Red alert
High radiation levels found in giant clams of Marshall Islands near US nuclear dump. P4-5

Cover Story

SPOTLIGHT: The US Department of Energy has disclosed high levels of radiation in giant clams in a lagoon near the Runit Dome, where the US entombed radioactive waste from US nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands almost four decade ago.

Reviews
Will Smith's magic works in the live-action version. 
Page 11

Back Page
US expat loves to see extra kindness during Ramadan. 
Page 16
Aladdin

DIRECTION: Guy Ritchie
CAST: Naomi Scott, Mena Massoud, Will Smith
SYNOPSIS: Aladdin is a lovable street urchin who meets Princess Jasmine, the beautiful daughter of the Sultan of Agrabah. While visiting her exotic palace, Aladdin stumbles upon a magic oil lamp that unleashes a powerful, wisecracking, larger-than-life genie. As Aladdin and the genie start to become friends, they must soon embark on a dangerous mission to stop the evil sorcerer Jafar from overthrowing young Jasmine’s kingdom.

THEATRES: The Mall, Landmark, Royal Plaza

Ma

DIRECTION: Tate Taylor
CAST: Octavia Spencer, Diana Silvers, Juliette Lewis
SYNOPSIS: A lonely middle-aged woman befriends some teenagers and decides to let them hang out in the basement of her home. But as Ma’s hospitality starts to curdle into obsession, what began as a teenage dream turns into a terrifying nightmare, and Ma’s place goes from the best place in town to the worst place on Earth.

THEATRES: The Mall, Landmark, Royal Plaza

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| Q-Post – General Postal Corporation | 44464444                |
| Humanitarian Services Office         |                         |
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| Ministry of Health                   | 40253370, 40253364      |
| Hamad Medical Corporation            | 40253356, 40253365      |
| Qatar Airways                        | 40253374                |

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_Quote Unquote_

“You sort of start thinking anything’s possible if you’ve got enough nerve.” — J. K Rowling

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**THEATRES**

**The Mall Cinema (1):**
- Capt’n Sharky (2D) 3pm; Devi 2 (Tamil) 9pm; NGK (Tamil) 11:15pm.

**The Mall Cinema (2):**
- Aladdin (2D) 2:30pm; Aladdin (2D) 8:30pm; Aladdin (2D) 11pm.

**The Mall Cinema (3):**
- Avengers: Endgame (2D) 2:15pm; Ma (2D) 9pm; NGK (Tamil) 10:45pm.

**Landmark Cinema (1):**
- De De Pyaar De (Hindi) 2:30pm; Ma (2D) 8:45pm; NGK (Tamil) 10:30pm.

**Landmark Cinema (2):**
- Aladdin (2D) 2:30pm; Aladdin (2D) 9pm; NGK (Tamil) 11:15pm.

**Landmark Cinema (3):**
- Capt’n Sharky (2D) 3pm; Devi 2 (Tamil) 8:30pm; Avengers: Endgame (2D) 11pm.

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**Royal Plaza Cinema Palace (1):**
- Avengers: Endgame (2D) 2:15pm; Aladdin (2D) 8:30pm; NGK (Tamil) 11pm.

**Royal Plaza Cinema Palace (2):**
- Capt’n Sharky (2D) 3pm; Ma (2D) 8:45pm; NGK (Tamil) 10:30pm.

**Royal Plaza Cinema Palace (3):**
- Ishq (Malayalam) 2:30pm; Red Joan (2D) 9:15pm; Devi 2 (Tamil) 11:15pm.
compiled by nausheen shaikh. e-mail: gtlisting@gmail.com, events and timings subject to change
Food for thought

The radioactive shellfish were found near Runit Dome — a concrete-capped waste site known by locals as “The Tomb”. The clams are a popular delicacy in the Marshall Islands and in other nations, write Susanne Rust and Carolyn Cole.

“We’ve known for decades that the material in the dome is radioactive as well as the surrounding soil and sediment. We don’t measure radiation exposures as a one-time event. We calculate exposure over a year or a lifetime.”

— Steve Simon, researcher
The findings from the Marshall Islands suggest that radiation is either leaking from the waste site — which US officials reject — or that authorities did not adequately clean up radiation left behind from past weapons testing, as some in Marshall Islands claim.

The radioactive shellfish were found near Runit Dome — a concrete-capped waste site known by locals as “The Tomb” — according to a presentation made by a US Department of Energy scientist this month in Majuro, the island nation’s capital. The clams are a popular delicacy in the Marshall Islands and in other nations, including China, which has aggressively harvested them from vast swaths of the Pacific.

According to Terry Hamilton, a veterinarian nuclear physicist at the Energy Department’s Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Runit Dome is vulnerable to leakage by storm surge and sea level rise, and its groundwater, which is leaking into the lagoon and ocean, is severely contaminated.

But the radiation in the shellfish and surrounding lagoon is not coming from the 40-year-old dome, said Hamilton in a slide he presented May 14 in an audience and broadcast in a hotel conference room in Majuro.

He said isotopic analyses indicated the lagoon contamination is from residue of the initial nuclear weapons testing.

The Los Angeles Times was not at Hamilton’s presentation, and the Energy Department did not make him available to comment. But the following day, local residents and officials informed The Times about the findings, which were later confirmed with others.

Between 1946 and 1958, the United States tested 67 nuclear devices in the Marshall Islands, including 44 in Enewetak Atoll, one of the nation’s 29 coral atolls. Although the Marshall Islands was home to only 6% of the total number of tests conducted by the United States, it bore the brunt of nuclear-related injuries and damage.

Much of the fallout from those events is now entombed within Runit Dome. According to a photograph taken of Hamilton’s presentation slides, the 377-foot-wide crater in Enewetak Atoll contains groundwater samples with radiation levels 1,000 to 6,000 times higher than those found in the open ocean.

Some Marshall Islanders who attended the presentation are sceptical about the agency’s conclusion that the dome is not leaking into the lagoon.

