Pakistan’s Khewra Mines are so large they have a mosque and electric railway inside!

The tourists here can literally, follow into the footsteps of Alexander the Great. P4-6

Cover Story
Salt of the earth

Lifestyle
Physical therapy could be better for low back pain: Study
Page 11

Reviews
Almodovar’s concept of self glows.
Page 14
**USEFUL NUMBERS**

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**PRAyER TiME**

- **Fajr**: 4.09am
- **Shorooq (sunrise)**: 5.27am
- **Zuhur (noon)**: 11.28am
- **Ajr (afternoon)**: 2.49pm
- **Maghreb (sunrise)**: 5.22pm
- **Isha (night)**: 6.52pm

**THEATRES**

- **The Rookies**
  - **DIRECTION**: Alan Yuen
  - **CAST**: Talu Wang, Sandrine Pinna, Timmy Xu
  - **SYNOPSIS**: Extreme sport lover Zhou Feng got involved in an international illegal trade by accident. So he had to follow an international special agent Bruce to Budapest. Together with a crappy police officer Miao Yan, a non-professional scientist Ding Shan and an unemployed doctor LV, they became an amateur unit. In company with the senior agent Bruce, these four rookies started a fight with the terrorists that is both thrilling and hilarious.
  - **THEATRES**: Landmark, The Mall

- **Prey**
  - **DIRECTION**: Franck Khalfoun
  - **CAST**: Joey Adalalian, Jolene Anderson, Vela Cluff
  - **SYNOPSIS**: Toby must survive an island retreat while a sinister force hunts him, leaving bodies in its wake. A troubled youth finds himself fighting for survival on a remote jungle island in Franck Khalfoun’s horror thriller.
  - **THEATRE**: The Mall

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**Quote Unquote**

“Pleasure in the job puts perfection in the work.”

– Aristotle

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**Community Editor**
Kamran Rehmat
**e-mail**: community@gulf-times.com
**Telephone**: 44466405
**Fax**: 44390474
**EVENTS**

**Ezdan Zoo at Ezdan Mall**  
WHERE: Ezdan Mall  
WHEN: Ongoing till tomorrow  
TIME: 6pm – 9pm  
Let’s Get Wild! Hop on over to Ezdan Mall Little Animal Zoo and experience adventurous Safari tours.

**Qatar International Art Festival 2019**  
WHERE: Katara Cultural Village  
WHEN: 30 October – 5 November  
TIME: 10am – 12pm  
The festival offers other benefits to participants, including the promotion of their work, interaction with print, electronic, digital, and social media, interaction with selected art collectors, art investors, and potential buyers. QIAF, one of the largest art fairs in the Middle East, will bring together buyers and sellers on a global scale.

**Let’s Get Wild! Hop on over to Ezdan Zoo at Ezdan Mall**  
TIME: 6pm — 9pm  
WHEN: Ongoing till tomorrow  
WHERE: Ezdan Mall  
Ezdan Zoo at Ezdan Mall

**Yoga Class**  
WHERE: Lululemon, Mall of Qatar  
WHEN: Every Saturday  
TIME: 8:30am – 9:30am  
The class runs on first come first served basis.

**Career Guidance**  
WHERE: Right Track Consultants, Al Sadd  
WHEN: Sunday – Thursday  
TIME: 6pm – 8pm  
Career guidance for course, country, college and entrance for students of Grade IX-XII, of all curriculum. Career assessments administered for stream preference, career test, branch preference, personality, multiple intelligence and learning styles and productivity. For more information, 55448835.

**Blood donation camp**  
WHERE: Labour City premises in Industrial Area, BOTC Clinic, Gate 8, Block II  
WHEN: Tomorrow  
TIME: 8am to 4pm  
Event is organised by Ethera Api Qatar and CCF Qatar. Blood donation is healthy and enhances the production of new red blood cells. It burns calories – one pint of blood (450 ml) when donated burns 650 calories in donor’s body. It also helps in fighting hemochromatosis – a genetic disease which may lead to organ damage. Blood donation reduces the chance of heart diseases, also it helps in reducing the chance of heart attack to one third.

**Photo Exhibition: ‘Experience Tanzania’**  
WHERE: Multaqa (Student Center) Art Gallery at Education City  
WHEN: October 8 until December 1  
TIME: 4pm  
‘Experience Tanzania’ is a yearly project supported by Student Affairs Division of Weill Cornell Medicine–Qatar that allows students and faculty to explore and immerse themselves in Tanzanian urban and rural cultures. During their trip, WCM-Q’s aspiring physicians offer basic healthcare services to the locals as a way of giving back to the community and learn about the lifestyles, traditions, socioeconomic hierarchies and health systems of the local Tanzanian communities. A collection of photographs of the wildlife, landscapes and people of Tanzania taken by WCM-Q professor Dr Dietrich Büsselfberg will be exhibited.

