Wealth is health!
Healthcare industry spends $30 billion a year pushing its wares, from drugs to stem cell treatment. P2-3

Cuisine
Moong dal halwa, an auspicious dessert.
Page 6

Showbiz
Proud to have directed Petta: Karthik Subbaraj.
Page 15
Health at a price!

Consumer advocates say that taxpayers pay the real price, as seductive ads persuade doctors and patients alike to order pricey tests and brand-name pills, writes Liz Szabo

“Better a diamond with a flaw than a pebble without.”
— Confucius

Quote Unquote

SALES PITCH: Sophisticated campaigns make people worry about diseases they don’t have and ask for drugs or exams they don’t need.

Marketing drives more testing. It drives more treatments. It’s a big part of why healthcare is so expensive, because it’s the fancy, high-tech stuff things that get marketed.

— Steven Woloshin, healthcare specialist

Community Editor
Kamran Rehmat
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Fax: 44350474
In recent months, the FDA has issued warnings to clinics marketing unapproved stem cell therapies. Medical advertising today goes beyond TV and radio commercials. Some online campaigns encourage patients to diagnose themselves.

Whenever pharma or a hospital spends money on advertising, we the patients pay for it—through higher prices for drugs and hospital services.

Shannon Brownlee, advocacy specialist

The website for Restasis, which treats dry eyes, prompts patients to take a quiz to learn if they need the prescription eye drops, said Woloshin, who co-wrote a February study with Schwartz on the drug’s marketing strategy. The Restasis website also allows patients to “find an eye doctor near you.”

Many of the doctors included in the Restasis directory have taken gifts from its manufacturer, Allergan, Woloshin said. The doctor directory includes seven of the top 10 physicians paid by the company, his study says.

In a statement, Allergan spokeswoman Amy Rose said the company uses direct-to-consumer advertising “to support responsible disease awareness efforts.” The ads “do not displace the patient-physician relationship, but enhance them, helping to create well-informed and empowered consumer and patient communities.”

Drug sites don’t just lead patients to doctors. They also provide scripts for suggested home remedies. For example, the website for Viagra, which treats erectile dysfunction, provides specific questions for patients to ask.

The website for Addyi, often called the “female Viagra,” goes even further. Patients who answer a number of medical questions online are offered a 10- to 15-minute phone consultation about the drug for $40. Patients who don’t immediately book an appointment receive an e-mail reminder a few minutes later.

“This is more evidence,” Brownlee said, “that drug companies are not run by dummies.”

— Kaiser Health News
Poor sleep may predict Alzheimer’s risk in elderly

Poor sleep quality may signal the risk of Alzheimer’s disease in older adults, a study suggests.

People with Alzheimer’s tend to wake up tired and their nights become even less refreshing as memory loss and other symptoms worsen. However, the reason was not fully understood. The study, led by the Washington University in St. Louis found that older adults who sleep poorly or have less slow-wave sleep, deep sleep needed to consolidate memories and wake up feeling refreshed, have higher levels of tau, a toxic brain protein.

“Measuring how people sleep may be a non-invasive way to screen for Alzheimer’s disease before or just as people begin to develop problems with memory and thinking,” said lead author Brendan Lucey, Assistant Professor from the varsity.

Moreover, the findings, published in the journal Science Translational Medicine, showed that it was not the total amount of sleep that was linked to tau, but the slow-wave sleep, which reflects quality of sleep.

People with increased tau pathology were actually sleeping more at night and napping more in the day, but they weren’t getting as good quality sleep.

“What’s interesting is that we saw this inverse relationship between decreased slow-wave sleep and more tau protein in people who were either cognitively normal or very mildly impaired, meaning that reduced slow-wave activity may be a marker for the transition between normal and impaired,” Lucey added.

For the study, the team studied 119 people aged 60 or older among which almost 80 per cent were cognitively normal and the remainder were very mildly impaired.

Up to two decades before Alzheimer’s symptoms of memory loss and confusion appear, amyloid beta protein begins to collect into plaques in the brain. Tangles of tau appear later, followed by decline of key brain areas. Only then do people start showing unmistakable signs of cognitive decline.

The challenge is finding people on track to develop Alzheimer’s before such brain changes undermine their ability to think clearly. For that, sleep may be a handy marker, the researchers said. – IANS

How heart attack, stroke affect income

People who have experienced a heart attack, stroke or cardiac arrest are significantly less likely to be working or have lower incomes on average than healthy people, finds a new study.

Cardiovascular disease and stroke are the most common causes of death worldwide where one-third of heart attacks, 25 percent of strokes and 40 percent of cardiac arrests occur in people of working age, under 65.

