

Time Out

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Inspiration and Co

There's a company that spoonfeeds authors with plots. BRANDON ROBshaw has already signed up

WHAT if there was a company which produced novels by committee? Which specialised in genre fiction, aimed with pinpoint accuracy at an identified target audience? Which thrashed out all the details of the plot, even snatches of dialogue, and then hired jobbing writers to join the dots? And then sold the finished product to established publishers? Well, there is such a company, and its name is Working Partners.

Few people outside the publishing trade have heard of it, but it's reasonably certain that if you have children, there are several Working Partners titles on their bookshelves.

The 100-plus books in the *Animal Ark* series, for instance, by "Lucy Daniels", an individual as fictitious as the stories themselves. It has sold over 15m copies worldwide.

Or the *Rainbow Magic* series (sales 5m and counting), or the *Heartland* series, or the *Shelby* series, or the *Secret Unicorn* series. For older readers there are the *Warriors* series, the *Special Agents* series, a series of vampire books and the *Lady Grace Mysteries* (one of which I reviewed a few weeks ago without even knowing that it was a WP title).

Except for a discreet mention on the copyright page, there is no indication of Working Partners' involvement in the finished product.

The books are brought out by reputable children's publishers such as Bloomsbury, HarperCollins, Macmillan, Orchard, Oxford, Puffin and Scholastic. They are falling over themselves to sign these titles. Kids love them, and they sell in high volume on both sides of the Atlantic.

The logical next step, of course, is to see if this strategy will work for adult fiction; and that is what Working Partners is looking to do now. In 2006, Working Partners was formed with the aim of cracking the adult market. Its first title, a chick-lit novel, has already been sold to a leading UK publisher and will be published with much fanfare (in which Working Partners' role will go unmentioned) later this year.

Many people's immediate reaction would be that this all sounds a bit sinister. It smacks of cynicism and manipulation. This is a knee-jerk reaction, though. As Puffin's marketing and Managing Director of Working Partners says, "Lots of entertainment is produced in this way: sitcoms or films, for instance. Nobody thinks it's sinister when a team of script editors and producers work on a movie script - what's the difference?"

At this point I should declare an interest. I am working on a four-book series for Working Partners, to be published by Puffin next year. This is how it works. You are sent a confidential document with descriptions of all the characters and a detailed synopsis of the plot. That the synopsis for a 200,000-word text runs to some 5,000 words gives some idea of just how detailed.

Nothing is left undecided; as a writer, you're

not concerned with what happens but with how it happens.

You write three sample chapters, in competition with other writers (you never find out who or even how many of them there are) and if Working Partners likes your first sample it will ask you to submit a revised version, again in competition with other authors (presumably fewer).

You are given extremely detailed and helpful feedback. Suggestions for revisions range from macro-comments about how such and such a character needs to be made more sympathetic, to micro-comments such as "There are too many 'g's in this sentence."

These criticisms were mingled with enthusiastic praise for the parts that worked - and praise is what all writers crave, even more than money.

You do get money, too: if your sample wins the final round, you'll be offered a modest advance on each book and a percentage of the royalty Working Partners get from the publishers. Signing up for the deal means signing up to a year of tight deadlines: a 20,000-word manuscript every three months for the next year.

Isn't it inhibiting to have to write to someone else's synopsis? In the obvious sense, yes, of course - you are not free to make the story go off in a completely different direction.

You can't bring in a new character if it's not in the synopsis. On the other hand, working within constraints is, paradoxically, liberating: the imagination is given the raw material to work with, and turning it into a story that comes off the page is a creative task like any other.

You might be thinking, this is all very well for children's fiction, but surely adult fiction needs to be more inspired? Charles Nettleton observes: "The potential for long series is not so great with adult fiction. We tend to think in terms of short sequences - perhaps three or four novels per sequence. Also, with adult characters, there has to be a lot more background research in such things as the jobs people do or the period or region they live in; more importantly, you have to fill in the backstories of all the characters - they can't just emerge fully-formed from the text."