**Arabic Calligraphy Workshop**  
WHERE: HEC Paris Doha Campus  
WHEN: October 14 and 15  
TIME: 6pm  
The lessons will take place every Saturday, Monday and Wednesday at 6pm. For more information, contact registration@hec-doha.com

**Hobby Classes**  
WHERE: Mamangam Performing Art Centre  
WHEN: Saturday – Friday  
Mamangam is an art and performance centre started with a vision of spreading our knowledge, interests and experience in various disciplines in arts across different countries for children and adults. Mamangam has become the favourite centre for learning. We offer regular classes in the following disciplines like traditional classical and folk dance forms, art and craft, drawing and painting, personality development and public speaking, Bollywood dance, contemporary, hip hop styles, music both vocals and instrumentals. To develop health consciousness, we train them karate, yoga with special sessions for kids and adults. Mamangam has also come up with chess and robotics in regular batches in an attempt to give a better learning experience, as they sharpen their minds and brains too.

**Compiled by Nausheen Shaikh. E-mail: gtlisting@gmail.com. Events and timings subject to change.**

**COMMUNITY ROUND & ABOUT**
Pakistan salt wonder

- Mine history dates back to 320 BC, following its discovery by Alexander the Great’s troops
- World’s second largest salt mine has 18 working levels and 40 kilometres of tunnels
- The salt mines boast a mosque made from salt, an electric train and an asthma clinic

The Khewra Salt Mines, as they are called, are located about 160 kilometres south of Pakistani capital Islamabad, at the foothills of the Salt Range to the north of the Jhelum city of Pind Dadan Khan.

The mines are considered the oldest in the salt mining history of the subcontinent.

With 98 per cent purity, the salt production in 2018 was estimated at 389,134 tonnes per annum. Besides the revenue the production brings in, a handsome amount is earned via the 40,000-plus tourists which visit the site each month.

The mines are not only visited by locals but also by international tourists, bloggers and vloggers.

“For me the mines were an incredible experience. I have never seen such beautiful monuments made just from salt before. We get Himalayan rock salt in the UK, so to go and visit where it’s made was so much fun and I think this is particularly true for international visitors,” TV presenter and travel
blogger Alex Outhwaite said after a visit to the mines. She added that it was also interesting learning about the use of salt treatments for health as that was something not focused on in England.

Among the tourists, a large number of them are students from different schools, colleges and universities who enjoy visiting the site as well as see the mines firsthand after reading about them in books.

“It was absolutely strange for me when I entered the mines in an electric train and saw long tunnels made of salt. I have studied about them in my course books and did not think them so interesting and beautiful at the time. It is spectacular to see brightly coloured monuments made of red, yellow and pink salt,” said Bushra Ali, a university student who visited the mines with a group.

Walking inside the mines the visitors come across marvels such as a mosque, a model of Minar-e-Pakistan (a national monument in Lahore where the resolution for an independent state for Muslims of the Indian subcontinent was passed on March 23, 1940, and which led to the country’s creation seven years later), a dispensary, Chaghi mountain (in Balochistan province) and some other colourfull buildings all made up of salt bricks. The monuments glow with lights inside them.

“I enjoyed the beautiful glowing structures made of salt bricks but the best spot in the mines was Crystal Palace which was amazingly beautiful with salt crystals sparkling like diamonds all around. It was like a dream spot for me,” said Abeer Faazal, a visitor from Peshawar.

The dazzling Sheesh Mahal, or the Palace of Mirrors, is another attraction in the mines with walls made of transparent salt and water ponds illuminated with colourful bulbs. The illuminated ponds and chambers have been connected with bridges made of salt.

“When I entered Sheesh Mahal, I felt like I’ve entered some scenes of Alif Laila (fabled One Thousand and One Nights) drama series which I watched in my childhood,” said Ahmad Ali, another visitor from Lahore.

An enthralling pond with Christmas trees is another wonder designed in the mines.

“Room and pillar mining method is used to extract salt from the mines. The salt in Khewra is the best in the world which is found in three different colours, white, red and pink,” Fayaz Hussain, a tourist guide, explained.

Apart from high quality salt, Khewra is also famous for gypsum, limestone, lime clay, potash, coal and other minerals.

Local residents feel pride that they live near the world’s second largest salt mines that are also a famous tourist spot.

“We are happy to have the opportunity to see this geological wonder where thousands of tourists come,” Haji Zafar Ahmad Reehan, an 80-year-old resident of Khewra who is also a salt dealer, said, adding that tourism brought several benefits to the local residents including restaurant owners, shopkeepers, transporters and gift shop owners, who sell salt-made souvenirs.

According to official records, a total of 419,379 tourists visited the Khewra mines in the year 2018-19, including 488,628 Pakistani visitors and 2,411 international tourists.