“What they’re saying is, here is the dome. And here, in the lagoon area, there is radiation. … But as far as leaking from the dome, we don’t think that’s the case,” said James Matayoshi, mayor of Rongelap Atoll, one of the atolls contaminated by fallout from the nuclear testing programme. “That doesn’t make any sense.”

Extending the incredulity further, Matayoshi and others noted that Hamilton presented a short animation of the dome, showing it rise and fall with the tide — suggesting seawater is freely flowing in and out of the containment zone.

“It looked like it was breathing,” said Matayoshi, who was interviewed in Majuro several days after the presentation.

Anne Stark, a spokeswoman for the Department of Energy, declined to comment on the presentation, because Hamilton’s work has not yet been peer-reviewed or published. According to people at the meeting, the research is contained in an unpublished report.

The US began construction on the dome in 1977, after the Marshallites had demanded for decades that US officials clean up the waste. Many Marshallites from the northern atolls of Enewetak, Bikini and Rongelap were evacuated during the testing programme and forced into perpetual migration. In Enewetak, for instance, an entire island was vapourised.

Between 1977 and 1980, the United States built roughly 4,000 US soldiers and subcontractors to clean the site. Many say they were inadequately protected. They excavated soils from Enewetak and elsewhere and turned the soil into a concrete slurry, which they poured into an unlined crater on Runit Island, left behind by the cactus bomb. They sealed it with a clean concrete top 18 inches thick, creating what is now called the Tomb.

In 1980, the people of Enewetak were told by the US government it was safe to return home.

But there have been lingering worries about atoll’s safety. The US government told the Marshallites the dome was a temporary fix. It’s now been nearly 40 years. This latest news didn’t alleviate any of those concerns, said Holly Barker, a professor of anthropology at the University of Washington in Seattle. Barker is a member of the Marshall Islands’ three-person National Nuclear Commission — a government-mandated committee charged with seeking justice for nuclear-related injuries and damage.

The basic takeaway from the presentation, said Barker, is that the lagoon is so contaminated, any leakage from the dome is negligible. Which raises the question, “in what way was Runit a cleanup?” Barker said.

Steve Simon, a researcher who has worked extensively on radiation issues in the Marshall Islands and now works for the National Cancer Institute, said the conclusions presented at the meeting were not surprising or alarming. “This isn’t news,” said Simon, who was not at the presentation and was only provided with the conclusions delivered at the meeting by a reporter. “We’ve known for decades that the material in the dome is radioactive as well as the surrounding soil and sediments.”

He said data gathered by the Department of Energy over the last several decades has been consistently reliable, and shows the atoll is safe to live in, as long as people avoid eating large amounts of food that have been grown on or near Runit, including the clams.

If they have eaten a few, however, he said they shouldn’t be alarmed. “We don’t measure radiation exposures as a one-time event. We calculate exposure over a year or a lifetime,” he said.

He said overall the radioactivity in the Marshall Islands is fairly low. There are a few hot spots, but they are well-known and people know to avoid them.

“This is where the US government is missing the mark,” Barker said. “They give the Marshallites numbers and tell them it’s up to them to decide what risks they want to expose themselves to. But they’re not looking at how the Marshallites interact with these places. They’re not bothering to understand.”

She noted that in the US, places that have been irradiated, such as Hanford Site, a decommissioned nuclear weapons complex in Benton County, Washington — the first full-scale plutonium production reactor in the world — are surrounded by fences and closed off to the public.

A visit to Runit last summer by The Times indicated there was no fence or sign warning people to stay away or avoid eating foods grown on the island. Indeed, there was evidence that peelers had camped and eaten coconut crabs — large, baseball mitt-sized crabs that clamber through the thick underbrush and palms of the island.

There are “a lot of uncertainties” about plutonium in the dome’s groundwater and lagoon sediments, said Rea Moss-Christian, another member of the three-person nuclear panel. She said the Marshall Islands government is working on getting independent analyses of Runit and the lagoon.

Lucinda Antolik, 35, from Sedro-Woolley, Washington, is a descendant of Runit landowners. She said the US testing programme in Enewetak has devastated her family. Her grandmother, who was raised on Enewetak, had thyroid cancer. Her mother, who was born there, had cervical cancer. And her sister had leukaemia.

“What happened there was wrong,” she said. “It ruined, and is still harming, many people’s lives.”

At a Marshall Islands’ Constitution Day celebration on Friday in Auburn, Washington, which featured dignitaries from the Marshall Islands — including Ken Kedi, the parliamentary speaker, and the islands’ minister of internal affairs, Amenta Matthew — the legacy of the testing programme could still be felt. Antolik told her husband, Dan, that she and their two children have travelled extensively educating young Marshallites about the past — making sure they know their nation’s history, and their ancestors’ legacy.

“It’s important that my grandmother, my mother and my ancestors are not forgotten,” she said. “We can’t — and we won’t — forget.” — Los Angeles Times/TNS
QU Law student participates in CCPCJ Youth Workshop in Vienna

Sharouq S Bawazir, a student of Qatar University (QU) College of Law (LAWC) recently participated in a Youth Workshop in conjunction with the 28th Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) in Vienna, Austria. Bawazir’s participation was part of the QU Legal Skills Department’s continued collaboration with The Hague International Model United Nations (THIMUN) Qatar.

In Vienna, Bawazir represented Qatar and QU Law during meetings with youth from around the world regarding the importance and practical implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 16 promoting ‘Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.’ As part of her representation, Bawazir engaged in discussions, debates and negotiations with six other youth from Brazil, Greece, the Netherlands, Uzbekistan and Qatar under the facilitation of Fatima El Mahdi, Head of THIMUN Qatar. Bawazir and her colleague’s efforts culminated in a joint statement regarding youth participation towards SDG 16 that was read into the record during the Plenary Session of CCPCJ at the opening of Item 10, on May 24.

