

the  
**SUNDAY  
TIMES**

SUNDAY  
MARCH 30, 2025



# FUN DAY

## TIMES



***Crazy Hair Day***

Pic. by M. A. Pushpa Kumara

**COMPETITIONS**

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WORLD**

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**LANDMARKS**

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**Please send competition entries to:**

**Funday Times**  
C/O the Sunday Times  
P.O. Box 1136, Colombo.  
Or  
8, Hunupitiya Cross Road,  
Colombo 2.

**Please note that competition entries are accepted by email.**

**Write the name of the competition and the date clearly**

**at the top of your entry and include the following details:**

Full Name (including Surname),

Date of Birth, Address,

Telephone Number and School.

Please underline the name most commonly used.

**All competition entries should be certified by a parent or guardian as your own work.**

Competition entries without the full details requested above, will be disqualified.

**Closing date for this week's competitions:**

**April 16, 2025**

**Telephone: 2479337/2479333**

**Email: [fundaytimes1@gmail.com](mailto:fundaytimes1@gmail.com)**



**In our online issue this week:**

- **Page 5** – Young Reporter
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Please log on to the Funday Times website on [www.fundaytimes.lk](http://www.fundaytimes.lk) or check out the Sunday Times epaper on [www.sundaytimes.lk](http://www.sundaytimes.lk) for additional pages of this week's Funday Times.



**Avurudu Cover 2025**

As the Sinhala and Tamil New Year approaches, it is time once again to think of the Funday Times *Avurudu* Cover. Would you like to send in a picture for our *Avurudu* Cover? If so, here's what you have to do.

**Paint a picture to depict the traditions of the Sinhala and Tamil New Year and send it in to us. The painting should be on A 4 size paper. You could use any type of paint, crayons or chalk. Please make your picture bright and colourful.**

**All entries should be certified by a teacher or parent as your own work. Uncertified entries will not be entertained.**

The best entry will be used for the cover of the Funday Times *Avurudu* issue. The winner will also receive a book voucher.

Wish you all happy painting!



Or



[fundaytimes1@gmail.com](mailto:fundaytimes1@gmail.com)

**Closing Date: April 1, 2025**



**The 30<sup>th</sup> annual sports meet of ESM International School, Wattala was held recently.**



**Young students of Maple Kids International enjoyed a fun 'Crazy Hair Day' recently.**

Pix by M. A. Pushpa Kumara

146<sup>th</sup> 'Battle of the Blues'  
Match Winners



**Saijay Kaanaruban (9 years)**  
S. Thomas' College, Mt. Lavinia

Portrait



**Geethavi Saubhagya (Grade 6)**  
C.W.W. Kannangara Central College,  
Matugama

My best friend – Hello Kitty



**Ranaya Abeywickrama (5 years)**  
Southlands College, Galle

My house



**Nahla Husni (6 years)**  
Ilma Int. Girls' School

My big sister

My big sister, a heart so true,  
Filled with love in all she'll do.  
A mini father, wise and strong,  
Guiding us when things go wrong.

She's kind yet firm, a mix so rare,  
Always showing that she cares.  
With warm hugs that chase away,  
The worries of my hardest day.

As Deputy Head Girl, she leads with pride,  
With wisdom and warmth always by her side.  
Balancing duties, dreams and care,  
She's always ready to be fair.

She walks with grace, a leader so true,  
With strength and kindness in all she'll do.  
A sister, a guide, a shining light,  
Standing tall, her future bright.

Though sometimes firm, her heart is kind,  
A role model, with a brilliant mind.  
Through every challenge, through every test,  
She proves she's one of the best!

A sister, a star, standing tall,  
An inspiration to us all.

She's the best friend I've ever had  
Our sister, our hero – we love her most of all.

**Mineli Weragala (10 years)**  
Visakha Vidyalaya, Colombo

'Wathusudu' Flowers

In a colourful vase  
Having little leaves  
with healthy growing  
Orchid flowers....

Having my mother's love and care  
Smiling with pride  
Beautiful and attractive  
Orchid flowers....

Growing far away in the garden  
With garbage waste  
Having high temperature  
and rainfall

Green colour leaves with  
blooming flowers like  
a flock of white butterflies  
'Wathusudu' flowers....

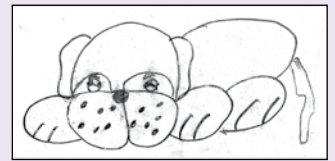
But my grandmother's choice  
To offer flowers for Lord Buddha  
Only with 'Wathusudu' flowers

To my surprise  
It's my grandma's choice  
To offer flowers to Lord Buddha  
Only with 'Wathusudu' flowers

**Thenuri Keerthisena (Grade 10)**  
Maliyadeva College, Kurunegala

My pet

My pet  
is a dog.  
Its name is  
Jimmy.