“This year the inflow of tourists has seen over 20 per cent increase as compared to 2017-18. This is because of peace in the country and steps taken by the present government for the promotion of tourism,” said Abdul Hafiz, who is an office assistant in Khewra tourist resort run by the Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation.

However, tourism experts and tourists expressed concern over the dilapidated condition of the road from Lila interchange to Khewra town, saying that the government should ensure the provision of facilities for tourists.

“In the past, a special train was started from Rawal Pindi to Khewra mines with stops in Lala Musa and Malak Khel. The train would arrive in Khewra at 11am and depart at 4pm for Rawalpindi daily. It was a good initiative by the government as large number of tourists used it but unfortunately, this government stopped the train,” said Mumir Ahmad a local resident of Khewra, and expressed the hope that it would resume the operation of the train.

Cleanliness is another issue. Tourist guide Hussain complained that visitors did not care about cleanliness and threw trash and plastic bottles everywhere.

“Look at the plastic bottles in the ponds, they have been thrown by the visitors. Sometimes visitors make loud noises as well which is also not good,” he said. — Internews

Continued to Page 6
In 326 BC, Alexander the Great, the Greek King famous for conquering an empire ranging from Asia into Africa and Europe, was making his way across Pakistan. Stopping his army for a rest in the area now known as Khewra, Alexander’s horse began licking the stones on the ground. Seeing that all the horses were doing so and taking note, a soldier himself tried one and found that the rocks were quite salty. The Khewra salt deposits had been discovered.

Today, some 2330 years later, the Khewra salt mines are the second largest in the world — behind the Sifto Canada, Inc., salt mine in Goderich, Ontario — turning out 325,000 tons of salt per year, and an estimated 220 million tons over its lifetime. This is barely even a dent in the massive salt stores here, which are said to be 6.687 billion tons. Officially, salt mining wasn’t recorded until the 1200s under the Janjua-Raja’ tribe, but salt has probably been mined and traded here since Alexander’s time.

Covering an area of 110 sq. km, 228 meters or 748 feet deep (with 18 separate stories), the massive mine has over 40 kilometres of tunnels running some 730 metres, or nearly half a mile into the mountain under which the salt deposits are found. To keep the huge space from collapsing in on itself, only fifty percent of the salt found is mined; the other half serves as support columns to hold up the mine. With such a massive area, a large workforce, and the ease of carving and building with salt bricks, some interesting sights have been built within the salt mine. — Atlas Obscura

WORKS OF ART: Glowing souvenirs made of pure Khewra salt on display for sale.

Continued from Page 5

HISTORY: Khewra Mines at a glance

In 326 BC, Alexander the Great, the Greek King famous for conquering an empire ranging from Asia into Africa and Europe, was making his way across Pakistan. Stopping his army for a rest in the area now known as Khewra, Alexander’s horse began licking the stones on the ground. Seeing that all the horses were doing so and taking note, a soldier himself tried one and found that the rocks were quite salty. The Khewra salt deposits had been discovered.

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LABOUR OF LOVE: Labourers load a truck with salt rocks in Khewra.
Community

NAKIS holds investiture ceremony for new student council

The investiture ceremony for Noor Al Khaleej International School (NAKIS) was held with enthusiasm recently. The ceremony began with the recitation of the Holy Qur’an followed by an address by the principal of the school. In her address, the principal congratulated the new members of the student council and encouraged them to be responsible role models of the student community. Members of the newly elected student council received their badges from Hamad al-Sulaiti, Director of NAKIS, the principal and the head teacher.

In the presence of the students, staff and parents, the oath taking ceremony was led by Head Boy Majed Bader al Naama who also addressed the gathering.

He shared his thrilling experience in the space with the visiting students. The team also visited prominent places like New York, Washington DC, Niagara Falls, Universal Studios and Disney World among other places.

IIS students visit NASA on educational trip

A group of 128 students from Ideal Indian School (IIS) recently visited NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) USA as part of a special educational trip. The students took part in a three-day space training programme at Kennedy Space Centre at Orlando where they also attended ‘Space Trek Rocketry’ workshop and learnt the fundamentals of rocket design, theoretical and experimental data collection and data analysis. They also had an interactive session and lunch with astronaut Fred Gregory who is a veteran of space missions aboard the Space Shuttle.

PISQ hosts session on ‘The Value of Historical Research’

A lecture on ‘The Value of Historical Research’ was recently held for intermediate students of Senior Girls’ Wing at Pakistan International School Qatar (PISQ). The session was held to provide the students with the opportunity to get information about the value of historical research.

The session was conducted by Dr Muhammad Reza Pirbhai. He is an educationist and associate professor of history. Reza is currently working at George Town University. He has authored several books including, Fatima Jinnah, Mother of Nation and Reconsidering Islam in a South Asian Context.

Addressing the students, the resource person discussed the importance of history as a subject and its effect on present developments.