The reduced ability to work and earn income in survivors of acute health events could be due to lasting reductions in functional status and quality of life.

The findings showed that acute myocardial infarction (MI), cardiac arrest and stroke all resulted in substantial loss in employment and earnings that persisted for at least three years after the events.

The loss in earnings was substantial, with reductions ranging from eight per cent to 31 per cent.

In addition, even if people were able to work, their incomes in the third year after the event were five to 20 per cent less than before.

These outcomes have consequences for patients, families, employers and governments, showed the results, published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal. “Unemployment and lost earning owing to common health events have broad societal relevance, with consequences for patients, families and governments, such as bankruptcy, worsening health and lost productivity,” said Allan Garland, Professor at the University of Manitoba in Canada.

For the study, the team evaluated the effect of these conditions on the labour market and compared the outcomes of 19,129 participants aged 40 to 61 years who were working before their event with controls who had not experienced a stroke or cardiac event.

The study will help in developing interventions and policies to support people to return to work, although more research is needed, the team said. – IANS

Irregular fasting can help in weight loss, boost health

Are you obese and worried about your excess weight? Take heart. New research suggests that with irregular fasting and a strictly controlled diet, you can lose more weight and improve your health too.

The study showed that women who fasted intermittently as well as restricted their food improved their health more than those who only restricted their diet or only fasted intermittently.

Obese women who followed a diet in which they ate 70 percent of their required energy intake and fasted intermittently lost the most weight.

"Continuously restricting their diet is the main way that obese women try to tackle their weight," said lead author Amy Hutchison, from the University of Adelaide in Australia.

"This study is adding to evidence that intermittent fasting, at least in the short term, may provide better outcomes than daily continuous diet restriction for health and potentially for weight loss," added Leonie Heilbronn, Associate Professor at the varsity.

By adhering to a strict pattern of intermittent fasting and dieting, obese women have achieved significant weight loss and improvements in their health such as decreased markers for heart disease, said the paper, published in the journal Obesity.

For the study, the researchers involved nearly 100 women aged between 35 and 70 who were overweight or obese. They followed a typical Australian diet consisting of 35 per cent fat, 35 per cent protein and 50 per cent carbohydrate over 10 weeks.

Participants who fasted intermittently ate breakfast and then refrained from eating for 24 hours followed by 24 hours of eating. The following day they fasted again.

"While the study confirms that intermittent fasting is more effective than continuous diet restriction, the underlying signal for limiting people’s appetite, which could hold the key to triggering effective weight loss, requires further research," Heilbronn noted. – IANS

KEY: Intermitent fasting is more effective than continuous diet restriction, the underlying signal for limiting people’s appetite, which could hold the key to triggering effective weight loss.
Does your dental floss contain toxic chemicals?

Using dental floss could contribute to elevated levels of toxic chemicals that can lead to health problems, especially in women, including kidney and testicular cancer, high cholesterol, low birth weight, among others, says a study led by US-based Silent Spring Institute.

The findings, appearing in the *Journal of Exposure Science and Environmental Epidemiology* (JESEE), showed that women who flossed tended to have higher levels of a type of PFAS called PFHxS (perfluorohexanesulfonic acid) in their body compared with those who did not.

“This is the first study to show that using dental floss containing PFAS is associated with a higher body burden of these toxic chemicals,” said lead author Katie Boronow, a scientist at the institute.

“The good news is, based on our findings, consumers can choose flosses that don’t contain PFAS,” she added.

Further, the team also tested 18 dental flosses (including three Glide products) for the presence of fluoxetine, a marker of PFAS, all of which tested positive for fluoxetine. The new findings are consistent with previous reports that Glide is manufactured using Teflon-like compounds.

In addition, the study also showed that women who frequently ate prepared food in coated cardboard containers, such as French fries or takeout, had elevated blood levels of PFAS chemicals.

“Overall, this study strengthens the evidence that consumer products are an important source of PFAS exposure,” Boronow said. “Restricting these chemicals from products should be a priority to reduce levels in people’s bodies.”

Other behaviours that were associated with higher PFAS levels included having stain-resistant carpet or furniture and living in a city served by a PFAS-contaminated drinking water supply. – IANS

**Novel treatment may offer promise to TB patients**

Researchers have developed a new treatment that could be used to treat hundreds of thousands of patients with tuberculosis (TB).

The study showed that the treatment, which patients will take using an inhaler, works by reducing the bacteria in the lungs causing tuberculosis while also helping the patient’s immune system to fight the disease.

“Many cases of TB are now becoming resistant to existing antibiotics. This new treatment could be used alongside antibiotics to treat drug-resistant TB and also possibly reduce the rate of antibiotic resistance resulting from conventional antibiotic treatments,” said Sally-Ann Cryan, Associate Professor at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI).