"But apart from that, there's no difference in principle. Whether it's children or adults we're aiming at, the challenge is to come up with great stories."

If Working Partners operated in a cynical manner, deliberately writing down for its readership and producing work that its editors despised, it would be a failure.

As Colin Watson put it in his critical survey of detective fiction *Snobery with Violence*, "The public is remarkably sensitive to 'longue in the chest' attitudes; it recognises and rejects every attempt to write down by an author who does not himself share the popular ideas he pretends to approve."



What makes Working Partners so successful is that the editors genuinely believe in the projects they are working on, and they will not take on writers who don't share their excitement.

This may explain why so far Working Partners have had few imitators. Chris Snowdon, the managing director, says, "There are two companies in America who are doing something similar. Over here we're the only one. And this is because what we do is difficult - you can't just say, 'I know, let's make up ideas for novels that the public will like.' It takes a lot of talent."

Like it or not, this appears to be the future of commercial fiction. It's linked with the growing professionalism of writing, a trend that has seen degree courses in creative writing mushrooming in universities all over Britain, with the Open University joining in last year.

What is wrong with giving the reading public

what it wants? Working Partners isn't perverting or corrupting public taste, but providing well-crafted, popular commercial fiction.

That this approach would not work for literary fiction is agreed. Working Partners is never going to come up with a new *Ulysses* or *Gravety's Rainbow*.

This is because literary fiction is most successful when it is different from what the reader expects of novel, whereas commercial fiction is most successful when it satisfies the reader's expectations. So, great literature produced by committee, no.

Good popular fiction, yes. It's likely enough that some time in the next few years you'll be enjoying a middlebrow novel on holiday, and it may cross your mind how well put together it is - and it will be a Working Partners title, and you'll never even realise it. - *The Independent*

Jimmy Carter faces revolt over Middle East book

THE former US president Jimmy Carter (pictured) has been facing a revolt from some of his own supporters after 14 members of the advisory board of his human rights organisation resigned in protest at his view on Israel and the Palestinians.

Carter has faced a backlash to the argument in his latest book, *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*, for a renewed effort to kick-start the Middle East peace process. The book has been denounced by some commentators as anti-Israeli.

The 200-strong advisory board of the Carter Centre is drawn from prominent local figures in Atlanta, Georgia, where it is based.

In a letter to Carter explaining their decision to quit, the 14 members accused him of holding a "strident and uncompromising position".

They said the book "portrays the conflict between Israel and her neighbours as a purely one-sided affair with Israel holding all the responsibility for resolving the conflict... It seems that you have turned to a world of advocacy, including even malicious advocacy."

Carter's book, which is No.5 in the *New York Times* best-seller list for hardback non-fiction, has been the subject of mounting criticism. Last month a fellow of the centre and long-time Carter adviser, Kenneth Stein, became the first to resign.

The book tracks the peace process from Carter's role as an architect of the 1979 treaty between Egypt and Israel.

It blames all sides in the conflict but is especially critical of successive Israeli governments. "Israeli bad faith fills the pages," wrote the *New York Times* book reviewer.

The most vociferous attacks on Carter have come from the word apartheid to describe the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a professor at Harvard law school.

In a series of articles published on a Boston website



under the title *Ex-President For Sale*, Prof Dershowitz has accused Carter of having been in hook to Arab leaders.

The spat between the two men led to further controversy within Brandeis, a Massachusetts university founded by the Jewish community in America.

Carter declined an invitation to speak there because he would have had to debate with Prof Dershowitz.

Last week, Carter announced that he would speak at the university this month, but only after the law professor had been taken off the ticket.

His spokesman said he would be happy to answer all questions.

Prof Dershowitz said he would be at the event and ask questions from the floor. "I will be the first person to have my hand up. I guarantee they won't stop me from attending," he told the Associated Press.