He laid emphasis on the role of a common man in history and the positive and constructive role of and individual in society. He further said that critical thinking, communication and decision making are key skills to attain success in life. An interactive question and answer session was also held towards the end of the programme. The students showed great interest and found the session fruitful for their career planning. Nargis Raza Otho, Principal of PISQ thanked Reza Pirbhai for conducting the purposeful session.

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Friends Circle Malappuram, a forum of expatriates from Malappuram district of Kerala, recently elected new office bearers for the next term. The new representatives are namely: Shuaib Mechery, president; Firoz Kozhissery, general secretary; and Salil Mannil Thodi, treasurer. The election was held during a function organised at Abu Hamour Dar Al Salam Mall. The event was attended by the presidents of the associate organisations namely, Bidya Mohanty (Uttarkhand association) and Neelambari Savardekar (Maharashtra Mandal Qatar). Manikandan AP (ICC President), welcomed the gathering. The event was co-ordinated and conducted by Nayana Wagh, head of cultural activity & education ICC. Nirmala Shanmughan, cultural co-ordinator for ICC, presented the vote of thanks.

Friends Circle Malappuram (PBA), a well-known sociocultural organisation of Pakistanis working in different companies of MIC (Mesaieed Industrial City), recently celebrated Pakistan’s independence and defence days at Al Banush Club, Mesaieed. More than 600 Pakistanis and their families from Mesaieed, Al Khor, Dukhan and Doha attended the event. Hafiz Junaid Amir Sial, Community Welfare attaché, Embassy of Pakistan, was the chief guest while Khalid Mohammad Abdullah, Supply Chain Manager of Qafco, was the guest of honour. Souvenirs from PBA were presented to Nabila Kaukab, Principal Pak Shamaa School, Mala Waseem, Visual Artist, and Samia Tayyab, FM107 radio announcer and producer RJ, to recognise their valuable services in the related fields. Different events were arranged including students tableaus, Qatar/Pakistan national songs, speeches, comedy shows, different games among couples at stage, singing and bait-bazi and colour competition. Many gifts were also distributed through lucky draws. At the end a beautiful Jhoomer, a cultural dance, was performed by PBA team.

Indian Cultural Centre (ICC) along with Millennium Kids, Birla Public School and Rajagiri Public School Qatar recently conducted Folk Dance Fest at the Ashoka Hall in the ICC premises. The programme was attended by about 200 enthusiastic people. Millennium Kids, an associate organisation of ICC presented Kerala folk song along with Kolattam and a semi-classical fusion dance Agiri Nandini. Students of Rajagiri Public School performed theme-based folk dance on Orum – the festival of prosperity, joy and happiness. Birla Public School presented national and couple of modern song with fusion along with folk dances in different forms including Arabic folk dance. The programme was a continuation of the initiative by ICC along with all ICC associate organisations, Indian schools and Indian cultural institutions in Qatar, to have cultural shows every week. The event was attended by the presidents of the associate organisations namely, Bidya Mohanty (Uttarkhand association) and Neelambari Savardekar (Maharashtra Mandal Qatar). Manikandan AP (ICC President), welcomed the gathering. The event was co-ordinated and conducted by Nayana Wagh, head of cultural activity & education ICC. Nirmala Shanmughan, cultural co-ordinator for ICC, presented the vote of thanks.
Doha-based Indian writer publishes new novel Kendran

Kendran, a novel in English, by Dr Sabu KC has recently been published by Don Books, Kottayam and is being distributed by National Book Stall, Kottayam, Kerala. The book traces the changes in the lives of the people that took place due to the advent of industries, technological innovations, trade and commerce over many years in Thirkkarakara in Kannayoor Taluk of Ernakulam district, in the Indian State of Kerala.

Anil Kumar Vijayan and Lippy Sabu edited the book. Suresh Kumar did the illustrations, while Anil Vega designed the cover. A review of the book was written by Professor Sunny Tharappan.

Dr Sabu KC, son of KV Chackappan and Mariamma Chackappan, hails from Kangarapady near Thirkkarakara in Ernakulam district of Kerala. His family comprises wife Lippy Sabu, teacher at Ideal Indian School, Doha and daughters Arunima Sabu, Ananya Sabu and Arya Sabu.

Sabu has holds a Masters in Sociology, Masters and Doctorate in Education as well as a postgraduate diploma in Human Resource Management. He has served as a lecturer in India and an Assistant Professor of Education in Bahrain. He also worked with various research and social development projects in different States of India. Sabu was the sub-editor of Central Chronicle newspaper in India. He was the Principal of Noble International Indian School in Doha. Currently Dr Sabu is working with Gulf Times.

The novel takes the reader to the second half of the twentieth century with its mainstay of sequential developments that were happening in the society – whether it’s the appearance of a cycle in a remote village in Kanayannur or the arrival of the four wheelers, either to travel or to carry loads on the muddy roads. Dr Sabu brings up some of the finer aspects of the type of people who lived in Kerala in the second half of the twentieth century in his book and incidentally brings up the pictures of the places that these people lived. There is an intelligent dealing with the plot that the book adopts.