"It was a moving experience to be able to witness students standing on a UN stage, embodying the principles of diplomacy, advocacy, and youth leadership, using MUN and E4J training to great effect. It was an honour to have worked with them to facilitate this wonderful and well received speech," said El Mahdi of THIMUN Qatar. Dr Melissa Deehring, Clinical Assistant Professor in the Legal Skills Department and UNODC Education for Justice (E4J) Ethics Champion, said: "The College of Law and Legal Skills Department are so proud of Sharouq, her continued volunteerism, her commitment to achieving the UN SDGs, and her desire to represent her country and school at the international level. The fact that Sharouq, a student who has benefited from localisation of the Doha Declaration’s E4J Ethics modules, which themselves are a product of the 13th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, is now able to take that knowledge and use it during a session of the CCPCJ demonstrates the possibility of these important educational materials coming full circle. It is extremely exciting.”

QU Law’s Legal Skills Department will continue to encourage its students to pursue international advocacy and collaborations with THIMUN Qatar and the UNODC during the upcoming fall semester. Dr Deehring will teach ‘Justice, Equality & Leadership in Law,’ QU Law’s first full-semester course dedicated to teaching concepts from the E4J Ethics Modules to address core integrity issues such as ethical leadership, strategies for ethical actions, corruption and human rights and gender diversity.

ICAI Doha Chapter conducts a seminar

The Doha Chapter of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) recently conducted a seminar on ‘Internal Controls over Financial Reporting (ICOFR) as per Qatar Financial Market Authority (QFMA)’ at Holiday Inn Doha – The Business Park. Around 110 members of the chapter attended the event.

Rukkaiya Fuchsia, Chairperson of ICAI Doha Chapter, thanked the members for their wholehearted participation, even during the holy month of Ramadan. She emphasised that good governance determines the functions and responsibilities of the Board of Directors, Senior Executive Management and employees of the company that definitely ends to achieve the real meaning of principle of upholding the interests of the public, the company, and its stakeholders to be priority before any other interest. The seminar was conducted by George Abraham, Manager at E&Y Qatar.

Delivering the seminar George explained the meaning of Internal Controls, its underlying responsibilities and compliance with QFMA requirements. He stressed on the fact that each one in an organisation is responsible for the controls and detailed the methodology to ICOFR in an hour-long session. Sandeep Chowdhary proposed a vote of thanks and expressed gratitude to the speaker, members, executive committee team, volunteers and sponsors.

PMJQC organises ‘Iftar Meet and Mahallu Sangamam’

Perringath Mahallu Jama’ath Qatar Chapter (PMJQC) recently organised an ‘Iftar Meet and Mahallu Sangamam’ at Asian Town recreation hall. The event was a get together of the families of the expatriates from Mahallu Kerala India. Zainul Abideen, Managing Director of Qatar Safari Group, inaugurated the event. K K Mohamed Sahib, a senior journalist and President of Mahallu Federation Kannur District, was felicitated on the occasion. Rafiq Zakariya Faizi spoke about Ramadan on the occasion. V Nasar Master was the chief guest on the occasion. The event was presided by P M Sadique. P K Faisal welcomed the gathering and Rahooof Thangal proposed a vote of thanks. Abkar Kunnooth presented annual report on the occasion.
COMMUNITY

GET-TOGETHER: Expatriates community from Kannoth Mahallu, Trissur District of Kerala, India, recently organised an Iftar get-together at Loydence Academy. The event was attended by over 100 people. The event was chaired by M K Hamzamon. Ashiq Aziz welcomed the gathering. Abdul Rauf recited the verses from the Holy Qur'an and Irshad Irfani delivered a message on Ramadan. Rismal Mohamed Rafi and Fidha Mukthar were felicitated on the occasion. The event was managed by Abdul Jaleel M M, Mohamed Rafi, Sharafudheen, Yassir M M and Shafir Khalid.

Over 200 hygiene kits distributed by McDonald’s Qatar and Wahab

In line with Eid al-Fitr celebrations, McDonald’s Qatar, a devout supporter of CSR initiatives and Wahab, an organisation engaged in programmes and project divert surplus food to help feed the less fortunate in the society, recently approached the workers with an initiative that expressed the importance of basic daily hygiene routines to the labourers after working under the scorching sun.

The spirit of giving continued with McDonald’s Qatar sponsorship to provide appropriate hygiene kits to the labourers at the Industrial area. Wahab volunteers and McDonald’s crews facilitated the packaging and distributing the items to the workers. More than 200 workers living in the labour camp were given with cleaning kits containing a toothbrush, toothpaste, soaps, face towels, shaving sticks, cream and Vaseline.

Ghada Kamal, McDonald’s Qatar Marketing Manager, said, “We believe in the significance of team building which can make a life-saving difference to workers who are lacking access to basic hygiene supplies. Through Wahab generous support for our Eid outreach program to improve the health of the people who surround us, we were able to provide the hygiene supplies that are essential for good health and preventing the spread of disease to the workforces. The distribution drive gave a sense of satisfaction within ourselves which brought out an incredible impact to those who are in need.”

Wardah Mamukeya, Founder of Wahab commented, “As we donate new clothes and accept new gifts on Eid al-Fitr, we do not forget the relationship we cultivated with the community during the holy month of Ramadan. Wahab, and McDonald’s, have joined hands to distribute Eid gifts to the workers as our way of celebrating gratefulness on these festive days.”

Oryx Rotana distributes Iftar boxes at Hazm Mebaireek General Hospital

To strengthen the bonds of affection and compassion, and as a part of its social corporate responsibility, Oryx Rotana, in collaboration with Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC), recently distributed Iftar boxes to visitors of Hazm Mebaireek General Hospital located at the Industrial Area, stated a press release. The initiative was in line with the spirit of giving in the holy month of Ramadan.

A total of 100 Iftar boxes were given by Oryx Rotana volunteering colleagues to all outpatients, nursing team and staff.

Speaking about the initiative, Ghassan Dalal, General Manager of Oryx Rotana, said, “I would like to thank Hamad Medical Corporation and specially the public relations department team for their unwavering support in delivering the message of giving back to the society and raise awareness on the importance of community efforts during Ramadan. This initiative comes under our efforts to strengthen the ties of bonding and affection during the holy month of Ramadan and is an extension of the many CSR activities we conducted throughout the year.”