Part of the reason reaction to Carter's book has so far been his use of the word apartheid to describe the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a comparison with the former racist regime in South Africa vehemently rejected by Israel. - *Guardian News & Media*

Literary talent contest gets Pop Idol treatment

By Ed Pilkington in New York

THEY are billing it as the thinking person's *American Idol*, a search for the next big superstar but with literary, as opposed to pop celebrity, pretensions.

Touchstone, an imprint of the publishers Simon & Schuster, on January 11 launched *First Chapters*, a competition designed to find writing talent through the Internet. It is inviting unpublished authors to submit the first three chapters of a manuscript to the scrutiny of the voting public. The winner's book will be published and distributed by Touchstone and the author will enjoy a \$5,000 cash prize.

The contest is being staged by a social networking website - gather.com - that does for the middle-aged what MySpace does for teens. Under the competition rules, authors have to submit March 15 to complete their manuscripts. The first chapters of all submitted work will be posted on the site and members will then be able to vote for up to 14 days.

The 15 most popular entries, together with five chosen by a panel comprising two Simon & Schuster executives and Tom Gerace, the founder of gather.com, will enter two further rounds of voting. The pool will be whittled down to five before the winner is picked.

Early website postings were mixed. Many welcomed the chance for hidden talent, but others questioned the value of a form more usually associated with the *Pop Idol* judge Simon Cowell rather than literary excellence. "This sounds to me far more like a popularity contest than a valid writing competition. Then again, that is perhaps accurately reflective of today's publishing world," a member said. Others were unhappy that the contest was closed to all but Americans.

This is the second attempt by Touchstone to launch a literary competition this year; a first prize of \$100,000 and publishing contracts with Simon & Schuster were offered in a contest that was then cancelled after attracting only 1,000 people, half the minimum number. - *Guardian News & Media*



Classics launch ... Schoolchildren recite a selection of the *Analects of Confucius* in Chinese and English at a grand launch for a new 100 volume edition of Chinese literary classics in Beijing on Friday. The state supported venture brings works dating back to the Warring States period (477-221 BC) to the 19th century with translation both to English and modern Chinese. Besides boosting Chinese culture to a global audience, the books are targeted at the rapidly growing number of students of Mandarin Chinese around the world estimated to be over 30m.

By Kathryn Hughes

Biographies, memoirs to look out for this year

YOU might think that there wasn't any more mileage to be squeezed out of the streets of Victorian London. But Jerry White is much more than a thrower-together of bits of information about dead cats, cholera and Fagin. January is the perfect time to tramp around the relatively empty capital, and you could do a lot worse than have White's *London in the Nineteenth Century* (Jonathan Cape) as your background script.

While you're out there, clattering over the cobbles, you might also like to consider the

extraordinary story of Princess Beatrice, Queen Victoria's youngest daughter, as told by Matthew Dennison in *The Last Princess* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson).

In February the big book has got to be Hermione Lee's *Edith Wharton* (Chatto & Windus). It's 10 years since Lee brought out her *Virginia Woolf*, which many people consider one of the best biographies of the 90s. Can she do it again with Wharton?

Meanwhile Frances Welsh is getting to grips with the great-

est conspiracy of them all in *A Romanov Fantasy* (Short Books), which asks just how Anna Anderson managed to convince half the pensionable royals in interwar Europe that she was none other than Grand Duchess Anastasia.

Big numbers are sometimes hard to grasp in history, which is why the affront of Atlantic slavery - 12m Africans rounded up and plunked on a new continent - can feel so fizzy. James Walvin's clever idea is to approach the grand narrative through individual stories.

In *The Trader, The Owner, The Slave* (Jonathan Cape, March) Walvin weaves three personal memoirs from three key players to moving and subtle effect.

In April Jonathan Miles tells the story of Geriulac's most celebrated and reproduced narrative painting, *Medusa: The Shipwreck, The Scandal, The Masterpiece* (Cape) is a thrilling read about Restoration France, political corruption and, of course, a boat that goes under in a spectacular way.

In May Linda Colley's *The Ordeal of Elizabeth Marsh: A Woman in Global History* (Harper) looks set to push biographical writing to a new place entirely. Marsh was a woman of no importance, yet her story rackets round some of the most contentious moments in 18th-century history.