The author takes away readers outside Kerala and brings in a wider aspect of the life of a character who migrated to Karnataka sometime in the first part of the second half of the twentieth century. This part of the novel brings to the readers the courageous and hardworking nature of the Malayalee and how they overpowered nature and other humans in different places.

Talking about the book, Sunny Tharappan writes; “Kendran, rather intrinsically, challenges the reader to lead to intellectual translation. The author’s imagination does not run wild into areas that are unknown or that are newly discovered, instead, he takes the reader through the smaller annals of historic developments that had happened in a small place like Kanayannur, unavoidable to remember, that such developments would have happened in different parts of the state of Kerala. His imagination allows him to put his hands on the shoulders of the reader and stand there; sometime face to face and some other times whispering into the reader’s ears; and stand there assuring the reader that what the writer presents before him is genuine, believable and worthy of being observed. There are no subversions that would shock the reader. In fact, the author and the reader run together towards the close of the story. The imaginative input throughout the story is provided with very little of unnecessary”

He further adds; “One of the finest aspects of the novel is the use of language in its narration. There is a natural flow in the use of the language, especially because it is devoid of any pompous show of words so as to impress, and that use helps the reader understand the sequence of events, apart from getting a glimpse of different spectacles of life in the village. The finest in the use of language is a creation of word pictures. The painting of the pictures is done in such a way that it is difficult for any reader to be dissatisfied with the position, the posture, the shape, the colour and the movements of different spectacles that are painted through words in the minds of readers.

The descriptions of incidents, events and episodes also provide the reader with clarity of what happens between and among characters that create the story and the descriptions of the time and place also go well with those spectacles that are to be noted by the reader.”

The author uses some of the Malayalam words, refers to volley ball game, temporary circus, the making of a cinema theatre, the players of card games, the advent of the radio, the village provision shop, the farmers who visit the village centre, the bullock carts, the cycle and the lorry that transports goods; different types of songs, and more than anything else, the type of life that villagers lead are all brought to the reader in different pictures. For the advantage of readers that are not familiar with Malayalam, Dr Sabu has included a glossary with the translation of Malayalam words into English. Kendran is available for purchase on Amazon.

GQA organises first carrom tournament

Goan Qatar Association (GQA) successfully organised its first carrom tournament during 26th and 27th September, 2019.

The primary intent of the tournament was to facilitate the convergence of carrom players in Doha and grant them a portal where they could perform and exhibit their skills, besides getting to know each other as players with a common passion. More than 40 players participated in the two categories (singles and doubles) to claim the coveted title.

A majority of the participants attended the pre-tournament meet wherein game rules were explained and the draws were conducted in the presence of all; including referees and match officials to ensure fairness and transparency.

The tournament kicked off on Thursday at 6:00pm with the singles category, featuring 26 players and four boards. Priya Pereira, General Secretary, hosted the ceremony.

Adrian Gomes, Sports Secretary delivered the welcome speech and encouraged the participants to maintain the spirit of sportsmanship and decorum during the tournament. Lucy Fernandes and Khalil Khan made the first strike and officially declared the tournament open. Thereafter, the referees and scorekeepers took up their respective positions and the games kicked off. One could feel the excitement and the pressure of the participants. The silence was occasionally broken by the cheers of the observers and the striking away of the coins. It was surprising to see some players busy strategising to optimise their performance, which is typically a trait of advanced levels.

The discipline, order and decorum was maintained at all times during the games which extended into the wee hours of the morning. All players did really well but the strongest ones emerged as finalists by the end of Day 1.

On Day 2, the games started at 5:30pm with the men’s doubles. There were 11 teams participating. After a few hours of high intense matches, we had our finalists for the doubles as well. A tense silence descended in the room as the finalists in both categories sweated it out to attain victory.

The stage was set for the finalists in the men’s singles – Abdul Salam and Abdul Sattar who were well matched and gave each other a tough competition, however in the end Abdul Salam emerged the Champion with his exceptional display of skill, focus and power.

The finals for the men’s doubles soon followed and the teams fighting for the championship were Madmat Khalifa (Abdul Salam & Mohideen), who were ultimately crowned champions and Diwan Strikers (Zeeshan & Aria), who were the Runners Up. Renowned International Carrom Referee – Imitiaz umpired the finals.

The prize distribution followed and winners were awarded with trophies, certificates and gift vouchers. Vote of thanks was delivered by Joelie Fernandes – Head of Social Events. The President of GQA – Anthea Fernandes, once again thanked all the participants for being such wonderful sportsmen and for the tremendous support provided to GQA in promoting the game of carrom in Qatar.

