

the
**SUNDAY
TIMES**

SUNDAY
JANUARY 14, 2024



FUNDA DAY TIMES



Ready for the rain

Pic. by M. A. Pushpa Kumara

New

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(ONLINE)



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FROM THE EDITOR

Calling Funday Times Club Members

IORA Day 2024 will be celebrated on March 10, 2024 in Colombo. Many interesting, ocean-related activities are being organized during the period leading up to that day.

Two-hundred (200) Funday Times Club members will be selected on a first-come first-served basis to participate in the activities.

Club members who would like to attend the main event, please call us or email us your contact details along with your club membership number.

Telephone: 2479337 / 2479333

fundaytimes1@gmail.com



IORA Day 2024 Essay Competition



Hey Kids, Funday Times is planning an Essay Competition to create awareness about IORA Day 2024. This is apart from the IORA Day 2024 All-Island Art Competition (See Page 3 for more details).

Under the main theme for IORA Day 2024, 'Sustainable Indian Ocean for Future Generations,' we give below three topics for the three age groups.

Please send in your essays with your full details to Funday Times by post or email. Remember to get your entries certified as your original work by a parent or teacher.

Exciting prizes will be awarded to the winners!

Closing Date: March 1, 2024

Age group: 9 years and below

Topic:

Our Ocean - Our Life

Word count: 150

Age group: 10 - 12 years

Topic:

Protecting our ocean

Word count: 150 - 200

Age group: 13 - 15 years

Topic:

Sustainable Indian Ocean for Future Generations

Word count: 200 - 300



Or



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Little Angels AMI Montessori, Nugegoda held their annual concert recently.

Pix by M. A. Pushpa Kumara

In our online issue this week:

- **Page 5** – Book Competition Essay Winners
- **Page 6** – Animals
- **Page 7** – Kids News
- **Page 8** – News in Pictures

Please log on to the Funday Times website on www.fundaytimes.lk or check out the Sunday Times epaper on www.sundaytimes.lk for additional pages of this week's Funday Times.



Zuhaan Abdul Careem
7 years on January 10

Photographs of members and non-members between 4 - 15 years, for the birthday page, should reach us at least ten days before the birthday, along with a letter from a parent giving full details.

IORA Day 2024

The ministries of Foreign Affairs and Education have combined to commemorate IORA Day in March this year with a major programme for schoolchildren which will include an art competition that will showcase the importance of the Indian Ocean.

Sri Lanka took over the Chairmanship of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) in October 2023 for the period 2023/2025. There are 23 member states and eleven dialogue partners in IORA.

The theme for IORA Day will be a 'Sustainable Indian Ocean for Future Generations' and will focus on educating and engaging future generations on the importance of ocean conservation and sustainable practices to preserve the oceans for the future.

Among the activities planned is a national level art competition for schoolchildren in association with the Ministry of Education and Wijeya Newspapers Ltd.

Entries will be accepted from schoolchildren in three categories: Primary (Grades 1 - 5), Junior (Grades 6 - 9), Senior (Grades 10 - 13).

Details will appear in the children's publications of Wijeya Newspapers Ltd., and their online versions.

Several other ocean-related activities will be conducted with the participation of children island-wide, drawing awareness to the importance of ocean sustainability. These activities are also coordinated by the Sri Lanka Navy and other ocean-related agencies. Opportunities are to be provided for children to be taken out to sea on a short excursion.

Ahead of IORA Day, several awareness programmes are planned.

The main event of IORA Day 2024 will be held at an ocean-front site in Colombo on March 10 with stalls displaying various ocean-related activities.



IORA DAY ART COMPETITION 2024

'SUSTAINABLE INDIAN OCEAN FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS'



Currently, Sri Lanka holds the Chairmanship of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and, plans are underway to hold the next IORA Day 2024 commemoration on 10th March, 2024.

As part of the activities, an Island-wide Art Competition among school children under different topics on the theme "Sustainable Indian Ocean for Future Generations" will be held as indicated below, in association with the Ministry of Education and Wijeya Newspapers Ltd.

CALLING ALL BUDDING ARTISTS ISLANDWIDE!

Express your creativity and concern for the Indian Ocean through art!

We are inviting artists from all schools to participate in our art competition centered around preserving our beautiful Indian Ocean.