TB is one of the top 10 causes of death worldwide. Ten million people fell ill with TB and 1.6 million died from the disease in 2017, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).

For the study, the team used a spray-drying process and packaged all trans-Retinoic acid (ATRA) solution, a derivative of vitamin A, within safe-for-consumption particles that are small enough to use in an inhaler.

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The findings, published in the *European Journal of Pharmaceutics and Biopharmaceutics*, demonstrated that these particles efficiently delivered the treatment and significantly reduced TB-causing bacteria and associated lung damage.

“Unfortunately, TB remains a significant problem for world health. We urgently need innovative treatments like this one if we are to achieve the UN 2030 health targets,” said Joseph Keane, Professor at Trinity College Dublin.

There is only one vaccine for TB, developed in 1921, which is unreliable in preventing the most common form of TB, and is not suitable in all patient groups.

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**These negative social media behaviours are linked to depression**

While scrolling through Facebook or Instagram, did you ever feel that everyone else is living their life better than you? Such social media behaviours are linked with major depressive disorder (MDD), said researchers.

In a study of over 500 millennials who actively use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and/or Snapchat, the team from the Texas State University identified five key social media factors associated with MDD.

Individuals who were more likely to compare themselves to others better off than they were, those who indicated that they would be more bothered by being tagged in unflattering pictures and those less likely to post pictures of themselves along with other people were more likely to meet the criteria for MDD. Participating in negative social media behaviours is also associated with a higher likelihood of having MDD.

The study, reported in the *Journal of Applied Biobehavioural Research*, also found that participants following over 500 Twitter accounts were less likely to have MDD. Participating in negative social media behaviours is also associated with a higher likelihood of having MDD.

While the study highlights social media behaviours that are associated with major depression, it is important to recognise that social media use can offer many positive benefits, including fostering social support," said Krista Howard, from the Texas State University.

“The key is for individuals to develop an awareness of how they currently use social media and to determine what changes could be made in their social media use to reduce the behaviours associated with psychological distress.

“Some changes could include reducing the time spent on social media, unfollowing individuals or groups that cause distress, or limiting online social comparisons,” Howard said. – IANS
Moong dal halwa, an auspicious dessert

Winters are a perfect time to enjoy delicacies of all types. First the chilled water bottles go away, then the seasonal vegetables arrive and then comes the full winter season for hot desserts. India and its connection with the array of halwa does not need an introduction, we can make halwa with almost any food item available around us. Whether it is the moong dal halwa, gajar halwa (carrot halwa) or the sooji halwa (semolina halwa) or the lauki halwa (bottle gourd halwa), they all taste so much better in winters that I could not avoid writing about them. Moong dal halwa is relished throughout Rajasthan during the winter months, as it is supposed to keep the body warm and protect us from the bitter winter cold. It is believed that halwa may have been an import from the Arab and Turkish region. The Turkish confection of ground sesame seeds and honey is believed to have travelled towards the eastern countries in primitive times and became our very own halwa as we see it today. Moong dal halwa is undoubtedly the king among all of them.

Moong dal halwa is an Indian dessert delicacy made with skinless split green gram. It is very rich due to loads of desi ghee and dry fruits that are included to make the halwa. This makes it a rich halwa, a must for weddings or festivals or special events. Moong dal halwa is a dessert with its roots in Rajasthan. Mostly, it is prepared during winters as a warm dessert. Rajasthan and its ingenious use of making the most interesting facets of Indian cooking are well known. Moong dal halwa is also considered to be one of the most auspicious dessert in the region and is prepared widely for special occasional such as Diwali or any other religious occasion or weddings. Moong dal halwa if not prepared right can turn out to be a disaster. Preparing moong dal does not require much time but it is the opposite while preparing its halwa. Moong dal halwa requires a lot of patience and muscle work and lots of ghee and dry fruits. But the amount of time and effort is worth the final product.

Moong dal halwa

**Ingredients**
- Yellow moong dal 1 cup
- Desi ghee ½ cup
- Saffron strands few strands
- Milk 1 cup
- Sugar 1 cup
- Cardamom powder ½ tsp

**For Garnish**
- Almond slivers to garnish
- Pistachio slivers to garnish

**Method**
1. Wash and soak the split yellow moong dal overnight.
2. Drain the water and grind the moong dal in a mixer to a coarse texture and keep aside.
3. Dissolve saffron in 1 tbsp warm milk and keep aside.
4. In a heavy bottom pan heat desi ghee over medium heat.
5. Add the moong dal paste and stir well.
6. Cook over low heat for 45 minutes while stirring continuously.
7. Once the moong dal is cooked and the raw flavour is eliminated add some warm water and milk.
8. Cook again over low heat for 7-8 minutes, while stirring continuously.
9. Add sugar and mix well and cook for 3-5 minutes and remove from flame.