Lastly, she formally declared open – GQA’s second annual ‘3-A-side Penalty Shoot-out’ for men and ladies to be held on Friday, 18th October 2019 at Al Markhiya Football Stadium. Interested players can contact the GQA Committee for more information.
What cyclists do inside the pack

The tight pack of racing cyclists – the “peloton” – gives riders an aerodynamic advantage and conserves their energy, but research found the main benefit is visual.

Riding close together helps riders’ visually

Maximizing vision is the main factor in the formation and shape of a peloton, new research found.

1. The peloton emerges during a race with cyclists aligned 30 degrees to the right or left of the rider ahead.

2. As the race speeds up and riders’ heart rate increases, their field of vision narrows – a natural physical reaction.

3. This decreases their field of vision, which causes a steady stretching out of the peloton.

Close visual contact with each other lets fish in a school, birds in a flying flock – and cyclists in a peloton – move as a group to avoid hazards.

Aerodynamics in the peloton

“Drafting” the rider ahead reduces air resistance. However, aerial images show that riders don’t generally align in optimal aerodynamic drafting positions.

Source: Tadd Truscott of Utah State University; Jesse Belden of the U.S. Naval Undersea Warfare Center; Baylor University, VeloCam Services and Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Journal of the Royal Society Interface; TNS Photos

Graphic: Helen Lee McComas, Tribune News Service
Physical therapy could be better for low back pain: Study

Patients who first saw a physical therapist for low back pain, rather than a primary care physician (PCP), were much less likely to be prescribed opioids, says a study. “To reduce the risks of short- and long-term opioid use, insurers should incentivise patients to see physical therapists or chiropractors first following a bout of low back pain, before seeing a PCP,” said study lead author Lewis Kazis, Professor at Boston University in the USA.

For the research, the team looked at commercial insurance and Medicare Advantage claims data from the Optum Labs database for 216,504 adults who were diagnosed with new-onset low back pain between 2008 and 2013 and had not been prescribed opioids before.

For the analysis, the researchers controlled as many socio-demographic, geographical, and medical history factors as they could get from the insurance claims data. According to the study, published in BMJ Open, patients who first saw a PCP for low back pain were 79 per cent more likely to use prescription opioids than patients who first visited a chiropractor and 71 per cent more likely than those who first went to a physical therapist.

The researchers also found patients in states with provisional or unrestricted access to physical therapy were much more likely to see a physical therapist first than patients in states with limited physical therapy access. – IANS

Aries
March 21 – April 19

Today you’ve decided to change things around you, Aries. You’re about to make radical changes to your life. You feel that you’re almost invulnerable, that nothing can resist you. You’re going to go beyond your boundaries even if it means that you might be forgetting your friends for a while. Carpe diem.

Taurus
April 20 – May 20

Taurus, you will have the opportunity to set the record straight with some of your relatives. Sometimes some of them take advantage of your kindness, and you serve without even a thought for yourself. The day will be stressful and you may be irritable. Try to use the day to your advantage and get your life back in order.

Gemini
May 21 – June 20

Your philanthropic side is fading. You’re used to thinking about others before thinking about yourself, but today, things are about to change. Indeed, you fascinate those around you. You’ve found a new freedom. It seems that you’re liberated from your old self and totally fulfilled.

Cancer
June 21 – July 22

Haven’t you wondered how it would feel to be omniscient, Cancer? Well, today you’re about to have this experience. You will have the energy of ten. People will come to you and ask for your guidance. You will easily find the solutions to their problems. Today the world belongs to you.

Leo
July 23 – August 22

Today could provide an interesting opportunity to show your assets in a professional setting. People will be impressed by your personality and may even offer you a new job or exciting business proposal. You won’t be able to turn down the proposition and you will feel totally free and satisfied.

Virgo
August 23 – September 22

Today you may have to commit to some values close to your heart, Virgo. As a child, you were aware of the role you had to play in society. You were greatly concerned about others. Today you will probably be asking yourself if you should get involved and make decisions in the general interest.

Libra
September 23 – October 22

You may feel your life is full of uninteresting people. You think they’re all alike and fit perfectly within a conservative society. You don’t want to be like them and would prefer to meet unusual individuals, people who differ from the crowd. They aren’t too far away. You just need to make an effort to look for them.

Scorpio
October 23 – November 21

You might think you’re the most intelligent person in the world. You hover over the notions that bind us. You’re transformed into an artist who’s able to have great ideas. Remember that geniuses always think big. Today you’re one of them. Your ideas could help others.

Sagittarius
November 22 – December 21

Everybody knows that you’re very strong willed. You’re always had a very active disposition. You have the ability to mount all obstacles and soak up all the energy that comes to your aid. It seems that today your strength could be reinforced by some people you meet or by your group of friends, Sagittarius.

Capricorn
December 22 – January 19

Your family life will give you a lot of work today. Some of your relatives may express a desire for independence and some might even try to rebel. If you don’t want to lose your cool, Capricorn, you should try to step away from all the excitement. It shouldn’t be too difficult for you to succeed.