Come June, while everyone else is packing their suitcases with slight books (in all senses), you should make room for the first volume of Philip Dwyer's new biography of Napoleon, *The Path to Power 1769-1799* (Bloomsbury). The story has

been told before, of course, but this time around Dwyer concentrates on Napoleon's ability to manipulate the media as a way of getting left-off.

Three of the biggest titles to start getting excited about in the autumn are the third volume of John Richardson's magisterial *Life of Picasso* (Penguin), Ophelia Field's elegant *The Kit Kat Club* (HarperCollins) and Germaine Greer, that great contrarian, stirring up a new conversation about Anne Hathaway, Shakespeare's Wife (Bloomsbury).

Now why did no one think of that before? - *Guardian News & Media*

Promotion ... Kiran Desai, the 2006 Man Booker Prize winner, speaks during a promotional event for her award winning novel, *The Inheritance of Loss*, during the literary festival in Galle, Sri Lanka on Saturday.

Signs of a thaw in writers' 30-year feud

By Giles Tremlett in Madrid

ONE of the world's iciest literary feuds, sealed with a punch-up in a cinema 30 years ago, is thawing as Colombian Nobel prize winner Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Peruvian writer Mario Vargas Llosa prepare to publish together.

A special edition of Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, to mark this year's 40th anniversary of its publication, is to include a prologue by Vargas Llosa. "Both men are in agreement over this," a spokesman for Spain's Royal Academy, which is publishing the edition, said last week.

The agreement comes despite the fact the two have not spoken since they came to blows in a Mexican cinema in 1976. The book is to be published in March, when it will be presented to a meeting of national Spanish language academies from around the world at Medellin in Colombia.

The introduction is reported to be an excerpt from Vargas Llosa's laudatory book on Garcia Marquez, published when the two were friends in 1971, called *History of a Deicide*.

The Peruvian writer had apparently refused to allow the book to be republished after his falling out with Garcia Marquez. He finally relented last year, adding it to a collection of his complete works in Spain. "There is no point in censoring a part of your life," he said at the time. Both writers have remained silent about the reasons for their brawl, except to say it was about something personal.

Garcia Marquez, who published a first volume of memoirs four years ago, is resisting writing a second volume, reportedly because he does not want to go into the reasons behind that fight. "I have realised that if I write the second volume, I will have to tell things that I do not want to tell about certain personal relationships that are not at all good," he said in an interview with Spain's *La Vanguardia* newspaper last year.

Whatever the reasons for the fight, it was the end of an intense friendship that had seen Garcia Marquez become a godfather to Vargas Llosa's son, Gabriel. The two belonged to the group of literary lions who emerged from Latin America in the 1960s. Both spent time as impoverished writers in Paris attics before going on to enjoy literary success.

Garcia Marquez admitted last year that he was running out of steam as a writer. Friends say that, as he turns 80 this year, he is more interested in reading than in writing. Vargas Llosa, 70, continues to write drama, novels and essays. - *Guardian News & Media*



(From left) A photograph taken by a student of Swaminarayan Hindu School shows an Asian girl waving the England flag during the 2006 soccer World Cup; Children playing during the 2006 soccer World Cup in this undated picture shot by Zoe, a pupil at the Mount Carmel Roman Catholic Technology College.

British faith school pupils get snapshot of attitudes

A government-funded photography workshop in London involving students aims to improve community links and explore perceptions of religion, ELEANOR WASON reports

TAHYIA, a student at an Islamic school converted from a Victorian grammar school, is discussing a photograph she took of a friend with her head covered by a hijab and a scarf pulled up to her eyes. "I didn't really think of a meaning behind it, although when I look at it now it looks like there are several," she said, giggling. "My photo makes me think 'terrorist' because of all the influences of the outside world, but that wasn't my intention. My friend wrapped the scarf around her face because it was cold."