PARTICIPATION

Participation rules are categorized as follows:



Primary (Grades 1 - 5)
Theme: Our Ocean - Our Life
(Certificates/Prizes for Participation)



Junior (Grades 6 - 9)
Theme: Protecting Our Ocean
(Certificates/Prizes for Winners)



Senior (Grades 10 - 13)
Theme: Sustainable Indian Ocean for Future Generations
(Certificates/Prizes for Winners)



Prizes to be won and selected Artwork will be showcased in the IORA Day Art Exhibition



Showcase Your Talent and share your message with a wide audience



Be an advocate for Sustainability and Inspire Positive Change



CONDITIONS

- Open for all school children in Sri Lanka
- Must be done on size A3 Paper
- All submissions should be certified by the School Principal
- Each entry should be accompanied by an entry form as below.

SUBMISSION

Submit your entry by registered post to reach before **16th February, 2024** with the completed entry form to:

Director (Aesthetic Education)
Ministry of Education,
Isurupaya,
Pelawatte, Battaramulla.

Please indicate following on top left corner of the envelope:

IORA Day Art Competition 2024,
Category :.....
Province :.....



Selected artwork may be used for future programs both locally and internationally.
Organized by Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education and Wijeya Newspapers Ltd.

IORA DAY ART COMPETITION 2024

Entry Form

Full Name:

Category: Primary (Grades 1-5) Junior (Grades 6-9) Senior (Grades 10 - 13)

School:

Province:

Home Address:


Name of the Parent/Guardian:

Contact Number of the Parent/Guardian:

Certification by the School Principal:

I certify that the above student is studying in Grade of this school.

.....
Signature of the School Principal



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 No. 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:
January 31, 2024

Telephone: 2479337/2479333
Email: fundaytimes1@gmail.com



BRITISH COUNCIL

Age groups:
6 – 10 years / 11 – 15 years
Word limit: 100 Words

Poetry Competition

This is your chance to get your poem published here. Entries should be in your handwriting and clearly certified by a teacher or parent as your own creation. Your poem should be posted to Funday Times with 'Poetry Competition' written at the top of the entry. The winner of each age category will be awarded a British Council Young Learner's Library membership.

6 – 10 years



WINNERS

Birth of the Prince of Peace
 Calm, quiet and peaceful night,
 In a mid-night time,
 Stars shine bright,
 And the wonder is now.

The Prince of Peace was born,
 In a stable...
 With lots of love and
 Friendship with animals and us.

The hearts are cleaned,
 For the invisible sight and
 The stars are here to,
 Disappear the dark.

Seja Damsuwi
 Southlands College, Galle

11 – 15 years

The lines

A kid was walking, hand in hand,
 With his grandparents, his mom and dad,
 He looked around the park, pointing at a man,
 Why so many lines on his face? wondered the little man.
 Grandpa's smile grew, and so the little kid knew,
 there was a story,
 A lesson that was new, a story that was true,
 These lines you see, are marks of pain,
 They are not just wrinkles, to the kid he explained,
 The longer you live, the more experience you obtain,
 These lines you see, are marks of gain,
 The love, the pain, it's all in these lines,
 These lines represent, all the past times,
 The kid now knew, there were stories in each line,
 He wished and hoped, "one day I'll have mine."

Duaa Hashmi
 Colombo Int. School

Please write **the date** at the top of your entry.

Please note that copied poems will be disqualified.



Or

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Win super books from



Age: 9 years and below

Word Count: 150

Topic: Your wishes for the New Year

Win: Horrid Henry's Christmas Cracker by Francesca Simon



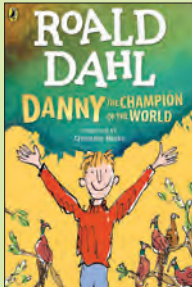
Four funny stories that will invoke every family's worst Christmas nightmares, as Horrid Henry sabotages the school play, tries to do his Christmas shopping, ambushes Father Christmas, and endures Christmas lunch with horrible guests.

Age: 10 – 12 years

Word Count: 150 – 200

Topic: Your New Year resolutions

Win: Danny the Champion of the World by Roald Dahl



Danny lives in a gypsy caravan with his father, the most marvellous and exciting father any boy ever had. The land around them belongs to Mr. Hazell, a rich bully who nobody likes.