Aquarius
January 20 – February 18

You aren’t the kind of person who likes to lead an ordinary life. You aren’t afraid of the unknown. You like to open up to new worlds and cultures. You sometimes feel willing to change your whole life. Aquarius, to your great satisfaction, today you will probably experience unusual events that could lead your life in new directions.

Pisces
February 19 – March 20

You shouldn’t try to stay alone today, Pisces. Once in a while you need to spend some time alone to ponder your life, to dream and wish for better things to come. But today you could meet someone who will take you places you aren’t accustomed to going. Try to stay available in order to seize this opportunity.
Wordsearch

Every letter of the alphabet is used at least once. Squares with the same number in have the same letter in. Work out which number represents which letter.

Codeword

Sudoku

Bound And Gagged
Super Cryptic Clues

Across
1. Crazy night fliers (4)
3. Pitiful epic that is translated (8)
9. Time to hold on for a good (7)
10. Gun fired initially in anger (5)
11. French sea, Italian desert (5)
12. Pressed for De Niro production (5)
14. Article sketched for patron saint (6)
16. The rest of Spain? (5)
19. Composer about to jump aboard (6)
21. One who gives a fellow gold (5)
24. Smart king or little bird (5)
25. Boat taking 500 in choppy lagoon (7)
26. Wind round one with defective hearing? (8)
27. Some other Easter present (4)

Down
1. Unconventional Czech (8)
2. Singer taking part in Britten oratorio (5)
4. Attack when provided with canvas (6)
5. Spear dropped on Marx (5)
6. Beginning to talk of payments for sweets (7)
7. Sign on staff, almost split (4)
8. Brand may be heard making a sound (6)
13. Bearing the cost of sending goods (8)
15. Flowers Lisa had arranged (7)
17. Medicament required when one has duck to eat? (6)
18. Confused in game or puzzle (6)
20. Satisfactory in each game (5)
22. Putting one’s head in this may make one so wretched (5)
23. Despicable people in dirty film? (4)

Today’s Solutions

Wordsearch

Codeword
Almodovar’s concept of self glows

By Katie Walsh

There are layers upon layers of intertextual storytelling of the self in Pedro Almodóvar’s meta memoir Pain and Glory. The actor synonymous with Almodóvar, Antonio Banderas, portrays a character that is some version of Almodóvar himself as a wild-haired Spanish film director, Salvador Mallo. It’s a film about reconciling every version of oneself, and the ways in which life has a magical way of forcing that to happen.

Pain and Glory is about emotional pain, but physical pain too, the fears and anxieties that manifest physically and the fear and anxiety pain brings up. Beset with back pain, the ailing Salvador hasn’t directed a film in years while recovering from a lumbar fusion surgery and the loss of his beloved mother. But as a legend in Spanish cinema, he’s fêted at screenings of his older films. One such film, Los Angeles Times

Minimal story, maximum impact

By Kenneth Turan

A small gem of focused filmmaking, Aga tells a minimal story so beautifully it holds us completely.

Directed with great skill by Bulgaria’s Milko Lazarov and stunningly photographed by Kaloyan Bozhilov, Aga plays for all we can see like a classic ethnographic documentary set in the Siberian far north of Russia’s Sakha republic. But though the characters speak the local Yakut language, what this film turns out to be is a carefully constructed parable that draws us into a made-up life as if it was the real thing.

What is real are the stunning vistas of winter in this dauntingly frigid part of the world, a frozen vastness that is mesmerising and poetic in its almost complete emptiness.

Living in this environment, as they have all their lives, are gray-haired Nanook (Mikhail Aprosimov) and Sedna (Fedosia Ivanova), as close and companionable as two halves of a couple can be.

If you recognize the name Nanook, you know that one of the inspirations for the script by director Lazarov and Simeon Ventislavov is Robert Flaherty’s landmark 1922 ethnographic documentary Nanook of the North.

Like that film, Lazarov follows his furry-clad Nanook through the tasks of daily life, watching as he sets and works in one of Sakha’s cities.

This is especially hard on the couple because one of the themes of Aga is the importance of family and community, and sadness at the way those ties are breaking down. As Nanook says at one point, “Legs are like family: One can’t do without the other.”

Though Aga’s story eventually takes some dramatic turns, what makes the biggest impact is not the plot points but the evocative visualisation of a way of life that, filmmaker Lazarov admits, is more true to the spirit of the Yakut than any specific activities.

No matter what its origin, the unforgettable thing about Aga is the way it beautifully shot and impeccably composed images hold us, both the epic outdoor shots and the warm intimate moments inside. Quiet and unobtrusive, this is a film that knows how to make an impression, and it does.

— Los Angeles Times/TNS
Guidelines of the Contest:

Following the given mood board/theme board, participants need to design any two unisex sample of a T-shirt for a sporting event.