Serve warm garnished with cardamom powder, and garnish with almond and pistachio slivers.

Chef’s Special

Chef Tarun Kapoor, Culinary Mastermind, USA. He may be contacted at tarunkapoor83@gmail.com
DPS-MIS organises 5th Alumni Meet

DPS-Modern Indian School (DPS-MIS) recently organised its 5th Alumni Meet. The event was attended by over 150 alumni students of the school currently studying in reputed universities worldwide. Rohit Chari, Head Boy of DPS-MIS, welcomed the gathering. The event featured a cultural performance by the students of Grade IX-XII. The event also featured various activities, including musical chair, tug of war and quiz competition. A friendly basketball match between the students of DPS-MIS and DPS-MIS alumni was also organised. Samiksha Arora, Head Girl of DPS-MIS, proposed a vote of thanks.

BPS celebrates Vishwa Hindi Diwas

Birla Public School (BPS) recently celebrated Vishwa Hindi Diwas at Basant Kumar Birla Auditorium. The event was sponsored by North Indian Association of Qatar. The event featured various activities and competitions for the students of Grade I-XII, including poem recitation, essay writing and public speaking in Hindi. The event was inaugurated by Hemant Kumar Dwivedi, First Secretary for Information and Education at Embassy of India, in the presence of Irshad Hussain and Sudhir Gupta.

Members of Toastmasters Area 7 conduct meeting

The members of the five toastmasters clubs in Area 7 Division B, including Indian Club Toastmasters, JOENG Toastmasters, PICE Qatar Toastmasters, Hamad Toastmasters and McDermott Doha Toastmasters recently held a meeting. The meeting was led by Alar Mel Manga R, Director of Area 7. The meeting was anchored by Ravishankar, Director of Programme Quality at Assistant Division B. The meeting featured various speeches by the members of the clubs, including Abdelmohimen Almsimany, Malika Nair, June Sabadisto, Adele Pereira and Saif al-Shaftan. Rashed al-Nasa’a, Ghiath Khiami, Ankit Srivastava, Felipe Catinooy and Surya Narayan, under the leadership of KP Murak, gave their feedback. Husam al-Omar conducted a table topics session. Sunita Saini, Director of Division B, addressed the gathering. The meeting was attended by over 60 members. Abdelmohimen Almsimany was voted as the best speaker, while Rashed al-Nasa’a and Saad Darwazeh were voted as the best evaluator and table topics speakers, respectively. Kumaran CS was the Sergeant-at-Arms at the meeting. The time management was conducted by Sheelu Manantan. Sunil Nair played the role of grammarian at the meeting.
Food Forests

A Web of Life
A food forest is designed to link food crops together in a web of life similar to that of other forests. Our web engages plants, animals, and fungi to help with gardening tasks. We grow a whole forest, not just food, and we get pest control, weed control, fertilizers, water storage, and a beautiful space for people.

Building Soil
Worms, fungi, and other soil life eat dead leaves, creating topsoil full of precious nutrients that plants can absorb easily.

Ladybugs and green lacewing larvae protect budding fruit from aphids and thrips.

All fruits start as pollinated flowers.

A plum tree may take 5 to 10 years to mature, and with it can produce for decades.

Roots pull up minerals trapped in rocks.
Living Web

Seedbugs save leaves from leafhoppers.

Helping Flowers Become Fruit
The food forest builds habitat for predators and pollinators that tend our flowers and fruits as they grow.

Slowing Water to Protect Soil
Layers of plants slow down speeding raindrops to lessen their impact.

Mulch, such as leaves and woodchips, protects the soil's delicate networks of roots, sand, organic matter, and hyphae (fungal roots).

Rain drops can fall at 30 miles per hour, breaking apart and crushing exposed soil.

Storing Water
Good soil structure provides air space for soil life and acts as a sponge, storing water for our dry summers.

Cleaning Water
Like a carbon filter used to clean water, soil with a lot of organic content (carbon) cleans stormwater.
A riotous retirement for Serge Storms

In No Sunscreen for the Dead, 22nd book in the series, Tim Dorsey’s endearingly criminal character comes to the defence of veterans.

Serge Storms has decided to retire. His legions of fans need not fear, however. In the first place, how long is his attention span? And retire from what, exactly?

In Tampa author Tim Dorsey’s popular series of books about him, Serge pursues his passion for Florida history, with occasional side trips to murder someone who has it coming, without any visible means of support, and certainly no regular hours.