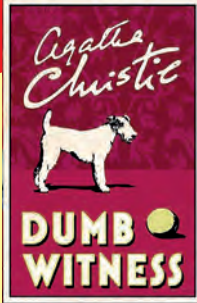
So, Danny and his father concoct a daring plot that will give Mr. Hazell the greatest shock of his life – as long as they don't get caught...

Age: 13 – 15 years

Word Count: 200 – 250

Topic: Ushering in 2024

Win: Dumb Witness by Agatha Christie




Everyone blamed Emily Arundell's accident on a rubber ball left on the stairs by her frisky terrier. But the more she thought about her fall, the more convinced she became that one of her relatives was trying to kill her....

Emily writes her suspicions in a letter to Hercule Poirot. Mysteriously he doesn't receive it in time until Emily is already dead...

Write at the top of your Essay

■ Book Competition ■ Essay Topic

Book Competition



<p>9 years below</p> <p>Things I like or dislike about school Sethupa Wickrama Seneviratna Royal College, Colombo</p>	<p>10 – 12 years</p> <p>An interesting experience Hemliya Rajaweda Colombo Int. School, Kandy</p>	<p>13 – 15 years</p> <p>The Festival of Deepavali Nivethikaa Yogendran St. Bridget's Convent</p>
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9 years and below

Things I like or dislike about school

I like school because it teaches some interesting subjects. We get to play sports, have some interesting clubs and there are very big grounds. I also like school because it is called Sri Lanka's number one school.

School is very good at cricket and very good at football. Also, it is very good at rugby. There are very nice teachers. There is a nice canteen and some nice after school sports. My school has a sports complex and swimming pool complex.

There are very good friends at school and nice classrooms and also very nice assemblies' like 'The Dog Show' and the 'Sky Festival' by the Air Force. There is a very big assembly hall to do things like the Doctor Association programmes.

I dislike school because they give us lots of homework and sometimes they put two clubs at the same time. So then I can't join both clubs. Then I miss the clubs I like. Sometimes I don't like that there are some extra activities that reduce my learning time. I like my school as it is neat and tidy.

Sethupa Wickrama Seneviratna (10 years)
Royal College, Colombo 7

Book Competition



10 – 12 years

An interesting experience

An interesting experience happened when I got my second puppy, after my first one ran away. I named him Roger. He is peach in colour and has a black, wet nose. He is very active and loves to chase his ball. He is a little naughty too because he ate my shoes, toys, pencil case and even my pencil.

He is scared of my father because one time he dug up one of my father's chillie plants and got scolded. But he loves when my father makes beef soup for him on Friday nights. He gobbles it all up in one go. And when he is done eating the first plate, he goes and licks my father's leg so then my father gives him more soup.

After that he comes to me and sits near my leg and I take him up on the sofa and give him

belly rubs. Then he falls asleep quickly. Then I put him in his bed and keep his favourite toy beside him and I go to bed too.

In the morning he licks my face to get me to wake up. Then we both get ready for school. He watches me get ready. Then I get in my car. He whines and barks at me saying not to go but I kiss him and go to school.

When I come back, we play in the garden and he chases his ball. He loves playing fetch. When it's the weekend we go to Hunas waterfalls, have a bath and have an ice-cream on the way home. His favourite flavour is cookie cream.

These are my interesting experiences with my dog.

Hemliya Rajaweda (10 years)
Colombo Int. School, Kandy

13 – 15 years

The Festival of Deepavali

Among the many festivals celebrated by Hindus, Deepavali is a prominent one celebrated annually in the month of October or November, on a date determined using a special calendar.

The customs and traditions of this fun-filled festival differ worldwide, but lighting oil-lamps is a common tradition. Celebrants prepare for the festival by cleaning, renovating, and decorating their homes and workplaces with *rangolis* (colourful art circle patterns).

During Diwali, people wear their finest clothes. They illuminate the interior and exterior of their homes with *diyas* (oil lamps) at night and light fireworks. They partake in family feasts and share sweets and gifts.

The history about this festival dates back centuries and differs from place to place. In North India the festival celebrates the royal homecoming of Rama along with Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman to the city of Ayodhya after defeating Ravana, the 10-headed king of the demons. In South India the festival marks Krishna's defeat of the demon Narakasura. Some celebrate Diwali as a commemoration of the marriage of Lakshmi and Vishnu, while others observe it as the birthday of Lakshmi.