Hassan Mohamed al-Hal, Executive Director of Public Relations and Media at HMC, said, “Hamad Medical Corporation welcomes all social and humanitarian initiatives intended to bring joy to the hearts of patients and visitors in our hospitals. We value and appreciate Oryx Rotana’s initiative to distribute Iftar boxes to the outpatients of Hazm Mebaireek General Hospital. Such activities amplify the values of compassion and generosity upon which the Holy Month of Ramadan is grounded.” The Oryx Rotana team was welcomed by a group of Public Relation staffs from the hospital headed by Ahmad al-Maliki, Head of Public Relation at Hazm Mebaireek General Hospital.
A reminder of impending extinction

Ivory products, an elephant skeleton and a sculpture of a flayed carcass at Myanmar’s new Elephant Museum force visitors to acknowledge the existential threat humans pose to the country’s most cherished creature, writes Jacob Goldberg.

From the main entrance of the Yangon Zoological Garden, a winding path leads visitors past a restless litter of caged bear cubs and a huddled flock of fluffy vultures before ending in a shady courtyard with a squat, nondescript building at its far end.

In a half-lit room on the building’s ground floor, ivory artefacts line the walls, and the skeleton of a long-dead elephant towers above a group of young visitors. On the floor lies a lifelike plastic sculpture of an elephant, its grey skin flayed to reveal bloody muscle underneath.

Since its opening in March, Myanmar’s Elephant Museum has been the latest effort by the government and conservation groups to confront the public with the reality of the country’s dwindling wild elephant population.

Myanmar has one of the world’s largest populations of wild Asian elephants, which have long been threatened by ivory poachers, who earn a living by slaughtering mature male elephants and selling their precious tusks.

The destruction of forests, the male elephants and selling their ivory poachers, who earn a living by slaughtering mature male elephants and selling their precious tusks.

Myanmar has one of the world’s largest populations of wild Asian elephants, which have long been threatened by ivory poachers, who earn a living by slaughtering mature male elephants and selling their precious tusks.

The threat to Myanmar’s elephants has become existential in recent years, with rising demand for other elephant parts, primarily skin. Both within Myanmar and in China, dried elephant skin is sold by the square inch as an ingredient in traditional medicines and it is also hardened and polished into blood-red beads and sold as jewellery.

News reports from around Myanmar regularly feature photos of the pink remains of elephants that have had their skin harvested by poachers. The museum’s skinned elephant sculpture forces visitors to confront this gruesome reality.

“As the demand for elephant skin rose rapidly in 2017 and 2018, Myanmar elephants have faced huge threats as poachers started targeting whole families, including female elephants and calves, which before had been safe, as they don’t have tusks,” says WWF-Myanmar communications officer Ye Min Thwin.

“In 2017, the killing rate was as high as one elephant per week, which could lead to Myanmar’s wild elephants becoming extinct in a matter of years.”

As poaching has accelerated, Myanmar authorities have largely fought the billion-dollar industry through law enforcement. Last year, the government enacted a new biodiversity and conservation law that punishes buyers and sellers of protected wildlife products with the strongest penalties for wildlife trade.

But disrupting the illegal wildlife trade also requires a cultural shift. According to the museum’s curators, there would be far fewer elephant products on the market if buying and selling them were less socially acceptable.

“Raising public awareness is one important part of a larger strategy to tackle the illegal trade of elephant parts,” says Ye Min Thwin. “Awareness among rural communities supports the work of the government’s elephant protection staff. Awareness among shop owners reduces the outlets selling the products, and awareness in the general public helps people to make informed decisions as to the products they buy and to understand the need to ban the trade and to protect elephants – their national treasures.”

The opening of the museum follows a series of small victories for Myanmar’s wildlife conservation movement in recent years. Last year, the grassroots conservation group Voices for Monos partnered with several celebrity performers in organizing the country’s first wildlife music festival in Yangon, and a few months later, the sale of illegally slain wildlife products was banned throughout the city and the surrounding area.

According to WWF-Myanmar, there has been no poaching in two key elephant poaching hotspots in the last year. As public consensus around the need to fight poaching slowly builds, the Elephant Museum offers a ray of hope for the future.

“The museum can help visitors see how our ancestors lived together with these magnificent creatures and how important the elephants are ecologically and culturally,” says Ye Min Thwin. “They can see how today’s elephants are struggling for their survival and what conservation efforts we have been making to save these animals, and they can play their part in that protection by not buying elephant or other wildlife parts and spreading that message.”

– DPA
Silence of the Lambs author returns with dark tale

Thomas Harris’ Cari Mora is a pulse-pounding thriller, and Cari is an engagingly badass character. Cari Mora has an all-new cast of characters and is set primarily in Miami Beach, writes Colette Bancroft.

My skin was crawling by page 7. It’s been 13 years since Thomas Harris last published a novel, but in Cari Mora the creator of Hannibal Lecter shows us he still knows how to send ice down our spines.

Four of the five previous novels by Harris, a former journalist, feature Lecter, the fiendishly brilliant serial killer and sometime cannibal. Two of those books, Red Dragon and The Silence of the Lambs, changed the paradigm for thrillers with their frightening journeys inside the minds of serial killers, and they remain two of the scariest books I’ve ever read.

Cari Mora has an all-new cast of characters and is set primarily in Miami Beach, where the very private Harris reportedly lives. The title is the name of its main character, a 25-year-old refugee from Colombia. “At the age of eleven” Harris writes, “Cari had been taken from her village at gunpoint and conscripted into Farc, the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia.” After five years as a child soldier, Cari escapes, at terrible cost.

Now she is “staying in the US by the skin of her teeth,” with a Temporary Protected Status. The US president could cancel everyone’s TPS at any moment in a fit of pique, if the president knew what a TPS was.”

Cari has many skills, among them the ability to assemble, lock and load an AK-47 in 45 seconds, but what she really wants is to go to veterinary school and buy a little house of her own, with a mango tree in the yard.