But in No Sunscreen for the Dead, the 22nd book in the series, and maybe the best title yet, Serge is infatuated with the retirement lifestyle of a significant portion of Florida’s residents. He’s determined that he and his sidekick, Coleman, will join their ranks. The Villages attracts him with its bawdy reputation ‘the highest STD rate in all of Florida!”, but he rejects it as too new, “Give me a retirement home with jalousie windows and terrazzo floors and I’ll die a happy man. “

Hence his Ford Falcon’s arrival at Boca Vista Lago Isle Shores, familiarly known as Boca Shores, a picturesque old-school trailer park on the east of I-75 side of Sarasota.

Serge finds his way there by haunting one of Sarasota’s Amish restaurants during early-bird dinner hour. He zeroes in on older couples and begins interviewing them for his latest oral history project. With Coleman in town, he soon makes himself everybody’s pal at Boca Shores, where he’s thrilled to find people who not only remember Doolittle’s Raiders and Chosin Reservoir but in many cases fought in World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

“I have the uncontrollable urge to march around the restaurant singing the national anthem in your honour,” he tells one of them, “but as you can see, I’m redirecting all my energy to sitting on my hands.”

He can’t sit on his hands when he discovers that not all is well at Boca Shores. Its trusting elderly residents attract the usual predators, and Serge is moved to pursue his ingenious sideline. Sold a room-size humidifier (in Florida!) to a nice old couple, and then a dehumidifier to go with it, to the tune of more than twenty grand? You might become a, formerly, human memorial to the nostalgic toy called Mold-A-Rama. We also find out just how much havoc can be wreaked by combining flour and firecrackers.

Meanwhile, other trouble is also mentioned in the book. A man named Benmont Pinch works near Tampa at Life Armor, an internet privacy firm.

Benmont is a middle-aged nerd, but he’s friends with some of his millennial colleagues, such as a “young man with corked ears” called Sonic. “Life Armor was a company with an enlightened view, and they had diversified. Besides protecting privacy, they also invaded it.

“Sonic worked in the protection division, and Benmont was on the invasion team. He’d always thought that when individualism was stripped, it would benyderedly clever yet weirdly inspiring plot?”

As Serge says near the end, just before the firefight, “Trust me. What can go wrong?”

– Tampa Bay Times/TNS
LEISURE

Colour by choice

Maze
Help the gardener find his way to the garden.

Connect the dots
Join the dots in order to find out more!

Picture crossword
VEGETABLES
USE THE PICTURES BELOW AS CLUES

ACROSS
1. Carrot
2. Broccoli
3. Tomato
4. Cabbage
5. Lettuce

DOWN
1. Potato
2. Onion
3. Pea
4. Brussels Sprout
5. Cauliflower
POOCH CAFE
By Paul Gilligan

COULD YOU HELP ME WITH—OH, FORGET IT.

WHAT IS IT?

I WAS GOING TO ASK YOU TO HELP ME GET THIS UP OFF, BUT YOU'RE A WOMAN.

JUST BECAUSE I'M A WOMAN DOESN'T MEAN I'M INCAPABLE! GIVE IT HERE!

THERE YA GO, MISTER.

POP! THANKS!

GIVE ME THOSE PICKLES!

MUSH! MUSH!

SNAP!

I'LL BE GLAD WHEN THEY PERFECT DRIVERLESS SLEDS!
**Super Cryptic Clues**

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**Wordwatch**

**rurban**  
(RUHR-buhn)  
Meaning: adjective: Having characteristics of both rural and urban life.  
Etymology: A blend of rural + urban, from Latin rust (country) and urbs (city). Earliest documented use: 1915.  
Usage: “Finance Minister Doug Horner... calls himself a rurban MLA because he lives in an urban riding (district) but has land in rural area.”

**squiggle**  
(SKROO-gilt)  
Meaning: noun: An irregularly curling or looping line, string, etc.  
Verb tr., intr.: 1. To make an irregularly curling or looping line.  
2. To squirm or wriggle.  
3. To scribble.  
Etymology: Perhaps a blend of squirm + wriggle.