It is beautiful. It is very playful.  
It is white in colour. It likes to eat fish.  
It likes to drink milk. It can run.  
It plays with me. I like my dog.

**Keshali**  
Royal Int. School, Kegalle

My resolutions  
for 2025

The year 2025 bloomed  
prosperously with promising  
opportunities. We Sri Lankans  
especially are thrilled to see what  
this year has in store for us. 2025  
was welcomed by people with lots of  
fireworks and joyous cheering. It is  
also very special as 2025 is a perfect  
square number.

Like many people, I anticipated this  
New Year with much anticipation and  
resolutions. Accordingly, I made a list  
of resolutions for 2025 in the hopes of  
becoming a better version of myself.

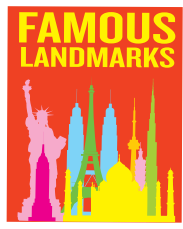
I have always wanted to play the  
piano since childhood. I want to  
master the piano and finally be able to  
play songs for Christmas this year on  
25/12/2025.

Until last year I have been a  
procrastinator. This year though,  
I am determined to follow my study  
schedule and minimize procrastination.

I also want to make my very own  
garden and provide my mother with  
fresh vegetables. After visiting my  
friend's house and seeing her home  
garden, I was inspired to grow plants,  
just like her. I would also like to grow  
orchids and roses in my garden.

I hope to follow my resolutions  
strongly until the end of this year.  
I believe that I can become a better  
and more confident version of myself,  
this year.

**Thanansika Rajees (10 years)**  
Hindu Ladies' College



# Central Park



**Central Park, is the largest and most important public park in Manhattan, New York City. It occupies an area of 840 acres (340 hectares) and extends between 59<sup>th</sup> and 110<sup>th</sup> streets (about 4 km) and between Fifth and Eighth avenues (about 0.8 km.) It was one of the first American parks to be developed using landscape architecture techniques.**

In the 1840s, the increasing urbanization of Manhattan prompted poet-editor William Cullen Bryant and landscape architect Andrew Jackson Downing to call for a new, large park to be built on the island. Their views gained widespread support, and in 1856 most of the park's present land was bought with about \$5,000,000 that had been appropriated by the state legislature.

The clearing of the site, which was begun in 1857, entailed the removal of a bone-boiling works, many scattered hovels and squalid farms, free-roaming livestock, and several open drains and sewers. A plan was devised by the architects Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux that would preserve and enhance the natural features of the terrain to provide a pastoral park for city dwellers; in 1858 the plan was chosen from 33 submitted in competition for a \$2,000 prize.

During the park's ensuing construction millions of cartloads of dirt and topsoil were shifted to build the terrain, about 5,000,000 trees and shrubs were planted, a water-supply system was laid and many bridges, arches, and roads were constructed.

The completed Central Park officially opened in 1876, and it is still one of the greatest achievements in artificial landscaping. The park's terrain and vegetation are highly varied and range from flat grassy swards, gentle slopes, and shady glens to steep, rocky ravines. The park affords interesting vistas and walks at nearly every point. The Metropolitan Museum of Art is in the park, facing Fifth Avenue.



**The Metropolitan Museum of Art** ▲



There is also a zoo, an ice-skating rink, three small lakes, an open-air theatre, a band shell, many athletic playing fields and children's playgrounds, several fountains and hundreds of small monuments and plaques scattered through the area.

There is also a police station, several block-houses dating from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and "Cleopatra's Needle" (an ancient Egyptian obelisk). The park has numerous footpaths and bicycle paths, and several roadways traverse it.

The 98-story Central Park Tower, located one block south of the park, is one of the world's tallest buildings and the second tallest building in New York City, second only to One World Trade Center.





**Central Park Tower** ▲



**Famous Landmarks Quiz 58**

**Q:** When was the completed Central Park officially opened in Manhattan?

**Famous Landmarks Quiz 57**

**Ovinu Karunathilaka, Galle** 

Source: Britannica



**Cleopatra's Needle** ▶



From a Funday Times Young Reporter

## 168<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Sri Lanka's First Postage Stamp

Sri Lanka's first postage stamp was issued on April 1, 1857, marking the beginning of the nation's philatelic history.

Stamp collecting, a globally popular hobby, originated with the introduction of postage stamps, and Sri Lanka's inaugural issue is now a highly sought-after piece. Today, many countries use stamps to showcase their culture and history, enriching the collections of stamp enthusiasts worldwide.

The concept of postage stamps emerged from the need to streamline postal delivery.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Sir Rowland Hill, a British postal administrator, proposed a system that led to the world's first postage stamp, issued in Great Britain on May 6, 1840.

