

the  
**SUNDAY  
TIMES**

SUNDAY  
MARCH 17, 2024

# FUN DAY TIMES



**Winners with dignitaries at IORA Day 2024**

Pic. by M. A. Pushpa Kumara



**IORA DAY 2024**  
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**COMPETITIONS**  
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**(ONLINE)**



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IORA Day 2024 Commemoration organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, held on March 10, at Galle Face Green was a resounding success.

School children from all nine provinces in Sri Lanka were invited by the Ministry of Education. Sri Lankan President, Ranil Wickremesinghe, envoys from IORA Member States and Dialogue Partners graced the occasion along with other invitees. A welcome speech was delivered by Secretary Foreign Affairs. This was followed by 'A Leap in the Ocean' an awesome parachute jump/sky-diving display.

Dr. Salman Al Farisi, Secretary General of IORA, then addressed the gathering.

An Equestrian display themed, 'Sea Horses,' was followed by an address by the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The presentation of Awards for winners of the Art, Essay and Social Media Challenge on the theme 'A Sustainable Indian Ocean for Future Generations,' then took place.

A group photo of winners and dignitaries concluded the official opening of the event. The children had fun flying spectacular kites contributed by some members states.

The highlight for the children was the boat trip organized by the Sri Lanka Navy. Students also enjoyed getting their IORA Passport stamped at the various stalls.



Pix. by  
M. A. Pushpa Kumara, Akila Jayawardena & Dilushi Wijesinghe



Lithuli Bandara



Manilal Fernando



Rithmi Seneviratne



Aysha Manaal



Nethmi Batuwita



The Sunday Times / Funday Times Stall



Some of the many informative and interesting stalls.



The French Embassy had a fun, interactive stall with a 'Colour-by-Number Wall' designed by Sri Lankan artist, Safiya Sideek.

(Pix courtesy: The French Embassy in Sri Lanka)



The SL Navy Boat Trip







**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:**

**April 3, 2024**

**Telephone: 2479337/2479333**

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



**In our online issue this week:**

- **Page 5** – Story
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- **Page 8** – News in Pictures

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.

## IORA Day 2024 Essay Competition organized by Funday Times

The following prizes were awarded at IORA Day Commemoration on March 10 at the Galle Face Green.



### 9 years and below - 'Our Ocean - Our Life'

**1<sup>st</sup> Prize** – Family Buffet Dinner for four complements of Hilton Colombo along with book vouchers with the complements of the Honorary Consuls Association in Sri Lanka

**Winner: Rithmi Seneviratne**  
of Southlands College, Galle

**2<sup>nd</sup> Prize** – Book vouchers with the complements of the Honorary Consuls Association in Sri Lanka

**Winner: Lithumi Hettikankanamge**  
of Convent of Our Lady of Victories, Moratuwa

**3<sup>rd</sup> Prize** – Book vouchers with the complements of the Honorary Consuls Association in Sri Lanka

**Winner: Kaveen Gnanaweera**  
of Brisbane Int. School, Nugegoda

### 10 – 12 years - 'Protecting our Ocean'

**1<sup>st</sup> Prize** – Family Dinner for four complements of Hilton Colombo and book vouchers with the complements of the Honorary Consuls Association in Sri Lanka

**Winner: Manilal Fernando**  
of British School in Colombo

**2<sup>nd</sup> Prize** – Book vouchers with the complements of the Honorary Consuls Association in Sri Lanka

**Winner: Suhanya Gamaarachchi**  
of Horizon College Int., Nugegoda

**3<sup>rd</sup> Prize** – Book vouchers with the complements of the Honorary Consuls Association in Sri Lanka

**Winner: Atarah Roshan** of Bishop's College, Colombo

### Overall Essay Winner

**Manilal Fernando**  
of British School in Colombo  
(Laptop presented by EWIS)

### Creative Art for IORA Day 2024 T-shirt

**Lithuli Bandara**  
of Vidura College, Kurunegala  
(Laptop from EWIS,  
Family Buffet Lunch from  
Hilton Colombo,  
Book vouchers and  
other prizes)

## Avurudu Cover 2024

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, 2024**

## Happy Birthday



**Mishenka Kiriella Bandara**  
11 years on March 29



**Mishan Kiriella Bandara**  
4 years on March 23



**Miqdhad Ahamed**  
6 years on March 12

# Mice, mice, everywhere!

By Manoshi De Silva

There was a house down by the lane, which was kept closed for a very long time. Finally a new owner moved in with all her belongings. She was known as Mrs. Pinto.