In the meantime, to support herself and several family members, she works multiple jobs. The most important one (for the purposes of the plot) is her position as caretaker at a beachfront mansion that once belonged to infamous Colombian drug lord Pablo Escobar.

In real life, Escobar did own a waterfront Miami Beach mansion in the 1980s that was confiscated by the US Government. After passing through several owners, the house was razed in 2016, and during demolition two safes were found hidden under its floors. One was stolen; the property owners kept the other but reportedly have not yet opened it. (The lot is currently on the market for $15.9 million.)

In Harris’ fictional version, there’s a rumour that Escobar buried treasure beneath the house: $25 million in gold bars. That rumour is enough to draw two treasure hunters, and both of them need Cari’s help, since she knows the house and its considerable quirks. One is a powerful crime lord called Don Ernesto, who lives in Baranquilla, Colombia, but has a long reach. The other is a Paraguayan named Hans-Peter Schneider. He’s “tall and pale, totally hairless,” a specialist in people trafficking for customers with particularly depraved tastes, although he’ll do just about anything for money.

When he first sees Cari, he thinks, “It would be a waste to throw her away. With those interesting scars he could get a lot for her. Maybe $100,000 . . . that’s with all her limbs and no tattoos. If he had to customise her for top dollar, with the downtime, it would be more.”

If you’re getting a whiff of Hannibal here (that’s the point on Page 7 when my skin began to crawl, you’re right. Cari is introduced to Hans-Peter as the new renter of the house, and her reaction is elemental: “But when Cari shook his hand in the kitchen, she caught a whiff of brimstone off him. Like the smell of a burning village with dead inside the houses.”

Hans-Peter and his ‘jailbird’ crew claim they’ll be shooting a movie in the house, but Cari doesn’t believe it for a minute, even before they start using a jackhammer on the floors.

She’s already friendly with Don Ernesto’s Miami crew, who have a certain honour among thieves (and who are all a little in love with Cari). They come to scope out Hans-Peter, and one of them, an old man named Benito, who actually worked for Escobar back in the day, is standing in the yard when a spot near the seawall collapses.

Thinking fast, Benito pokes his cell-phone into the hole to take photos that reveal a cave carved under the water. Under the house’s foundation is a ‘shiny cube larger than a refrigerator’. . . . Beside the cube, at water’s edge, were a human skull and the back half of a dog. ‘The race to claim what’s in the safe after figuring out how to get past its lethal security systems and whatever toothy creature is lurking in the water outside the cave’s mouth, kicks into high gear, leaving a bloody wake. ’

Harris builds the plot skillfully, with violence and betrayal punctuated by moments of calm and reminiscence. The contest for the gold turns into a fight for survival that rockets to the final pages.

Cari Mora is a pulse-pounding thriller, and Cari is an engagingly badass character. But is Hans-Peter a next-gen Hannibal? Alas, no. He’s certainly dreadful, sadistic and relentless. But he just doesn’t have Lecter’s complexity and intelligence, his sophistication and startling contrasts. Hannibal was a character who could repel and seduce at once, and that was what made him so deeply, unforgottably creepy. It’s not just the liver, it’s the nice Chianti. — Tampa Bay Times/ TNS
A sight to behold at the souq

It’s always a pleasure to visit one of the most happening places in Doha, which is the Souq Waqif. Therefore, we decided to pay a visit to the souq to see the cannon firing at the time of Iftar, during the holy month of Ramadan, which is a thrilling experience for everyone. So do visit at the evening time before Iftar to experience it with your family. The children, in particular, are more excited to see, touch, feel and sit on top of the cannon. People enjoy taking photos and selfies around the cannon.

Finally, minutes before the Iftar time, the audience are cleared from the cannon area by men in fatigues as they prepare to fire the cannon. It’s a moment that lasts only about a second or so but you don’t want to miss it! Iftar boxes are also distributed by organisations like Qatar Charity to the folks who have come to witness the traditional round.

— Text by Mohammed Muslim (@mmuslim),

Photos by Mohammed Muslim and Shabana Bibi (shabanabb).
Will Smith’s magic works in the live-action version

By Rick Bentley

The parade of live-action films based on Disney animated movies continues with Guy Ritchie’s take on Aladdin. There are always elements to deal with in this process, but none of the previous attempts have come close to the massive hurdle as this film considering Robin Williams was so spectacular voicing the Genie in the 1992 production.

The live-action version comes with lavish sets, grand musical numbers and new music but it all came down to how well Will Smith could carry on such an iconic part.

The story hasn’t changed. The wicked Jafar (Marwan Kenzari) is looking for an easy way to become Sultan and he needs help from street thief Aladdin (Mena Massoud) to steal a magic lamp from a cave. Things go bad and it is Aladdin who ends up getting three wishes from the Genie (Will Smith) and uses one wish to become a prince so that he can impress the Sultan’s daughter (Naomi Scott).

Their romance and the evil deeds of Jafar play against the backdrop of the Oscar-winning score by Alan Menken with the memorable songs of Friend Like Me and A Whole New World. It also is told against a dazzling backdrop of a fictional Middle Eastern city created by production designer Gemma Jackson. Smith is by far the strongest casting outside of Smith. She brings both a royal demeanour and a spunkiness to her performance that makes Jasmine a very strong and independent character. The new tune of Speechless from Menken, Benj Pasek and Justin Paul is delivered with such power and grace that it is destined to be both an anthem for those who can’t be kept quite and a potential nominee for an Oscar.

In both performance and singing voice, Scott overpowers Mena Massoud. He’s fine when dealing with the lacunose ways of Aladdin or trying to control his emotions around Jasmine. But, he’s not as capable as Scott either as a singer or a dancer and that comes through very clearly with A Whole New World.

Even Nasim Pedrad’s performance as Jasmine’s friend and confidant, Dalia, has more energy. It may be that the women seem more empowered by these roles than the men. Marwan Kenzari’s Jafar even comes up a little short in the menacing category.