Queen Victoria, born on May 24, 1819, ascended to the throne at a young age. The image used on the first stamps, including the iconic Penny Black, depicted her at the age of fifteen, although she was 21 years old when the stamp was issued in 1840. Consequently, all stamps printed between 1880 and 1900 featured her portrait.

April 1, 1857. It featured a portrait of Queen Victoria and was valued at 6 pence. This brown stamp covered the postage for a letter from Ceylon to England.



This stamp is distinctive for its paper, which has a subtle bluish tint, and its star-shaped watermark. The first postage stamp of Ceylon was designed in London and printed by Perkins, Bacon and Company. These stamps were issued without perforations and had to be cut out with scissors.

Due to its rarity, this stamp is highly valued by collectors, and its price varies significantly depending on its condition. Approximately 65,000 of these stamps were printed.

**Thenuri Keerthisena (Grade 10)**  
**Maliyadeva B. V., Kurunegala**



Following this innovation, stamps were printed worldwide, including in British colonies. As Sri Lanka, then known as Ceylon, was a British colony, regular correspondence was exchanged between the two countries.

Thus, Ceylon began printing its own stamps, with the first postage stamp being issued on

## Storytelling at British Council Colombo Library



Children gathered around the UK-qualified teacher at the British Council Colombo to listen to the story 'Monty the Hero'. It is a tale about a hero, a monster and a magic wand.

The kids were thoroughly engaged, not only by the exciting plot but also the activity that followed. This activity helped them reflect on important values, teaching them to think of others, offer help and be kind to everyone around them. It was a wonderful experience, full of fun and learning.



# British Wildlife Photography Awards

March 19, 2025

**A**round 13,000 pictures were entered into the annual photography competition, to compete for a prize of £3,500. Entries were split into 10 different categories in the adult competition: Animal Behaviour, Animal Portraits, Botanical Britain, Black & White, British Seasons, Coast & Marine, Habitat, Hidden Britain, Urban Wildlife and Wild Woods.

In the youth competition the categories included: 11 and Under, 12 – 14 years and 15 – 17 years.

Will Nicholls, Director of British Wildlife Photography Awards (BWPA) said: "This year's competition not only celebrates the artistry and dedication of our photographers but also serves as a powerful reminder of our responsibility to protect these wild spaces."



**Simon Withyman was chosen as the grand prize winner with his picture of a streetwise fox in Bristol.**



**The Young British Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2025 was awarded to 9-year-old Jamie Smart for her beautiful image of a curlew amongst dandelions in Wiltshire.**



**This incredible picture of a Blue Shark won the Coast & Marine category and was captured off the coast of Cornwall by Nicholas More.**



**The winner of the 12 – 14 category was Kiran Simpson, who captured this amazing picture of a Northern gannet off the coasts of Scotland.**



**Ben Lucas from Essex won the 15 – 17-year-old category with his clever shot of some pigeons eyeing up some fries using a hidden go-pro camera.**



**This picture of a hare running captured by David Tipling, won the Animal Portraits category. He was inspired by artist Robert Gillmor to try to take a picture of a hare in motion.**



**John Waters won the Animal Behaviour category with this snap of two speckled wood butterflies chasing each other.**

**This dramatic picture won the Black & White category and was taken by Mark Kirkland. It shows a Guillemot seabird diving off the coast of Scotland for sand eels.**



Source: CBBC Newsround

## Oxygen found in distant galaxy

March 21, 2025

Oxygen has been found in the most distant galaxy ever discovered.

Known as JADES-GS-z14-0, the galaxy was detected last year by NASA's James Webb Space Telescope.

Its light took more than thirteen billion years to reach Earth, meaning it can reveal what the universe was like when it was just 300 million years old.

Astronomers say that the discovery provides evidence that the universe developed much faster after the Big Bang than previously thought.

### What have scientists discovered?

The study was carried out by two teams of experts – one from Leiden Observatory in the Netherlands and the other by the Scuola Normale Superiore University in Pisa, Italy.

They both used data from the Alma telescope in the Chilean desert.

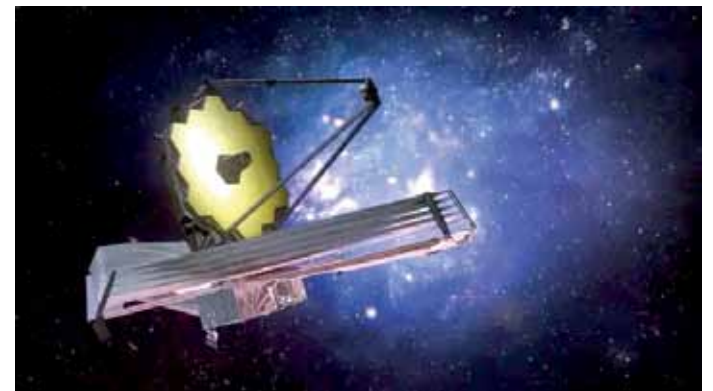
According to the European Southern Observatory, galaxies usually start their lives full of young stars, which are made mostly of light elements such as hydrogen and helium.