**Sudoku**

```
8 1 9 6 4 3 2 5 7
3 5 7 2 6 8 4 9 1
6 2 3 5 7 1 9 8 4
8 7 4 1 9 2 6 5 3
9 6 1 4 3 7 5 2 8
2 3 5 8 1 6 7 4 9
5 1 4 3 2 9 7 8 6
7 9 2 6 4 5 3 1 8
4 8 6 7 5 3 1 2 9
```


**Yesterday’s Solutions**

**Across:** 1 Spring 5 Pull up 8 Opera 9 Gemini 10 Recent 11 Neat 14 18 Of the first water 20 Inured 22 Liberate 25 Slung 26 Tahi 26 Ground 29 Sigma 30 Parrot 31 Nettle.  
**Down:** 1 Sight 2 Ramp 3 Going off 4 Departure lounge 5 Parson 6 Lied 7 Potter 12 Bathers 13 Impairs 15 Elfin 17 Event 19 Toboggan 20 In step 21 Detist 23 Evadne 24 Char 26 Just.
How to keep up with your New Year Resolutions

Making resolutions and scheduling actions for New Year is something that everyone aspires for. But, the real challenge is in keeping up the momentum to achieve the goals. Chaotic routines, dwindling will-power or plain laziness tend to succumb to these at some point or the other. However, a few steps might help you to achieve the goals you have set for yourself in 2019.

Gautam Raj Anand, Founder and CEO, Hubshopper, and Anupama Dalmia, blogger at Momspresso, list some ways to keep up with your New Year Resolutions.

- Trick your brain and start by familiarising your mind with your resolutions by visualising them. Write down your goals and stick them at some corner you visit often like your bedroom walls or office cubicle. These work as perfect reminders which we often require. This will make you feel more inclined towards your goal without positioning it as a threat to your habits. Push yourself for the first few days with your willpower.

- Recharge your spirits and boost yourself with some pep talk by listening to self-help podcasts. When routine wears you down, escape it with motivational and inspirational sessions on podcast platforms. From health to career goals, you will find a countless number of topics on how you can set realistic goals and achieve them. Also, set practical and achievable goals keeping in mind your budget.

- Ensure the goals are specific and measurable for example, ‘I want to lose 5kgs’ is a better-defined goal which you can work towards than ‘I want to have a figure like some Bollywood actress’.

- Research well on the place you want to visit and plan the duration and dates for your travel in advance. Book the tickets accordingly and the moment that is done, you will try your best to make that travel happen.

- Keep yourself motivated to stay on track. You know what works best for you. It could be the company of a friend or reading an inspiring fitness/travel story. — IANS

### ARIES
March 21 – April 19

A friend or family member might act strangely and seem distracted. You may wonder if he or she is upset with you. This probably isn’t the case. This person has issues that need attention. Allow them some space. A partner might have to break a date tonight. It should be OK. Someone at home might not be communicative, which could cause a little worry. This person has issues they need to work out for themselves. Just be there if needed.

### TAURUS
April 20 – May 20

Too much reading might have you experiencing eyestrain and possibly headaches. Taurus, it might help to have your eyes checked, but it’s probably just too much stress. You might have some trouble focusing on whatever work you do today, but this is only a temporary condition. You should be back to your normal self tomorrow. Stay home tonight, listen to music, and take it easy.

### GEMINI
May 21 – June 20

Doubts about business and financial matters might weigh on your mind now, Gemini, so much so that they invade your dreams. The dreams are only a reflection of your worries – they aren’t prophetic. Your situation is probably better than it seems on the surface. Lack of information clouds the issue. Check the facts and judge them for yourself before making yourself crazy.

### CANCER
June 21 – July 22

A scheduling conflict may come up today. Cancer, a business engagement could interfere with a social event. You might doubt whether you can attend both, but if you plan carefully, it should be OK. Someone at home might not be communicative, which could cause a little worry. This person has issues they need to work out for themselves. Just be there if needed.

### LEO
July 23 – August 22

Confusing communications could be the pattern for today. Leo, some paperwork you need to do for a task might be delayed - hung up in the mail or filed in the wrong place. It might take a while to locate it, but it should turn up eventually. There might be some strange messages for you, and you may not be sure whether or not you should return the calls.

### LIBRA
September 23 – October 22

Business transactions that could take place in your home or perhaps involve the home might seem a bit unclear today. Libra, before agreeing to anything, read the fine print and verify all the facts about what you’re signing. Use your intuition. It’s very high at this time. Personal relationships, should be pretty financially stable now, and this trend is likely to continue. Check out the facts before giving in to panic.

### SCORPIO
October 23 – November 21

You might get a lot of mixed messages from friends, relatives, and colleagues. Scorpio, they may say one thing while you sense that they mean something else. Insist on hearing how they really feel. This can prevent a lot of resentment later. New businesses could open in your neighbourhood that you might want to check out. Take a look—especially if it’s a new bookstore.

### SAGITTARIUS
November 22 – December 21

Today you might not feel secure about your financial situation, Sagittarius, and get a little nervous. Disconcerting information in the news about the general state of the world economy might have planted some unsettling seeds in your mind. On the whole, you should be pretty financially stable now, and this trend is likely to continue. Check out the facts before giving in to panic.

