

the  
**SUNDAY  
TIMES**

SUNDAY  
MARCH 1, 2026



# FUNDA Y TIMES



**'Poetry for Children' at British Council**

Pic. by Priyanka Samaraweera



**COMPETITIONS**

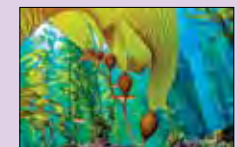
**PAGES 2 & 4**



**MATHS**

**PAGE 3**

**ONLINE**



**SEAGRASS**

**PAGE 5**

**KIDS NEWS**

**PAGES 6 - 8**

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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: March 18, 2026**

**Telephone: 2479337/2479333**  
**Email: [fundaytimes1@gmail.com](mailto:fundaytimes1@gmail.com)**



**In our online issue this week:**

- **Page 5** – Environment
- **Page 6** – BAFTAs
- **Page 7** – Kids' News
- **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.

**FUNDAY TIMES KIDS IN COLOUR with Richard**

Funday Times together with Richard is happy to launch a new Art Competition for our readers, starting from January 2026.

A topic will be given each month.

The paintings should be on **A4 size paper** and you could use any medium of your choice.

Three winners from two age groups will be selected each month. Winners will receive an attractive gift pack from Richard.



**All paintings should be certified by a teacher or parent as your own work.**

Age Groups: 4 – 6 and 7 – 10 years

*Please write your Full Name, Date of Birth, Home Address, Telephone Number and School and paste it on the back of your entry.*

**Topic for March: Wildlife**

**Closing Date: March 31, 2026**



Or



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

**Art Winners for January will be announced in the Funday Times next week.**

**Poetry for Children**

A lively and inspiring session on 'Poetry for Children' was conducted by children's author and poet Joseph Coelho at the British Council Colombo in celebration of Mother Language Month in February.

During the session, he shared engaging poems from his 'Out Loud' poetry series, captivating young minds with rhythm, creativity, and expression.

The event was highly interactive, encouraging children to create and perform their own verses while learning practical tips on how to begin writing without hesitation.

Filled with imagination, adventure and enthusiasm, the session inspired children to discover the joy of poetry and express their thoughts with confidence.



Pix. by Priyanka Samaraweera

**Maths in Action 98**  
By R. N. A. de Silva

**Truncatable Prime Numbers**

A prime number is a whole number greater than 1 with only two factors, 1 and itself. A prime number cannot be divided by any other positive integer without leaving a remainder. The first 10 prime numbers are 2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, 23 and 29. There are 25 prime numbers between 1 and 100. Try to find these 25 numbers.

Greek mathematician Euclid recorded a proof that there is no largest prime number among the set of primes. However, many mathematicians are still searching to find whether there is a number after which no primes occur. The largest known prime number is  $2^{82,589,933} - 1$ . It has 24,862,048 digits. This was recorded in 2021 and may have changed by now.


One of the most important uses for prime numbers is in cyber security, making information shared over the internet safer.

The beauty of mathematics lies in the fact that prime numbers continue to hide secrets, that mathematicians have not been able understand.

Consider the number 73,939,133. Mathematicians have named such numbers as right-truncatable prime numbers. This means that successively removing the last digit to the right will always result in a prime number.

- 73,939,133
- 7,393,913
- 739,391
- 73,993
- 7,393
- 739
- 73
- 7

The numbers here are all prime. ▲



7 is a prime number  
73 is a prime number  
739 is a prime number  
7393 is a prime number  
73939 is a prime number  
739391 is a prime number  
7393913 is a prime number  
73939133 is a prime number



There are currently 83 known right-truncatable prime numbers.

The largest known left-truncatable number is given here. ▶

- 357686312646216567629137
- 57686312646216567629137
- 7686312646216567629137
- 686312646216567629137
- 86312646216567629137
- 6312646216567629137
- 312646216567629137
- 12646216567629137
- 2646216567629137
- 646216567629137
- 46216567629137
- 6216567629137
- 216567629137
- 16567629137
- 6567629137
- 567629137
- 67629137
- 7629137
- 629137
- 29137
- 9137
- 137
- 37
- 7



**Math Plot - 98**

Try to find the solution to the following puzzle. You may send solutions with reasoning to [rnades@gmail.com](mailto:rnades@gmail.com) within the next three days. Please include your full name, date of birth, home address, contact details and the name of your school along with the solution.