Tahya is one of a group of London teenagers who are five different religions taking part in a government-funded photography workshop aimed at improving community links in one of the world's most multicultural cities. The scheme encourages teenagers to use photography to explore perceptions of religion, at a time when Britain's traditional government support for schools based on religion - alongside secular ones - is coming under fire. Critics say faith schools fuel segregation and intolerance. The London bombings by British-bred Muslim extremists in 2005 sparked concern that a policy of encouraging communities to conserve their traditions, rather than assume a common British identity, had deepened dangerous cultural divides. There are about 7,000 state faith schools in Britain, mostly affiliated with major Christian denominations, but also Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Greek Orthodox and Seventh-Day Adventist schools. They are popular with parents who often associate them with high academic achievement, and the government says they can help community cohesion by developing partnerships with schools of other faiths and non-faith schools.

In the project's weekly sessions, students study famous photographers and learn to document their own lives through photos. They aim to produce a joint exhibition of their pictures at the end of the school year. Once a term, they meet at one of the schools to work in mixed-faith groups. Despite initial reservations, the 14-to-16-year old pupils from Islamia Girls' School, Mount Carmel Roman Catholic Technology College, King Solomon High, Guru Nanak Sikh School and Swaminarayan Hindu School were pleasantly surprised by each other. "You think people from other religions are going to be very different," 14-year-old Islamia student Sarah said. "But they're just like you, they have the same ideas as you, the same heroes. Religion is something we base our lives on but it didn't matter when we talked together."

The pupils' discussions of how a simple image can hold different interpretations according to the viewers' background help probe wider issues of identity - personal, religious and national. Many said they had never met people from certain religions before, but their nerves soon gave way to inquisitiveness. "I was impressed they felt comfortable to ask questions and to answer them. I heard a Catholic girl ask a Muslim girl if she liked to wear a headscarf," organiser Gabrielle Lobb said. Muslim women's dress has become a hot topic in many countries after senior politicians, including British Prime Minister Tony Blair, said they veils hindered community relations. Britain has traditionally taken a more tolerant approach to Islamic dress than other European countries such as France, where the headscarf is banned in state schools. Many

of the non-Muslim girls attending the workshop were clearly unused to keeping their hair covered as required by Islam, one of several Islamic schools founded by Yusuf Islam, the singer formerly known as Cat Stevens. The government last year tried but failed to enforce a scheme obliging religious schools to offer a quarter of their places to children of different faiths. Instead, leaders of the major faiths pledged to commit their schools to teach pupils about other religions and promote community cohesion. Spencer Lewis, deputy head of Jewish King Solomon High, opposed the quota idea but welcomed inter-faith dialogue. "This photo project was a tremendous opportunity to get students to learn about each other's faiths," he said. "This is what schools need to be doing. Children need to see how other people live - that is how you break down stereotypes."

Mount Carmel's art teacher Cathy Lee said a visit to the opulent white marble temple next door to the Hindu school in the project had reduced her girls to uncharacteristic silence and left some of them almost moved to tears. At one photography session in the Hindu school, 13-year-old Ravi talked about the work of British photographer Martin Parr and gestured to the classroom's views of temple domes and turrets alongside London's new Wembley football stadium. "Parr uses photos to represent England. He does beaches, people having fun. It's all blue skies and yellow sand but only a small part of England is like that," he said in navy school blazer and tie, a red ritual Hindu mark on his forehead. "I wanted to take photos of what London is about. Parr takes pictures of white people but now there is so much diversity," he said. - Reuters