In the end, none of that would have mattered if Smith had not come through. Smith’s ability to bring his own form of magic to the role makes the live-action version not a movie mirage but real entertainment. There are some similarities to the frantic nature that came out of Williams being the original voice of the Genie. Those moments are mixed with the kind of high energy performance Smith has shown in the past when allowed to play comedy.

The CGI work that helps bring the character to life is good it is impossible to tell when it is the real Smith and when the Genie is being completely created in a computer. That adds to the overall strength of the performance.

Transformation of some Disney animated films over the past few years have worked beautifully (Jungle Book) while others have failed (Dumbo). Aladdin falls under the category of an adaptation that works but it does come with the same question that has dogged all of the animation-to-live-action productions so far: Why was this necessary other than to generate a few bucks for Disney? There are a few Disney animated movies that have some very outdated moments but overall the company’s animated offerings continue to be just as strong as the day they were created.

There is enough quality in the live-action Aladdin to suggest that you should stumble upon a magic lamp, make one of your wishes to go see this movie. The second should be to own a copy of the original animated film because it is still a treasure. The third wish is up to you. – TNS

by Kenneth Turan

It’s an open secret in publishing that young-adult fiction has gone viral because card-carrying adults as well as younger folks are drawn to the genre’s purity of emotions and directness of action.

In the cinematic universe, the Twilight and Hunger Games franchises have benefited from that phenomenon, and now the sweet natured but potent The Sun Is Also a Star is poised to join the list.

Based on a massively popular YA novel by Nicola Yoon, Sun unapologetically embraces deep–dish romantic fantasy (albeit with a bit of grit thrown in) and unashamedly exults in deep-dish romantic fantasy (albeit with a bit of sarcasm and snark, it’s just going to have to do). There is enough quality in the live-action Aladdin to suggest that you should stumble upon a magic lamp, make one of your wishes to go see this movie.

The same is true for cinematographer Autumn Durald Arkapaw, whose lively visuals include romantic shots of glinting skyscrapers that make us believers when Tasha exclaims “God I love this city.”

In a less coincidences–prone world, Tasha and Daniel would never meet, let alone know each other’s thoughts on love, but The Sun Is Also a Star does not unfold in that world.

So when Daniel sees a beautiful young woman and notes with astonishment that she’s wearing a jacket emblazoned with the same phrase (deus ex machina, of all things) he jotted down in his journal that very morning, he’s convinced they are meant for each other.

“Can’t stop what’s meant to be,” he tells her. “The universe wants us to be together.”

Tasha, however, is not so easily convinced. She mocks Daniel’s belief in love and tells him that if you can’t use the scientific method on something, it’s not real.

Daniel counters by asking for a day to prove they are in love. Tasha, unwilling to reveal her immigration problems, says that’s impossible. Daniel settles for an hour, at least for now.

Director Russo-Young, whose roots are in independent film, has brought a bit of a welcome indie sensibility to the proceedings.

The same is true for cinematographer Autumn Durald Arkapaw, whose lively visuals include romantic shots of glinting skyscrapers that make us believers when Tasha exclaims “God I love this city.”

Screenwriter Olver has done her part well, pruning Yoon’s novel and even removing a few characters that were not deemed essential to insure everything moves along smoothly.

Among the more interesting choices are changing Daniel’s college of choice from the book’s Yale to Dartmouth and altering the name and ethnicity of the immigration attorney Tasha consults from
**Wordsearch**

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**Codeword**

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.

**Sudoku**

Sudoku is a puzzle based on a 9x9 grid. The grid is also divided into nine (3x3) boxes. You are given a selection of numbers and to complete the puzzle, you must fill in the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains all of the digits from 1 to 9. Each digit is repeated.
Super Cryptic Clues

Across
1 Meals cooked in a Massachusetts seaport (5)
4 Knockers provided by learner (5)
7 Short day with bird or mammal (8)
8 Kid not finishing meals (4)
9 Standard selection from Beethoven or Mozart (4)
10 Stealthily pursued, son divulged information (7)
12 Ordering salmon pie in an American city (11)
14 Time has resolved lack of belief (7)
16 Novelist not finishing Rob Roy, for example? (4)
19 Knock a bit off approach shot (4)
20 Wendy’s family pets (8)
21 Stop to eat a Malaysian dish (5)
22 The crew dined, we hear (5)

Down
1 Be contemptuous of sulphur put on cereal (5)
2 Restraint shown by group of soldiers crossing river (3-4)
3 Secure a ship for Othello, perhaps (4)
4 Have a meal with fruit brought round for primate (5,3)
5 Essential spirit finally found in small bottle (5)
6 Casual footwear for couch potatoes? (7)
11 Upset, pasty-faced PC leaves festival (5,3)
12 Games for a striker? (7)
13 Without polish, without lead (7)
15 Former partner with postman living abroad (5)
18 Time to regret being faithful (4)

Yesterday’s Solution

Wordsearch

Codeword
What to keep in mind while curating personal space

All the elements in your house have an impact on how you feel and live which is why it’s essential to focus on them while curating your own personal space, say experts. Shailander Kumar, interior design consultant and founder of Fanusta.com, and Nikhil Tiwari, surface designer and founder of Topstona, have a list:
- Back to nature: Nature has been the initial habitat for all living creatures on earth, and adding it back into our space is extremely important. Be it a contemporary minimalistic space or a cosy Bohemian home, adding indoor plants in planters that match your aesthetics is a great step towards bringing in more positivity to your home.
- A pop of colour: An otherwise soothing and neutral home isn’t complete without a hint of character. A pop of colour would do just that.
- Sustainability is on: Environmental preservation is the need of the hour and what better way to make your contribution by adding sustainability into your living or work interiors. Adorn with materials like terracotta pottery, bamboo and more.
- For handmade things: When you buy a traditional handmade object, you are buying a one-of-a-kind art piece that has been created through timeless craftsmanship and emotions. Adding your interiors with such pieces, infuse life into your space.
- Feeling of textures: Textures make a room feel more intimate which helps to feel more comfortable in your surroundings. Adorn interior walls with textured wall claddings, and create a cosy and pleasant vibe for your home.