### CAPRICORN
December 22 – January 19

Some unsettling news about your work situation might reach you today and make you worried, Capricorn. You might question your future in this field and possibly consider a change. Consider it, by all means, but this isn’t the day to make a final decision of any kind. Wait until you’re in a more secure frame of mind. In the meantime, list your different options. This will get you back to reality.

### AQUARIUS
January 20 – February 18

You’re a logical person, Aquarius. When insights come to you through ESP, you tend to doubt their validity. Don’t do this. If a feeling is particularly strong, go with it. Don’t write it off because it seems illogical. Life isn’t always predictable. If you give yourself permission, you can trust your intuition about nearly anything.

### PISCES
February 19 – March 20

Doubts about a friend’s motives could plague you today, Pisces. This person seems to be acting strangely and isn’t communicating. This probably has little if anything to do with you. This person has issues that he or she is having trouble with. There are others who are in a better space whose company you will enjoy at this time. Get together and enjoy the amiable atmosphere.
Proud to have directed
Petra: Karthik Subbararaj

Filmmaker Karthik Subbararaj, who wears his Rajinikanth fandom on his sleeve, says he is proud to have directed Tamil actioner Petra as a die-hard superstar Rajinikanth fanboy.

Having made a mark with films such as Piuza, Jigarthanda and Irudhi, Subbararaj has joined hands with Rajinikanth for the first time in Petra, which released yesterday in Tamil, with the Hindi version set to release today.

The film has been extensively shot in Uttar Pradesh, in places like Varanasi and Lucknow. Every promo of Petra so far has clearly indicated that it’s a film made by a true-blue Rajinikanth fan, one who wants to pay rich tribute to the superstar of 1990s.

“I grew up idolising Rajinikanth and I’ve always wanted to see him in a certain way. When I knew I was going to write for Rajini sir, I wanted to show him in the most stylish way and bring back his mannerisms and machismo,” Subbararaj told IANS.

While there’s no denying Petra will be Subbararaj’s love letter to his matinee idol, he points out that it will have a healthy mix of his sensibilities and popular Rajinikanth tropes.

“The film has a mix of both our sensibilities. Rajini sir gave me an opportunity to work with him because he liked my work, especially my style of narration and dialogues. Now, I can’t go out and make something very different just to please him. He wanted me to make Petra the way I want it and with my sensibilities intact,” he said, adding that the film also has everything a Rajinikanth fan wants to see.

If the promotors are anything to go by, one can be assured that Rajinikanth’s fans are in for a treat. Subbararaj says audiences will see a happier, chipper version of Rajinikanth as Kaali, in the role of a hostel warden.

Asked if he tried to consciously break Rajinikanth’s recent stint of dark characters, Subbararaj said: “As stories, Rajini sir’s recent films such as Kabali and Kaala were dark. Therefore, his characters were also dark. The story decides the nature of a character.”

“When I thought of writing for Rajini sir, I told myself it will be a really cool character with a very happy-go-lucky attitude. We took such a character and placed him in a strong story and I believe, as a combination, it has worked wonders. Rajini sir thoroughly enjoyed doing comedy and romance,” he added. Petra stars an ensemble cast of Trisha, Simran Bagga, Nawazuddin Siddiqui, Vijay Sethupathi, Saikumar, Bobby Simhaa, Malavika Mohanan and Megha Akash, among others. – IANS

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Next Project: Actor Hrithik Roshan will be seen next on the big screen in Super 30 and in a Siddharth Anand directorial with Tiger Shroff.

Hrithik Roshan turns 45, Sussanne says ‘shine on’

As actor Hrithik Roshan turned 45 on Thursday, his former wife Sussanne Khan called him her “best friend forever” and “soulmate” even as several others from the film fraternity wished the “great son” and “soulmate”, even as several others from the film fraternity wished the “great son” and “soulmate” best BFF... best dad in the world... Soulmate, “ she captioned the image.

Hrithik, whose father and actor-filmmaker Rakesh Roshan underwent surgery for throat cancer earlier this year, will be seen next on the big screen in Super 30 and in a Siddharth Anand directorial with Tiger Shroff. – IANS

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Method Actor: Bale is the master of extreme weight loss and gain on screen.

“I like chaos: Christian Bale

Academy Award–winning actor Christian Bale, who is known for undergoing physical transformations for his performances, says he likes chaos. He has delivered on demanding performances – whether it was his skeletal frame in The Machinist or the Herculean built in The Dark Knight Rises, the mentally exhausting character of a sadistic psychopath and a deranged serial killer in American Psycho or as Dick Cheney in Vice, where he has managed to bulk up and try prosthetics.