Though the origins differ, the aim of this festival is to mark the victory of light over darkness, symbolized by illuminating the dark night with bright fire in earthen lamps.

Sri Lankans celebrate this festival with their families, as a public holiday is given on this day. Deepavali is a constant reminder that good will always win over darkness, even though the odds are against.

Nivethikaa Yogendran (13 years)
St. Bridget's Convent, Colombo 7



Read-a-Book and win a voucher from Vijitha Yapa Bookshop

Read any book of your choice and write briefly about it. What we want is not just a summary of the story but your views on the book.

The best account in the three age groups will be awarded book vouchers of Rs. 500 each from Vijitha Yapa Bookshop. Three winners will be selected each month.

Your account should not exceed 200 words. Please indicate word count. Fill in the coupon and attach it to your entry.

Read-a-Book Competition

Name :

Date of birth :

Address :

School:

Tel:

Finished book on :



Or

fundaytimes1@gmail.com

Serval

A serval sits patiently in a grassy field, swiveling its head back and forth like a watchful owl. The predator is scanning the savanna for a meal not with its eyes, but with its oversize ears. An unseen rodent stirs under the thick brush and the wild cat tenses. It crouches on its legs and feet before launching itself up and over the tall grass. Guided only by sound, the serval lands directly on the once-invisible rat.

Weirdest cat ever?

Thanks to its extra-long legs, stretched-out neck, and huge ears, the serval is sometimes called the “cat of spare parts.” (If a person had ears like a serval’s, they’d be as big as dinner plates!) But put together, their bizarre-looking body parts make these cats really successful hunters. In fact, servals catch their prey in over half of their attempts, making them one of the best hunters in the wild cat kingdom.



Common Name:	Serval
Scientific Name:	<i>Leptailurus serval</i>
Diet:	Carnivore
Group Name:	Pack
Average Life Span in the wild:	10 years
Size:	23 inches long
Weight:	19 to 40 pounds

That’s about 20 percent better than lions hunting together in a pride.

Blending in

Servals rely on their coat for camouflage as they stalk prey and avoid predators where they live throughout parts of northwest Africa and much of sub-Saharan Africa. Cats like cheetahs sport spots, while others, such as tigers, wear stripes. Servals have both — kind of. While they don’t have actual stripes, some of their larger spots blend together to give them the appearance of stripes. That makes it tough to find a serval in high grass when it’s standing still.

No two serval coats are the same. In fact, servals that live near woodlands have more dots that are small than those cats that spend time on the savanna; scientists think the smaller spots might hide those cats better among the shade of trees. However, white spots behind an adults’ ears are supposed to be seen — they help cubs keep track of Mom when she’s leading them during a hunt.

Not-so-fancy feast

Servals mostly hunt rodents — on average, one serval eats 4,000 a year — but they’re not picky eaters like some other wild cats. They’ll eat anything small enough for them to catch, including