**There are 100 houses on a street numbered from 1 to 100. Sunil is delivering newspapers to each house on the street. How many times does he deliver a paper to houses with the number 2 in it?**

**Math Plot 97 – Solution**

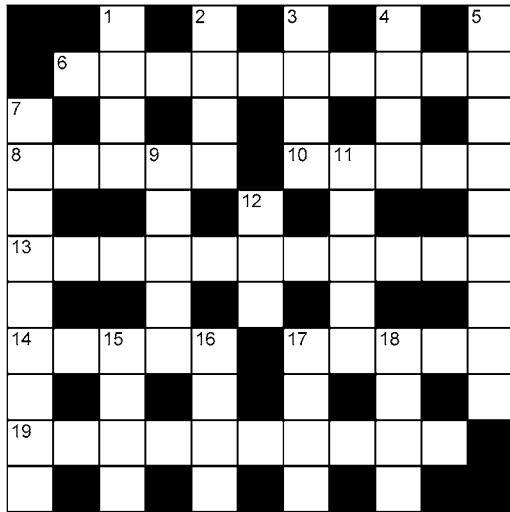
*The answer is 52.*

The winner is **Thihama Zacky** of **Al-Azhar Central College, Thihariya.** Congratulations!

**Rugrats**



**LUMALA Crossword – No. 19**



**Across**

- 6 A building where legal trials are held
- 8 Rub out
- 10 Undecorated
- 13 Scary
- 14 Opposite south
- 17 A group of singers
- 19 Bad dreams

**Down**

- 1 A garment worn by early Romans
- 2 Costing nothing
- 3 Buy something here
- 4 Where Cubans live
- 5 People aged 13 to 19
- 7 Very, very loud
- 9 One of your senses
- 11 A meal
- 12 A pig's pen
- 15 Scraps of material
- 16 Strikes
- 17 A potter uses this
- 18 Follow an order

**Age Group:**  
8 – 15 years

**LUMALA BICYCLE COMPETITION**

You now have a chance to win a brand new **LUMALA bicycle** for your own. One lucky winner will receive a brand new Lumala bicycle each month. All you have to do is fill in the Lumala Crossword No. 19, according to the clues given. Write the answers neatly on a postcard or paper, and send it to **Funday Times**. Cut the strip 'LUMALA Crossword No. 19' seen at the top of the page and paste it on your entry.

Entries should be certified as your own work, by a teacher or parent.

*Closing Date: March 31, 2026*

**Solution No. 18**



**Minudi Risindi,**  
Colombo 5



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**4 – 6 years**

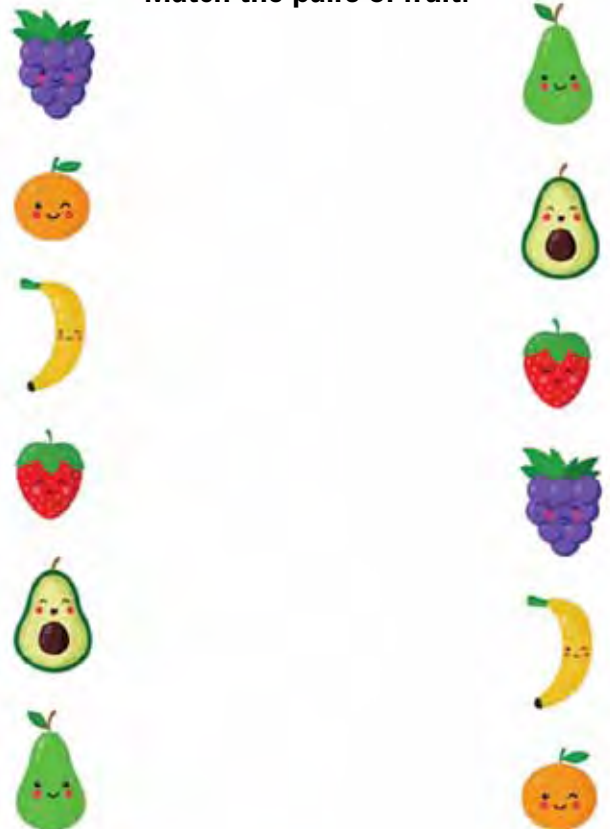


- ▶ Hussain Riyaaaz, Colombo 8
- ▶ Fathima Aamina, Dehiwala
- ▶ Mohamed Amhar, Gampola
- ▶ Fathima Raabiah, Colombo 6
- ▶ Ayadh Abdul Malik, Colombo 2

Winners please call **Funday Times** on **2479333/2479337** and arrange to collect your prizes.