Aries
March 21 — April 19
Take extra time to tend to your appearance and show off a bit today, Aries. Keep your shoulders back and head high. Be the proud person you are. You should feel validated. Your job today is to simply uplift people with your presence. This is no sweat for you.

Taurus
April 20 — May 20
You may be called upon to host a gathering in your own home. Taurus. At first this could throw you into a panic because you don’t think your house is clean enough. Don’t worry. It’s probably impeccable. You’re the only one who will notice any dust, so don’t sweat it.

Cancer
June 21 — July 22
You may be running into obstacles associated with your goals. You may feel you aren’t getting the support and co-operation you deserve. Today you may sense that people are emotionally distant, with shallow views on certain issues. People you expected to be on your side may turn against you, making you feel betrayed. Try not to take things personally.

Leo
July 23 — August 22
You may be running into obstacles associated with your goals. You may feel you aren’t getting the support and co-operation you deserve. Today you may sense that people are emotionally distant, with shallow views on certain issues. People you expected to be on your side may turn against you, making you feel betrayed. Try not to take things personally.

Libra
September 23 – October 22
This is a climactic time for you, Libra. You may feel like many difficult issues are coming to a head. You may lash out and snap at people who don’t deserve it. Your actions may make the issue even more difficult to deal with. The key today is to bring more balance into your life. By controlling and stabilising your feelings, you can deal with the difficult issues that arise.

Scorpio
October 23 – November 21
Get into the spotlight where you belong instead of letting someone else take credit for something you did, Scorpio. Don’t be shy about strutting your stuff. You may usually turn away from people who act this way because they seem shallow and self-centred. Realise that you’re more sensitive. Be proud of who you are.

Sagittarius
November 22 – December 21
Today can be a wonderfully productive day for you, Sagittarius, if you learn how to compromise. If you insist on doing things your way only, you will run into difficult emotional conflicts. realise that this can easily be avoided by joining hands with your partner and working together toward a common goal. There’s a great deal of energy here, so don’t waste it on something insignificant.

Capricorn
December 22 – January 19
You will most likely be hungry for attention today, Capricorn. You will look at others who are on centre stage and adjust your appearance or attitude in order to be more like them. Be careful of getting obsessed with attention. The key is to be yourself and happy, regardless of who’s watching. A flower unseen blooms just as beautifully and smells just as sweet.

Aquarius
January 20 – February 18
This is a great day to brand yourself, Aquarius. You’re on top of the world, so enjoy it, your family, and the people around you. You’re at the forefront of the action and you don’t miss a beat, regardless of the conversation buzzing around you. You’re able to whip out facts and dates at the drop of a hat. Don’t let anyone bring you down or talk you out of your good mood.

Virgo
August 23 – September 22
You may wonder why all the attention isn’t focused on you, Virgo. Perhaps you feel cheated and irritable. The more annoyed you get, the more you will drive others away instead of draw them to you. Rather than get upset or angry because attention isn’t coming your way, join with the prevailing happy-go-lucky mood. You will find that your whole day turns around for the better.

Pisces
February 19 – March 20
You may feel tense, Pisces, perhaps because someone close to you disregards the way you feel. You feel as if this person is more concerned with his or her own issues and not concerned about you. Meanwhile, your sensitive, caring heart is well aware of everyone else. You support others and are thoughtful. It’s time to reorganise your priorities. First care about yourself, then others.
So fear Allah as much as you are able and listen and obey and spend [in the way of Allah]; it is better for you yourselves. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul - it is those who will be the successful.

Qur’an 64:16

Altruism: an Islamic perspective

If it is easy for you to give without being annoyed, you are a generous person. If you are one of those who donate profusely and retain only little for themselves, you are open-handed. However, if you give while in need yourself, you have reached the highest degree of generosity: altruism; this stems from staunch faith, genuine love, perseverance and steadfastness, and hope of reward from Allah The Almighty.

The following are some of the most important factors that urge one to favour others over his or her self:
1. Love of good manners and abhorrence of incivility: one’s level of self-sacrifice is proportionate to one’s desire to possess good morals, because favouring others is the epohome of courtesy.
2. Dislike of stinginess: anyone who hates miserliness knows that there is no means of countering it other than with generosity and kind acts.
3. Respect of the rights of others: when a person gives people their due and respect, he or she meticulously fulfils their rights, fully aware that if he or she does not reach the level of altruism, he or she will not give others their due.
4. Belittling the worldly life and aspiring for the Hereafter: if people are primarily concerned with the next life, the worldly one becomes inconsequential in their sight; they know that they will be recompensed for whatever they give here, on the Day of Resurrection when they will be in dire need.
5. Adapting oneself to tolerating hardship and distress: this helps one reach a degree of self-sacrifice that may result in poverty and harsh conditions; so, if a person is not accustomed to endurance, he or she will not be capable of giving while in need.

Degrees of altruism

The scholars who have divided altruism into varying degrees, is Ibn ul-Qayyim, may Allah have mercy upon him, who said:

“The first level is to favour others over yourself in that which does not diminish your commitment to the religion, hinder your path (to Allah) or waste your time; this means that you favour their interests over your own, such as when you feed them while you are hungry, dress them while you are still unclothed and offer them water while you are thirsty. However, this should not lead you to commit anything Islamically prohibited. Thus, any act that results in reforming your heart, time and standing with Allah The Almighty, should not be an object of sacrifice. If you favour others at the expense of such acts, you are actually ignorantly favouring Satan over Him.

The second degree is to give preference to the pleasure of Allah The Almighty over the satisfaction of people, even if its repercussions are so severe that one’s body and faculties cannot afford them. This act entails that one wants and does whatever pleases Him, although it may result in the anger of His creatures. This is the degree of the Prophets of Allah, whereas the Messengers were at a higher level, and the respective Messengers, may Allah exalt their mention, even more esteemed.