Now, Mrs. Pinto was a person who loved to eat. She always munched on something. So the kitchen was stacked with various food items and sweets.

During the time that Mrs. Pinto's house was kept closed, it became a shelter to all the neighbourhood mice. They ran and played all over the house. But once she moved in, they all crept into the kitchen and stayed hidden in the holes in the walls and ceiling.

When night fell, all the mice would come out and scurry about in Mrs. Pinto's kitchen. With the packets of sweet food in the cupboards and the fruits and vegetables on the racks, it was like a carnival for the mice. "Look at all this food!" squeaked and danced the mice, as soon as Mrs. Pinto switched off the lights and went to sleep.

"Listen everyone!" shouted the oldest and wisest mouse in the group. "Don't take bites from the food, because then she'll know that we are here! Take the entire thing to your nests without leaving behind any half eaten food. That way she'll be confused about the missing food, but she won't know that it's us!" All the mice agreed to this, so they took bananas, biscuits, entire bread slices and other food items to their homes.

The next morning Mrs. Pinto came to her kitchen wanting, to eat the ripe banana that was there. But the banana was missing. "What happened to the banana? I am sure that it was here!" She searched all over the kitchen, but she couldn't find it. Mrs. Pinto was so confused that her face turned red. She scratched her head and walked out confused.

That night the mice came out again, as soon as the house turned dark. They ran around, enjoying the food and carrying them to their tiny homes. "Oh look at this!" shouted a tiny mouse hugging a packet of biscuits. "If you want biscuits, take the whole packet!" shouted back the old mouse. "Don't leave half bitten biscuits behind,

because when the lady sees your teeth-marks, she will know!"

So the little mouse pulled the packet, trying to drag it home. But it was too heavy. Finally he gave up and dropped it. The biscuit packet fell to the ground making noise and woke up Mrs. Pinto. The mice ran and hid when they heard her footsteps.

Mrs. Pinto turned the light on. She saw the biscuit packet on the ground, away from the cupboard where it was kept.

Mrs. Pinto picked up the packet and observed it. There was nothing suspicious. "Ooh..." shivered Mrs. Pinto.

"There must be a ghost!" She was too scared to move. So she ran back to her room and sat on her bed, listening carefully. She could hear things being pulled and dropped in her kitchen.

Mrs. Pinto covered herself from head to toe with her sheet and shivered like a leaf. "This house is haunted!" she muttered. That's when she heard a loud squeak. Not just one but a few more. "That is not the sound of a ghost," said Mrs. Pinto and slowly tiptoed back into the kitchen.

The mice were having a jolly good time in Mrs. Pinto's kitchen. They were enjoying the food and doing their food shopping from her cupboards. They didn't know that Mrs. Pinto was back. So they continued with their merriment. But when she switched on the light, Mrs. Pinto and the mice all froze in shock.

Seeing the brown fluffy creatures, Mrs. Pinto screamed in horror, "Eek, mice!" and got on top of a chair. "Eek, a human!" squeaked the mice and ran this way and that way, making Mrs. Pinto scream some more. "Mice, mice, everywhere! This house is infested with mice!" All the mice ran into the holes and hid, except for the oldest mouse.

"I'll catch all of you and destroy you!" screamed Mrs. Pinto waving her hands like mad. "Please don't harm us," said the old mouse. "We too feel pain like you humans do!"

"What do I care!" shouted Mrs. Pinto stomping her feet on the chair in anger.



The chair couldn't support her weight and it broke, dropping Mrs. Pinto to the ground. Mrs. Pinto howled in pain.

"Are you hurt?" ask the old mouse. "Of course I am, I just fell didn't I?" yelled Mrs. Pinto. "I wish I could help you but I am too small to do anything..." said the mouse.

Mrs. Pinto thought for awhile, "but I just said I'll destroy you all. So why do you still want to help me?"

"That's how we animals are," replied the mouse. "We have no hate in our hearts. If we attack you, that's only to defend ourselves. We don't hurt others for no reason, like humans do."