As stars evolve, they create heavier elements like oxygen, which then gets scattered through their galaxy after they die.

Researchers previously believed that a galaxy such as JADES-GS-z14-0, which is only 300 million years old, was therefore too young to contain oxygen.

However, the two different teams of astronomers found that despite its young age, JADES-GS-z14-0 contained around 10 times more heavy elements than expected. Sander Schouws, from Leiden Observatory, said: "The results show the galaxy has formed very rapidly and is also maturing rapidly, adding to a growing body of evidence that the formation of galaxies happens much faster than was expected."

Stefano Carniani, from the Scuola Normale Superiore, added: "I was astonished by the unexpected results because they opened a new view on the



The galaxy was discovered last year thanks to NASA's James Webb Space Telescope.

first phases of galaxy evolution.

"The evidence that a galaxy is already mature in the infant Universe raises questions about when and how galaxies formed," he explained.

## Baby dolphin rescued in race against time and tide

March 19, 2025

A young dolphin, separated from its mum and not feeling well, was saved thanks to members of the public, volunteers and a tourist boat.

The rescue happened in Cardigan Bay in Wales, a special conservation area where bottlenose dolphins live, but sightings of the animals are rare.

Rescuers faced a race against time and battled with the tide to stop the dolphin from becoming stuck in shallow waters before releasing it safely to swim away.

The tourist company that helped out, said the calf had not been spotted since, adding: "An amazing result today."

The rescue happened after Josh Pedley from New Quay had been watching a group of dolphins in Cardigan Bay.

He said he watched the dolphins for about an hour from the beach before a calf was left behind when the others swam away.

After continuing to watch the dolphin calf, he became concerned.

"It was spending most of its time 'logging' on the surface of the water and swimming round in circles," he said.

Pedley phoned the British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR) for advice explaining that the tide was heading in.

"The waves increased and the calf was getting pushed ever shallower."

Eventually, he waded into waist-deep water to use himself as a barrier to stop the calf being pushed into water that would be too shallow for it.



When a team from the BDMLR arrived, they tried to help the calf out into deeper water, but it kept being pushed back by the waves.

Eventually a tourist boat came to the rescue and the dolphin was wrapped in a blanket and lifted into the company's boat.

After being checked over by marine medics the dolphin was re-released into deeper waters.

**March 25**

# News in Pictures



**Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia**  
Balinese Hindus carry sacred objects during a cleansing ceremony called Melasti. It typically precedes Nyepi, the Day of Silence, marking the Balinese New Year.



**Avalon, Australia**  
Roulettes PC-21 of the Royal Australian Air Force perform in formation as part of their aerobatic display during the Australian International Airshow in Avalon.



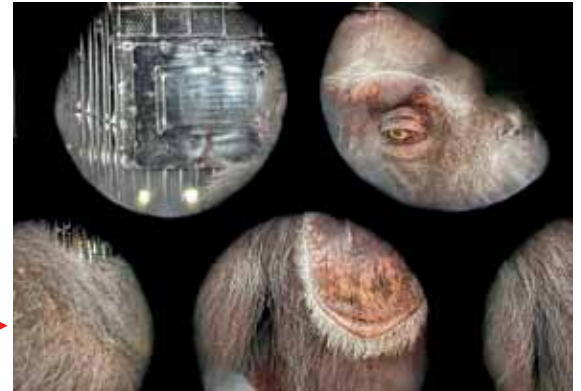
**Uiseong, South Korea**  
Houses burn in a village in North Gyeongsang province after being engulfed by a wildfire fuelled by strong winds that hit the region for the third consecutive day.



**Gaza**  
A Palestinian girl gathers her belongings at the site of an Israeli strike on a house, in Bureij, in the central Gaza Strip.



**Ashkelon, Israel**  
Israel's Iron Dome anti-missile system intercepts a rocket launched from the Gaza Strip, as seen from Ashkelon.



**Bogota, Colombia**  
Yoko, the only known great ape in captivity in Colombia, rescued after suffering animal abuse, is transported in a container inside El Dorado International Airport, before being relocated to Brazil's Sorocaba Sanctuary.



**Seoul, South Korea**  
One person died after a massive sinkhole opened up in Seoul, the fire department said, with harrowing video footage showing the moment his vehicle was swallowed by the hole at an intersection in the south-east of the South Korean capital during the evening rush hour.

**March 24**



**Rome, Italy**  
Pope Francis gestures during his first public appearance in five weeks, on the day he was set to be discharged from Gemelli Hospital, in Rome.



**Mecca, Saudi Arabia**  
Muslims perform late-night prayers at the Grand Mosque.

Sources: The Guardian & Reuters