However, the Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayh wa sallam, occupies the highest level of all, as he resisted the whole world, devoted himself to calling others to Allah The Almighty, bore the animosity of both relatives and strangers for His sake and favoured His pleasure over anyone else’s, in all aspects, fearing the criticism of no one. His intention, concern and endeavours were all dedicated to satisfying Allah The Almighty, conveying His message, rendering His Words the uppermost and fighting His enemies until His religion became superior over all others, its argument established against the worlds and His favour perfectly bestowed on the believers. The Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayh wa sallam, conveyed the message, delivered the trust, advised the Ummah, strove ardently in the way of Allah The Almighty and worshipped Him until he passed away. Therefore, no one attained as exalted a degree of altruism as the Prophet, sallallaahu ‘alayh wa sallam.

As for a person who favours people’s approval over that of Allah The Almighty, it is His unchangeable tradition that He makes their satisfaction impossible to achieve and he or she is forsaken by them, with only him/herself to blame. Indeed, someone whose praise is sought will eventually vilify and the one whose satisfaction is desired, will become displeased. Accordingly, the person who seeks the approval or delight of others will neither achieve his or her goal, nor attain the reward of the pleasure of the Lord; and this is the weakest and most foolish person.”

Ash-Shaafi’i, may Allah have mercy upon him, said, “Satisfying people is an unattainable goal. Therefore, adhere to what makes you righteous; and that is possible only if we favour the satisfaction of the Lord over that of others.”

The third degree of altruism is to attribute this quality to Allah The Almighty and not one’s own self, and to admit that these self-sacrificing acts are by His Command, thereby submitting them to Him. Consequently, if we do favour others over our own self, it means that it is Allah The Almighty Who did so in reality, for He is the actual Giver.

Islamweb.net
SPIRIT OF RAMADAN

US expat loves to see extra kindness during Ramadan

By Mudassir Raja

Qatar has quickly become a place known for its heterogeneity with people from all corners of the world making Qatar their second home.

The expatriates obviously come from different cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds, while Qatar predominately carries its Arab and Islamic culture. The cosmopolitan atmosphere provides an opportunity for a diverse group of people to understand and appreciate different cultures and religions.

In this sense, Ramadan is a distinct period of time when the expatriates from different countries experience new and interesting things. They seem to enjoy experiencing the spirit of Ramadan and how it is observed in Qatar.

Jose Saucedo is a US national. He has been living in Qatar for about two years. Before moving to Qatar, he used to live in Minnesota. During his short stay in Qatar, Jose has made his name as a volunteer who heads a group that runs regular beach clean-up drives.

Community recently spoke to him about how he has been experiencing the month of Ramadan. Jose said: “I did not know much about Ramadan before I moved to Qatar. I always saw it as an important period of the year for the Muslims. I always took it as a tradition of fasting. I did not know much about it.”

Since Jose moved to Qatar, his understanding and knowledge about the month of Ramadan and its true spirit has improved. “Qatar is a Muslim country. Ramadan is greeted with religious reverence and cultural hospitality. My knowledge about the holy month got enhanced in Qatar.”

“Now, I know that it is a religious obligation to fast. It is the month when Qur’an was revealed. Each of its 10 days has its unique religious significance. There are more and more prayers during this month. I mean I have learnt a lot from my friends.”

Being in Qatar, Jose’s family has also improved their knowledge of Ramadan. “My children have also learnt about Ramadan and Garango in their school.”

Jose has now started fasting himself to experience the basic human conditions. He fasted only for three to four days in 2018. This year he has been observing fasts throughout Ramadan. “It was really hard at the beginning. After going through the challenge, I have realised that it is like challenging yourself.

“Fasting reminds you of basic human conditions like hunger and thirst. When at the iftar table we take the first date or first sip of water, we realise how fortunate we are to have food and water. These are the most beautiful feelings.”

Jose finds it exciting that during Ramadan people continue their normal life and carry out their daily activities. “We also kept on cleaning the beach areas during Ramadan. Recently, more than 300 volunteers gathered at Al Zubarah area. We started our clean-up operation at 3pm and finished at 6pm. We had our iftar at 6:15pm and returned home. There is life in routine during Ramadan.”

Further, he has learnt many good things about Ramadan and the practices that people follow during the holy month. “It is the month of extra kindness and extra generosity. It is always good to be extra kind. The spirit is evident everywhere during Ramadan in Qatar, from large parties in big hotels, iftar tents to distribution of roadside iftar packets. It reminds me of celebrations of the Thanksgiving Day in the United States. It is the spirit of saying thanks for the blessing that we have from God by giving away the share to other people.”

He added: “Ramadan is an embodiment of patience, kindness and generosity. The people of Qatar are genuinely hospitable and they become spiritedly generous during Ramadan.”

Food Tips: What to eat?

By Azmat Haroon

If you have ever seen the popular anime Naruto Shippuden, you would have seen Naruto eating a bowl of noodles called ramen, which usually comes topped with cutlets or boiled eggs, in between missions without fail. He slurps while eating ramen, showing how the best way to eat ramen is just when they are still hot.

There is a reason behind slurping as well. Ramen experts say that if you eat your ramen daintily, the process can take a long time and the noodles will get all mushy.

Ramen, or ramyeon in Korean, is an extremely popular dish in the world thanks not just to an anime but also the instant ramen cups or packets available everywhere, including Qatar. Originally from China, ramen was brought to Japan over 100 years ago. It consists of Chinese-style wheat noodles in a flavoured broth with the addition of various toppings.

Japanese ramen comes in different varieties that is decided by the flavour of the soup. These include shio (salt-based ramen), shoyu (soy sauce-based ramen), miso (soybean paste-flavoured ramen).

Meanwhile, Korean ramyeon is different not only because the noodles are typically fried but they also make soup using instant powder, which means there are literally over hundreds of flavours.

Ramen’s popularity is due in part to the fact that it is simple to make and quick to eat. It is also inexpensive, making it an ideal lunch, dinner or after-a-night-on-the-town snack for budget-conscious people.

Here are our favourite places to grab a bowl of ramen in Qatar.

Top places for Ramen
- Wagamama
- Megu
- Oishi Sushi
- Yee Hwa
- Sol Korean Restaurant