**4 – 6 AGE GROUP**

Match the pairs of fruit.



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# Seagrass

**Compiled by Cecilia Hewavitharana**

Seagrasses are marine flowering plants that grow underwater in shallow salty and brackish waters around the world.

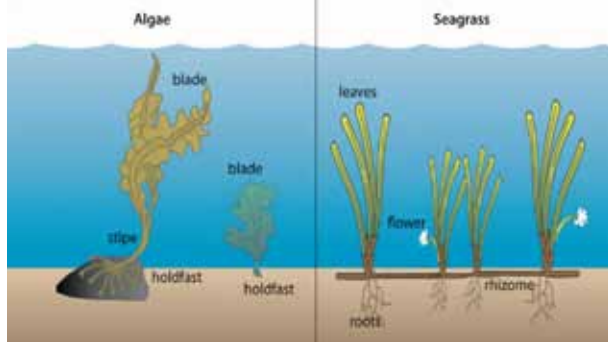
Seagrass meadows are found in 159 countries on six continents, from the tropics to the Arctic Circle. There are 72 species of seagrass worldwide, which are categorised into four families: Posidoniaceae, Zosteraceae, Hydrocharitaceae and Cymodoceaceae.

## Seagrass vs. Seaweed

Seagrasses are marine flowering plants that are closely related to terrestrial flowering plants and have roots, stems, veins and leaves, and produce flowers and seeds.

Seaweed or marine algae are not true plants as they do not have roots, stems or flowers. Algae also do not have internal vascular systems to transport nutrients and gases like seagrass.

Examples of seagrass species include eelgrass and turtle grass, while kelp and sea lettuce are examples of algae.



**Algae vs. Seagrass (Courtesy of the Integration and Application Network, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science).**



**Kelp forests, Channel Islands National Park, California, US (Photo: Douglas Klug).**

## Threats to seagrass

The biggest threats to seagrasses around the world are habitat loss due to human activity and the impacts of climate change.

Nearly 30% of the global seagrass area has vanished since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, while at least 22 of the 72 seagrass species have been declining. The IUCN has categorised 21% of seagrass species as Near Threatened, Vulnerable and Endangered Species.

## Why is seagrass important?

While seagrass meadows only cover around 0.1% of the ocean floor, they are home to thousands of marine species, including many endangered species, providing them with both food and shelter.

Seagrass meadows cover over 300,000 km<sup>2</sup> of the Earth, making them one of the most widespread coastal habitats. To put this into perspective, around 90% of all marine life are found in coastal seas.

Seagrass meadows capture 35 times as much carbon as a rainforest of the same

area and can hold up to 18% of the world's oceanic carbon, making them a very effective natural solution for fighting climate change.

They also act as a defence against ocean acidification, thereby improving the resilience of the most vulnerable ecosystems and species, such as coral reefs.

Furthermore, seagrass meadows reduce wave energy, thus protecting people from the increasing risk of floods and storms. They also sustain around 20% of the largest fisheries in the world,



**Photo credit: Benjamin Jones/Project Seagrass**

**In 2022, March 1<sup>st</sup> was declared as World Seagrass Day by the United Nations General Assembly to raise awareness about the importance of seagrass for humans and marine life and to promote their conservation.**

## Seagrass in Sri Lanka

According to the research article 'Current status and checklist of seagrass in Sri Lanka' by Susantha Udagedara and D.D.G.L. Dahanayaka, published in 2021, 15 species of seagrass have been recorded in Sri Lankan waters.