"But you eat my food!" accused Mrs. Pinto. "That's because we don't have the ability to understand right and wrong. But you humans have that ability. So why don't you use it and not harm others?"

Mrs. Pinto sighed. "But I can't have mice in my kitchen. My food gets destroyed and mice can spread diseases! So I'll give you time to leave my kitchen."

"Okay we will leave this place. But promise us that you will use your ability as a human to judge right from wrong and not harm any other person or animal, in the future!"

"Okay I promise," said Mrs. Pinto, "I will trap any animal that causes trouble and release them to a place away from houses. I won't harm them!"

"Great!" said the mouse. "We will leave tomorrow. Thank you for showing kindness to us animals, who are disliked by many. We too have to live somewhere on earth you know!"





## 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.



Or



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### Read-a-Book Competition

Name : .....

.....

Date of birth :

.....

Address : .....

.....

.....

School: .....

Tel: .....

Finished book on : .....

.....

## Cartoon Time!

Hey Kids!  
We plan to put in more cartoons in the Funday Times and what's more they will be your own cartoons.

So, here's a chance for you to try your hand at producing your very own original cartoons.

Draw a little cartoon with a caption. It could even be a small cartoon story in a strip (not more than three boxes).

The best cartoons you send will be published in the Funday Times.

So good luck to all you cartoon fans!

Please remember that the cartoons you send in should be your original work and not copied or traced from anything. They should be certified as your own work by a parent or teacher.



Or



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## Young Reporters

If you are interested in joining as a Funday Times Young Reporter please fill in the coupon given and send it in to us along with a recent report or interview not exceeding 300 words. Photographs or illustrations would enhance the report.

Young Reporters who have already enrolled with us, please send in new reports for publication.



Or



fundaytimes1@gmail.com



## Young Reporters Coupon

Name: .....

Date of Birth: .....

Address: .....

.....

Telephone: .....

School: .....

Parent's approval: .....

Date: .....

.....

Rugrats







March 11, 2024

**T**he movie world's biggest awards ceremony, the Oscars, took place in Hollywood on March 10, 2024.

The 96<sup>th</sup> Academy Awards, to give it its formal name, sees celebrities and actors from all over the world come together to celebrate the best films from the last 12 months.

The biggest winner of the night was the movie 'Oppenheimer', which won seven awards, including Best Picture.

There were live performances throughout the show, including an extra special performance of 'I'm Just Ken' by actor Ryan Gosling, and even a dog in a bowtie!

### 'I'm Just Ken!' Ryan Gosling brings the Ken-ergy to the Oscars



If you're a fan of the new 'Barbie' movie, then you'll be happy to know that one of the movie's stars: Ryan Gosling – who plays Ken – gave a special live performance of his song 'I'm Just Ken' at the awards.

Wearing a sparkly pink suit and sunglasses, Ryan began singing the song in the audience, just behind his co-star Margot Robbie – who played Barbie in the movie – making her laugh.

He then made his way on stage, where he was joined by famous musicians Mark Ronson and guitarist Slash, as well as 65 other Kens including Simu Liu, Ncuti Gatwa and Kingsley Ben-Adir who also played Ken in the movie.

Ryan also went down into the crowd to sing alongside Barbie's Director Greta Gerwig, and co-stars Margot Robbie and America Ferrera, as well as his friend and actress Emma Stone.

## The Oscars 2024: Five top moments

### Billie Eilish wins the 'Triple Crown'



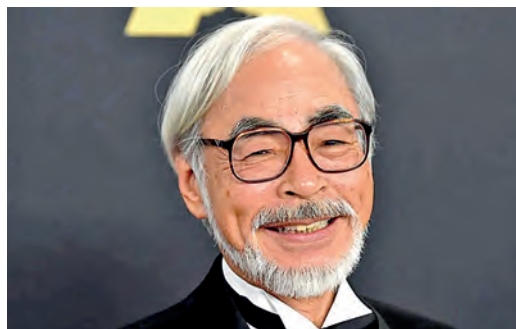
Billie and her brother Finneas are Oscars record-breakers!

But 'I'm Just Ken' wasn't the 'Barbie' movie's big winner at the awards show, it also won Best Original Song for 'What Was I Made For?' by Billie Eilish and her brother Finneas.

The siblings gave a special live performance of the song to the crowd, and received a standing ovation.