Asked if there is anything else he aspires to do, Bale told IANS here during his visit to India: “I have never had a plan or a strategy. I like chaos. So, I wait to see what happens next.”

Bale was also a part of filmmaker–actor Andy Serkis’ Moust: Legend Of The Jungle, in which he essayed Bagheera.

He also scored a Best Actor in a Motion Picture, Musical or Comedy victory for his performance as former US Vice President Dick Cheney in Vice. – IANS

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ANIMATION: Star Wars Resistance is an American animated television series inspired by Japanese anime and produced by Lucasfilm Animation.
Qatar Natural History Group (QNHG), a group that’s working to raise awareness about the natural beauty of Qatar, held an informative and enlightening talk on the topic ‘Al Karaana Lagoons: Reclamation, Rehabilitation & Wildlife Enhancement’ at Doha English Speaking School on Wednesday. The discussion was attended by members of QNHG and other participants.

Thomas Clouet, Technical Interface Manager – Project Manager for SUEZ, one of the world’s leading environmental service companies, explained in a presentation the process and benefits of the big on-going environment project.

Thomas has an engineering background in the field of water treatment with 15 years of experience within SUEZ Group working on engineering, procurement, construction sewage treatment plants, potable water production plant, and sludge drying systems in Egypt, France, India and Qatar.

He arrived in Qatar in November 2017 for the project. Al Karaana Lagoons have been used for years as an industrial sewage dumping area. Ashghal decided to clean the area to preserve environment. The wildlife developed naturally thanks to the presence of water, in the middle of the desert.

In addition to the main objective to clean up the area and bring it back to its previous undisturbed state, the parties eventually committed to go beyond contract obligation in order to enhance the wildlife zone.

Elucidating on the objectives of the project in his presentation, Thomas said that the project aimed at re-instatement of the site with no future development, preservation and enhancement of existing wildlife, and permission for temporary discharge of industrial effluent.

Explaining the scope of the work, he said: “We will create two evaporation ponds to allow the reception of industrial sewage until new treatment plant is available. “We are also to extract, treat and store on site polluted sediments contained in the existing lagoons – prior to the treatment. Water in the lagoons will be evaporated. The project will also create one landfill to encapsulate significantly the contaminated sediments. We will also create three wildlife lagoons to evaporate TSE [Treated Sewage Effluent] water currently coming from nearby treatment plant and will recreate wildlife habitat for birds and the fish.”

Last month, Ashghal told members that more than 71% of the reclamation and rehabilitation works of Al Karaana Lagoon has been completed and the project is scheduled to be commissioned to be completed in the third quarter of 2020.

Al Karaana Lagoon, located 60km southwest of Doha, has been used since 2006 to receive liquid industrial waste discharged by tankers. In 2016, the lagoon also started receiving treated sewage water from Al Karaana treatment station.

Talking to Community, Thierry Lesales, a senior member of QNHG, said: “The presentation and subsequent discussion was very enlightening. We learnt that how much interest the Qatar authorities are taking in reclaiming the site and improving environment of Qatar. The project is very costly but the government decided to go ahead with it focusing on its environmental importance. We all are very excited to learn that the project will also go for improving some lagoons and preserving wildlife. They will have a beautiful landscape there in the end.”

Sheri Kenly is a US citizen and has been associated with QNHG for eight years. She said: “Such kinds of discussions absolutely help us understand environment of Qatar better. The group has helped me in learning many things about this Qatar. Different professionals come to the platform and discuss environment and nature in technical ways. I can apply the knowledge I get from here while I am in the desert. I have learnt that I should not drive on any greenery in the desert because there can be some kind of birds with their nests inside the area.

“There are many people who do not leave Doha city. There is a natural habitat in the desert in this country. You can go anywhere in this country safe and sound. That is your opportunity to learn about Qatar so I will stay out of the city and do not just stay here.”

Kyounghee Cha Malawi is a US national with Korean origin. She said: “I have been associated with the group for four years. It is a kind of best way to learn about the natural beauty of Qatar. I think many people come to Qatar and see only West Bay or other parts of the city. One of our members has seen a sand fox in the desert and these are the beautiful things to see in Qatar.”

Qatar Natural History Group holds talk on reclamation of Al Karaana Lagoons

By Mudassir Raja

EXPERT Thomas Clouet talked about the Al Karaana Lagoon’s rehabilitation project along with ways to enhance wildlife in the area.

GROUP Audience members listen keenly during a session on Al Karaana Lagoons: Reclamation, Rehabilitation & Wildlife Enhancement at Doha English Speaking School.