These include tape seagrass (*Enhalus acoroides*), sickle seagrass (also known as Pacific turtlegrass; *Thalassia hemprichii*), smooth ribbon seagrass (*Cymodocea rotundata*), beaked tasselweed (also known as beaked ditchgrass and widgeon grass; *Ruppia maritima*) and noodle seagrass (*Syringodium isoetifolium*).



**Tape seagrass in Batticaloa (Photo: Susantha Udagedara).**



**Turtle in seagrass meadow, Australia (Photo: Jayne Jenkins/Ocean Image Bank).**

indirectly providing people with food.

Despite their importance to humans and marine life, only

26% of recorded seagrass meadows are protected through marine protected areas. According to the UN, the conservation and restoration seagrass meadows can help countries achieve 26 targets related to 10 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Sources: un.org, UNEP, Smithsonian Ocean, Britannica, International Journal of Aquatic Biology.

## BAFTAS 2026: From Paddington to Zootropolis

February 23, 2026

The BAFTAs - British Academy of Film and Television Arts - the UK's biggest movie awards took place on February 22.

They celebrate the best movies, actors and production teams from the last year. The awards took place at the Royal Festival Hall in London.

But who won what this year this year, and why was Paddington Bear on the red carpet?

### Paddington Bear made an appearance

The cuddly bear in a blue coat made a special appearance at the award ceremony. Paddington appeared on the red carpet for pictures, before heading inside to present the award for best children's and family film.

"I am the first ever bear to present an award," said Paddington. "And also, the first presenter to get marmalade all over a BAFTA. Sorry about that!" he said.

### Which films won?

Paddington announced the winner for the best children's and family film, which this year went to a film called 'Boong'.



Paddington posing with Alan McAlex, Farhan Akhtar, Lakshmi Priya Devi and Ritesh Sidhwani, winners of the Best Children and Family Film award.

'Boong' is the first Indian film to win in this category, and tells the story of a young boy navigating ethnic tensions in the north-eastern region of Manipur in India, to bring his father home.

"Thank you to the jury members and BAFTA for giving our very small film, such big love," said the film's director Lakshmi Priya Devi.



The award for best animated film went to 'Zootropolis'.



Paddington Bear delivered a "sticky" award in the children's and family category.

'Boong' was up against some tough competition in the category, from Hollywood blockbusters 'Lilo & Stitch' and 'Zootropolis 2' and 'Arco'.

'Zootropolis 2' became one of the highest-grossing animated movies of all time when it was released earlier this year.

The movie's co-creators Jared Bush and producer Yvett Merino accepted the award.

"We wanted to tell the story about differences and the fact that sometimes in this world right now, we are told that differences are bad or a problem. Our differences make us all fantastic. Our differences can make something really wonderful, and the world needs it right now," said Jared Bush in his acceptance speech.

### Huntr/x performed!



Rei Ami, EJAE and Audrey Nuna performed 'Golden' at the awards.

Despite not being able to be nominated for an award at the BAFTAs, there was a special live performance from the singers of Huntr/x (Huntrix), from the 'KPop Demon Hunters' movie.

EJAE, Audrey Nuna and Rei Ami sang the song 'Golden' from the movie, which was one of the biggest hits of last year.

The movie was not able to be nominated for a BAFTA award because it doesn't follow the BAFTA rules, as it went straight to Netflix in the UK without being shown in cinemas first (although a sing-along version was released in cinemas later).

Source : CBC Newsround

## Award-winning amazing animal pictures

February 23, 2026

**The winners of the World Nature Photography Awards 2026 have been revealed – and the photos are out of this world!**

Thousands of entries were sent into the annual competition from photographers in 51 countries and six different continents.

They were judged on their techniques and skill and how well they captured the beauty, fragility and power of the natural world.

This year's top winner was Australian photographer Jono Allen, for his image of a rare white humpback whale. "To be announced World Nature Photographer of the Year through capturing this unique mother and calf bond has made what was already a truly life-changing encounter even more profound and humbling. I feel beyond honoured to receive this award."



World Nature Photographer of the Year Jono captured this picture of a baby humpback whale getting a cuddle from her mother.



Mary Schrader won gold in the Animal Portraits category for this picture of a female gorilla staring at a butterfly.