Billie and her brother also won in 2021 for the James Bond song 'No Time to Die', and with her latest win, the team have become the youngest people to win two Oscars, as well as earning the Triple Crown – the title given to someone who wins an Oscar, Grammy and Golden Globe award – for a movie song.

### 'The Boy and the Heron' wins Best Animated Feature Film



The 83-year-old also won the Golden Globe for the same film last January.

There was some strong competition in the animated movie category this year, with Disney's 'Elemental' and 'Spider-Man, Across the Spider-verse' in the running.

But the award went to Japan's famous Studio Ghibli animator Hayao Miyazaki for his new film 'The Boy and the Heron'.

The story of takes place after the Second World War in Japan, and centres around

a 12-year-old boy called Mahito Maki, who moves to a new town in the countryside after the death of his mother, and discovers a magical gateway to a fantasy world.

'The Boy and the Heron' took about ten years to make, as Mr Miyazaki's animation is drawn by hand.

### Who's a good boy? Messi the dog!



One of these guests is not like the others...

The Oscars audience was joined by a four-legged star this year: Messi the dog.

The black-and-white border collie played Snoop the dog in the film 'Anatomy of a Fall' – which was nominated for Best Picture.

Messi was captured on camera giving a round of 'appaws' to Robert Downey Jr. for winning Best Supporting Actor.

Sadly Messi didn't win an Oscar, but he did win the award for goodest boy!

### The kids taking part in the Oscars

Singer Becky G also gave a show-stopping performance at the Oscars.

She sang her song 'The Fire Inside', from the movie 'Flamin' Hot' – which is about the invention of the crisp flavour Flamin' Hot Cheetos.

Halfway through the song, she was also joined on stage by a group of girls from a children's choir from her hometown of Inglewood, in the US.





March 12

## News in Pictures

**Santa Cruz Island, Ecuador**

A marine iguana (*Amblyrhynchos chuscratus*) swimming in Tortuga Bay, part of the Galapagos archipelago. Greenpeace has called for the creation of a high seas marine protected zone under a new UN treaty to secure a much wider area around Ecuador's Galapagos archipelago.

**Stockholm, Sweden**

Police detain the climate activist Greta Thunberg during a climate protest outside the Swedish parliament, the Riksdag.

**Jakarta, Indonesia**

Indonesian Muslims attend evening prayers during the first night of the holy month of Ramadan at the Grand Mosque of Istiklal.

**Kedonganan, Indonesia**

Two boys enjoy a mud bath, known as Mebuug-buugan, traditionally held a day after Nyepi – the Balinese Day of Silence – aimed at purification and removing bad luck.

**Nairobi, Kenya**

A member of the Africa Roho Msalaba church throws a two-month-old baby into the air during the 'Throwing babies into the air' ritual in Kibera slum. The babies of church members are kept at home and are not allowed to be seen by strangers until they are two months old, before being introduced to the community by being paraded through the streets and then thrown in the air.

March 11

**Japan, Tokyo**

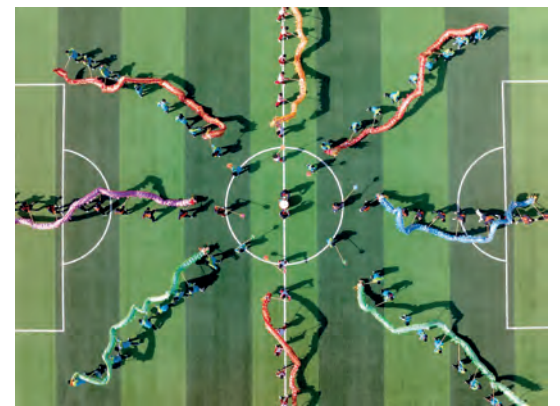
A woman poses for a photo in front of an installation to promote the film Godzilla Minus One, which won the Oscar for best visual effects, outside a popular shopping centre and official shopping development in the Hibiya area.

**Birmingham, UK**

Viking, an Australian shepherd who won best in show, poses for photographs at the Crufts trophy presentation.

**Buenos Aires, Argentina**

Thousands of people gather at the Obelisk to say goodbye to Akira Toriyama, the creator of 'Dragon Ball'.

**Xiangyang, China**

Aerial view of primary school students performing a dragon dance to celebrate Dragon Head-Raising Day.

Source : The Guardian