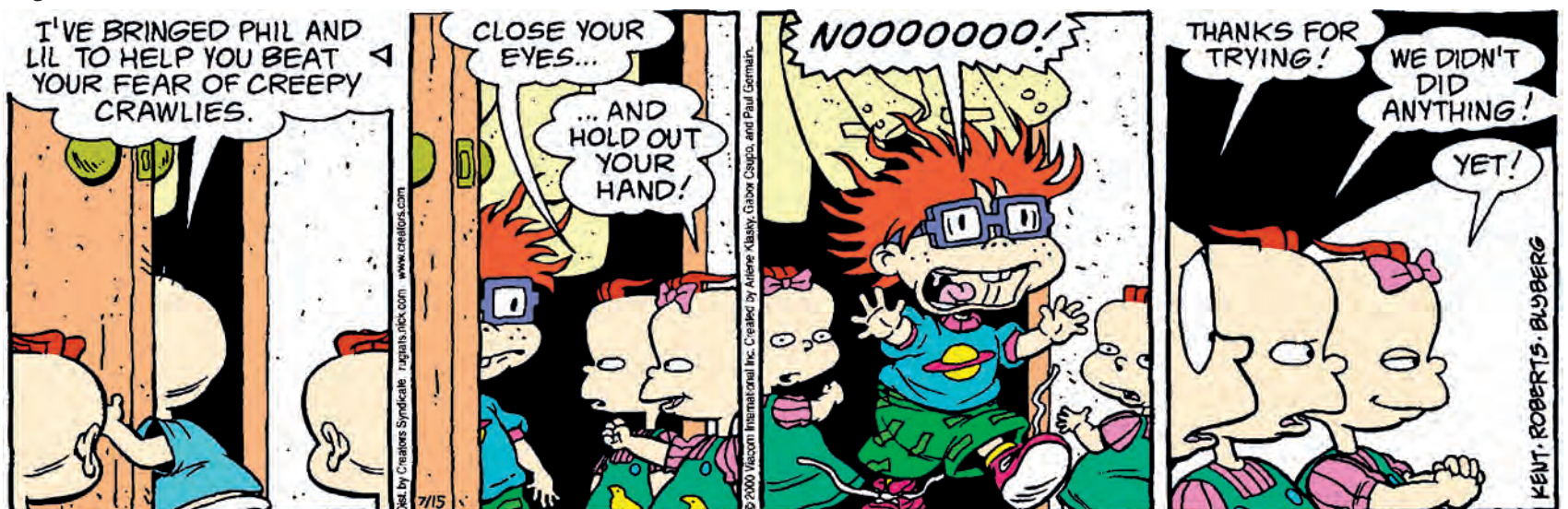
grasshoppers, snakes and even birds as large as storks and guinea fowls. They’ll occasionally wade into water to gobble up frogs and other amphibians. A serval can catch up to 30 frogs in three hours while hunting in water.

Also, unlike most other wild cats, they almost never scavenge, or eat other animals’ leftovers. Scientists think this is because they’re already such successful hunters.

National Geographic Kids



Rugrats



Aditya-L1: India's solar mission reaches Sun's orbit

January 8, 2024

India says a spacecraft it sent to observe the Sun has reached its final destination in space.

The Aditya-L1 satellite was launched in September last year and is the country's first mission to the Sun.

It will now spend five years in space observing solar activity, solar wind and solar flares - and their affect on Earth.

Experts hope that it will help improve our scientific understanding of the Sun - the 4.5 billion-year-old star that holds our solar system together.

What's happened?



The mission will help improve our scientific understanding of the Sun.

The spacecraft has been travelling towards the Sun for four months since being launched on September 2023.

On Saturday, it was announced that Aditya-L1 had reached the spot in space from where it will be able to continuously watch the Sun.

It's hoped that now Aditya-L1 is in the Sun's orbit, it will need very little fuel to operate and will be able to watch the Sun constantly and carry out scientific studies.

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi called the mission "a landmark" and an "extraordinary feat".

Aditya-L1 will allow scientists to observe solar activity, solar wind and solar flares, and their effect on Earth.

India's Space Agency (ISRO) said that some of the instruments on board the satellite have already started work, gathering data and taking images.

The Aditya-L1 mission is not the country's first venture into space - last year India successfully landed the world's first-ever probe near the lunar south pole.