Eligibility to Apply:
1. Grade-X pass students.
2. Each participant is only allowed a submission of two designs.
3. Designs should be strictly hand sketched and coloured.
4. Strict plagiarism rules apply. Any inspired/plagiarised design can lead to the disqualification of the contestant.
5. No digital designs would be accepted.
6. Each sketch should be submitted in standard A4 size, should be drawn with standard HB pencil/black marker and can be coloured in any medium. The sketch should include other details, including fabric options, colour options, trims options etc.
7. Any embroidery or other surface technique on T-shirt should be sketched separately along with the T-shirt design in order to understand the participant’s concept.

Judging criteria:
The final judgement will be based on the following criteria. Each contains 25 marks.
1. Concept
2. Creativity
3. Design Details
4. Product Feasibility

About the Mood Board:

From historic era to the present day fashion trends, the visuals in the theme board highlight Qatar’s architecture to its glitz-glam ever changing fashion trends and colours. What’s new? What’s classic? And is everything collaborating and coming back together? We leave it to you, to your perception and view of fashion in Qatar.
US embassy goes pink to promote cancer screening in October

By Mudassir Raja

US Chargé d’Affaires William Grant and Dr Salih al-Marr, Assistant Minister of Health Affairs at the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) illuminated the embassy building in pink in honour of breast cancer awareness month and to raise awareness about how early detection of all cancer types can save lives. The embassy will be illuminated pink throughout the month of October.

According to the Ministry of Public Health, breast cancer is by far the most common cancer in Qatar, accounting for 40 percent of cancer cases in women. Breast cancer is the second leading cause of death in women, worldwide. One in eight women in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime.

Speaking on the occasion, William Grant said: “Cancer can be beaten. Early detection through screening is critical. That is why the US Embassy in Qatar is proud to join the Ministry of Public Health and other Qatari partners to raise awareness about breast cancer and all cancers during the month of October. We encourage people to know and understand breast cancer symptoms and see their healthcare provider for early screening tests.”

“This month we also celebrate survivors of the cancer – there are more than 3.5 million survivors of breast cancer in the US alone.”

Talking to Community, William Grant said: “We all know that pink is the colour that represents breast cancer awareness in October. It is very popular in the US and you see various signs of pink colour everywhere. In Qatar, we decided to do this because we are in a busy street and we know that the people will notice.

“With this idea, we want to convey the message of the Ministry of Public Health that cancer can be cured. People need to know about the danger signs of different kinds of cancers. They need to get screening done where it is available for all types of cancer. If you do that, you can prevent the worst impact of the cancer. The message is ‘screen for life.’ That is the message we are promoting through illumination of the embassy.”

Responding to a question about co-operation between Qatar and US in the healthcare sector, William Grant said: “We have a lot of co-operation with the Ministry of Public Health. The minister is in the US right now and she will have lots of meetings with government officials. Even more important is the connection between various hospitals and health institutions in US and Qatar. They have the expertise. We have the institutes that have very good experience and they share the experience with Qatar.”

“At the Ministry of Public Health, we are delighted to have the US Embassy participate with us in the cancer awareness campaign,” said Dr Salih Ali al-Marr. He pointed out that the Ministry of Public Health, the health sector institutions, and many other partners are organising a public awareness campaign throughout the month of October to raise awareness of breast cancer and highlight the importance of early screening.

All women in Qatar aged 45 years and above are encouraged to get screened for breast cancer, noting that since the launch of the programme in February 2016 through August 2019, over 30,000 women were screened for breast cancer.

Dr al-Marr also stressed the important role the survivors of cancer play in raising awareness of breast cancer, as evidenced by the statistics of the National Cancer Registry which indicate that survival rates have increased relatively in recent years reaching almost 90%.

He encouraged women to adopt a healthy lifestyle, be aware of the signs and symptoms of breast cancer, undergo breast cancer checkups regularly and book for mammography screening annually.

The US embassy staff will participate in a number of events throughout the month of #Pinktober to raise awareness about various cancers, including breast cancer. William Grant will be tweeting throughout October about activities in Qatar on his handle @ USAmbQatar.

“We want to convey the message of the Ministry of Public Health that cancer can be cured. People need to know about the danger signs of different kinds of cancers. They need to get screening done where it is available for all types of cancer. If you do that, you can prevent the worst impact of the cancer. The message is ‘screen for life.’ That is the message we are promoting through illumination of the embassy.”

— William Grant, US Charge d’Affaires

GROUP: Dr Mohamed bin Hamad al-Thani, Director of Public Health Department at the Ministry of Public Health, US Chargé d’Affaires William Grant, Dr Salih al-Marri, Assistant Minister of Health Affairs at the Ministry of Public Health, Dr Khaid bin Jabor al-Thani, chairman of Qatar Cancer Society, Yahya Hamad, Protocol officer at Ministry of Health.