'Watch out below!' This snap taken by Vince Burton from the UK, won silver in the Behaviour – Birds category. It shows a Barn Owl swooping in whilst hunting at night. Just look at those talons!



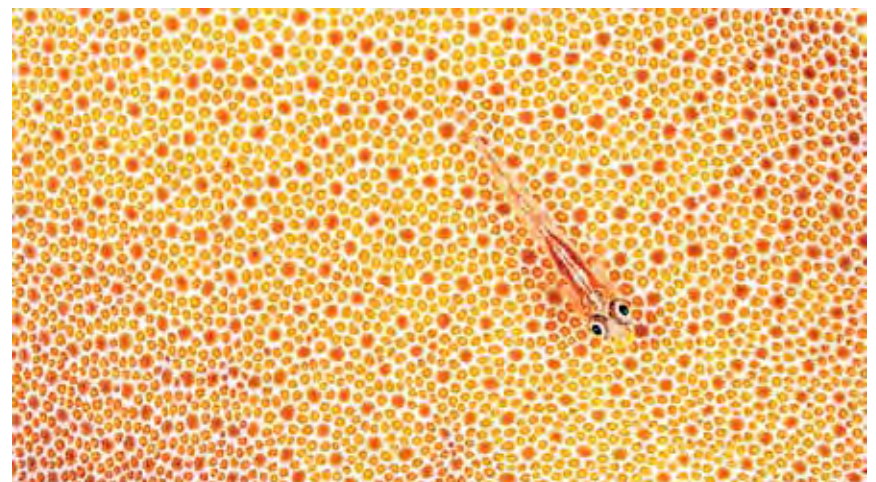
'A little to the left please!' This funny snap of a moose was captured by Deena Sveinsson from the US, who won gold in the People and Nature category.



This lovely picture called 'bear hug' won silver in the Behaviour – Mammals, category. It was taken by Michael Stavrakakis.



This Namaqua chameleon was captured by Dewald Tromp, battling against a sandstorm. The picture won gold in the Behaviour – Amphibians and Reptiles category.



This picture taken by Simon Biddie won gold in Nature Art category. If you look hard enough you can see a Ghost goby hiding on a reef!

Source : *CBBC Newsround*

**February 24**

# News in Pictures



**Kyiv, Ukraine**  
President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and First Lady, Olena Zelenska, meet troops in Independence Square after a ceremony to commemorate the fourth anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.



**Santarem, Brazil**  
Indigenous people celebrate after Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's government revoked Decree 12,600, which allowed plans to dredge the Tapajos River and expand rail transport of soy and corn for export markets, outside Cargill's Santarem terminal in Brazil.

**February 23**

**Nakhon Pathom, Thailand**  
People take pictures with blossoming Tabebuia rosea trees at Kasetsart University's Kamphaeng Saen Campus, in Nakhon Pathom province, Thailand.



**Puerto Vallarta, Mexico**  
Smoke billows from burning vehicles amid a wave of violence, with torched vehicles and gunmen blocking highways in more than half a dozen states, following a military operation in which a government source said Mexican drug lord Nemesio Oseguera, known as 'El Mencho', was killed, in Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco, Mexico.



**Buenos Aires, Argentina**  
A man poses for a picture with his dog in Buenos Aires, at a gathering of teenagers who identify as "Therians," a subculture whose members adopt animal characteristics.



**Khan Younis, Palestinian Territories**  
Children watch through the window above the graffiti reading, "Blessed month to you", as Palestinian Musaharatis beat drums and chant as they wake people up for a pre-sunrise meal during the holy month of Ramadan.



**Tokyo, Japan**  
Japan's Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako wave to well-wishers from a balcony at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, during a public appearance to mark the Emperor's 66<sup>th</sup> birthday.



**London, UK**  
Britain's William, Prince of Wales, and Catherine, Princess of Wales, arrive with Jane Millichip, CEO of the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) and Lord-Lieutenant of Greater London Ken Ollis to the BAFTA Film Awards 2026, at the Royal Festival Hall, Southbank Centre, in London.

**Los Angeles, USA**  
Cast member Jon Hamm attends the premiere of Disney-Pixar's 'Hoppers' at El Capitan Theatre in Los Angeles, California.



Sources: The Guardian & Reuters