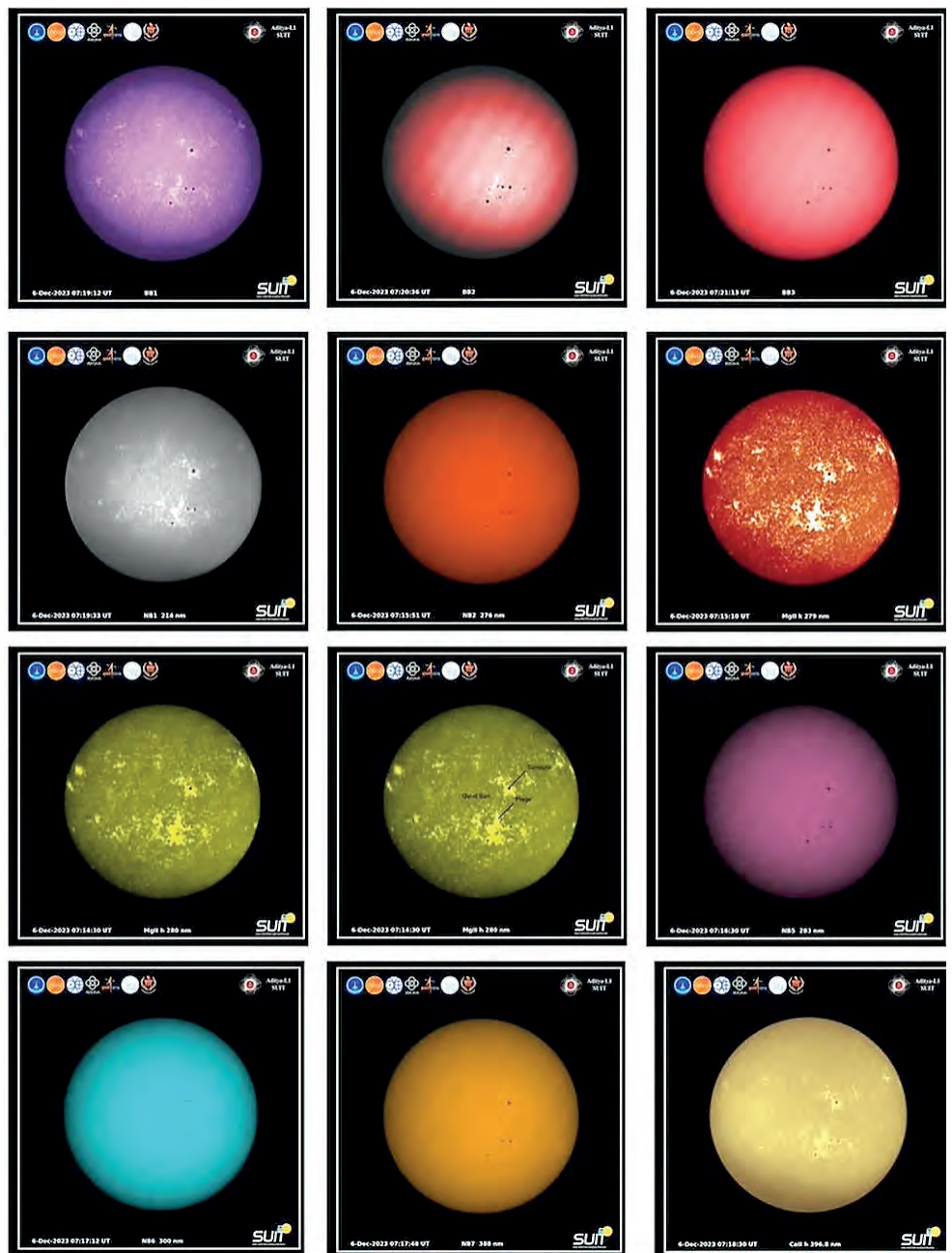
Why is it called Aditya-L1?

India's first space-based mission to study the solar system's biggest object is named after *Surya* - the Hindu god of Sun who is also known as 'Aditya'.

And L1 represents the exact place between the Sun and Earth where the Indian spacecraft is heading.



India's first Sun mission lifted off from the launch pad at Sriharikota in September 2023.



India's Space Agency says these images of the Sun sent by Aditya-L1 provide insights into the Sun's surface and lower atmosphere.

January 9

News in Pictures



Suzu, Japan
Police officers prepare to conduct a search operation in Ishikawa prefecture after earthquakes on the western coast.



Baghdad, Iraq
A military parade marks Iraqi Police Day in Baghdad.



London, UK
Idris Elba stands in Parliament Square alongside rows of clothing that represent the human cost of knife crime. The actor is calling on the government to take immediate action to stem youth violence.

January 8

Brunnen, Switzerland
Revellers in traditional costumes inspired by those worn by the characters in the Venetian Commedia dell' Arte mark the opening of the carnival season.



Torgau, eastern Germany
Farmers drive their tractors past Hartenfels Castle to protest against the federal government's austerity plans.



Dayeuhkolot, Indonesia
A man pulls his child, who is sitting in a toy truck, through flood water in Bojongasih village.

At the Golden Globes 2024



Cillian Murphy after winning the Best Male Actor in a Film award for 'Oppenheimer.'



Florida, USA
The Vulcan Centaur rocket lifts off at Cape Canaveral on its debut voyage carrying Astrobotic's Peregrine lunar lander.

Emma Stone leaves the stage clutching her Best Female Actor in a Film award for 'Poor Things.'



Source: The Guardian