Remote Chinese city banks on Olympic boom

By Ben Blanchard

TO THE casual observer Chifeng - with its smoke stacks, crumbling apartment blocks and unkept factories - is just another industrial town trying to find its way in China's uncertain transition to a market economy. The city, typical of many poor and polluted inland cities in China, is an unlikely setting for a potential tourist hotspot. But all that could change come the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, for Chifeng has been put on a list of tourist sites recommended by the Olympic Games organising committee. Chifeng bills itself as the closest place from Beijing to experience the Inner Mongolian grasslands, where Genghis Khan's warriors roamed centuries ago and where his descendants still live. The local government has high hopes the Olympic Games will draw foreign tourists to the city, creating jobs and easing the pain of unemployment caused by the closure or privatisation of the factories that used to be the city's economic mainstay. "If we can get more visitors here on the tails of the Olympics, that's great," said Li Shuang, 50, a laid-off worker who opened his own restaurant four years ago. "For too long Chifeng has been remote, so I hope that we can be more connected to the outside world," Li added. "Maybe we can even get some foreign investment." Yet Chifeng, referred to on its Chinese language travel website (www.chifeng.net) as a "flourishing, outstanding tourist city" and a "tourist hub", may find it hard to attract large numbers of tourists.

The city has been judged so unworthy of tourism that English language guidebooks, including the iconic Lonely Planet, make not even a passing mention of it. Indeed, foreign visitors are such an oddity that people stop to stare at them in the street. "Why on earth would a foreigner want to come here?" said ethnic Mongolian Bataar as he smoked outside Chifeng's train station, built in a socialist-architectural style that was once considered de rigueur by Communist planners. "There's nothing to see in Chifeng." Signs that the government has been spending like crazy to prepare for a possible tourist influx are everywhere. A huge new administrative hub, complete with Chifeng's first five-star hotel, rises out of the fields on the outskirts. In the main town, old buildings are being torn down, roads repaved and street lighting improved. Yet Chifeng may face an image problem. It is home to a jail identified by Amnesty International as a place where torture takes place - a prison that houses political detainees like ethnic Mongolian academic Hada, serving 15 years for separatism. And although the military presence is not obvious downtown, an air base lies on the city's outskirts. Despite being situated a relatively close, around 500 or so kilometres northeast of Beijing, communications are inconvenient, though a new highway has cut in half driving time to the capital. But the fastest train to Beijing still takes about 10 hours. Chifeng's airport, 1950s-era airport is so small that the baggage reclaim area is a raised counter next to two check-in desks. The tarmac can hold just two aircraft - and small regional jets at that. There are no announcements in English. Visitors who arrive a little early for one of the three daily flights will find that most flights are turned off, including in the control tower. To be fair, many of Chifeng's tourist attractions lie outside the city, in the grasslands and mountains. Chifeng, whose population of about 5m exceeds that of New Zealand, was once the capital of the Liao Dynasty, established by the nomadic Khitan people in 907. - Reuters



A woman picks through the remains of a demolished house in Chifeng.

Banger rally does a Dakar minus the frills

By Claire Soares

COMPETITORS in the Dakar Rally can count on support from planes and even helicopters to back them as they steer their state-of-the-art vehicles across the Sahara desert. David Kirkpatrick had only his ancient Mini and his wits. The financial analyst took time out from his job in London to compete in the Ultimate Banger Challenge, an alternative amateur rally where beat-up cars try to survive a three-week road-trip from southern England to the west coast of Africa. "I wanted to have a crack at something a bit different," explained the 30-year-old during a lightning refuelling stop on the penultimate leg in northern Senegal. "And driving this thing across the Sahara was certainly that." This year marks the fifth alternative rally, conceived as a spoof version of the better-known Dakar Rally. The Ultimate Banger Challenge, which began from Plymouth on December 27 and is scheduled to complete its journey in Banjul by mid-January, is the brainchild of a frustrated London stockbroker, Julian Nowill. "I set up this rally to take the micky out of the 'Big One' (the Dakar Rally) to prove you can do it in a crap car with no experience or special skills," the 47-year-old said in an e-mail interview. Devoid of the glitzy commercialisation that surrounds the Dakar Rally, there are just five riders in the amateur race. Drivers are not supposed to spend more than \$190 to buy their cars, and no more than \$29 on improvements. Vehicles must be left-hand drive and must be auctioned off in the Gambian capital, Banjul, the final destination, with the proceeds going to local charities. But the regulation ringing in Kirkpatrick's ears as his Mini battled its way across the



A car taking part in the Ultimate Banger Challenge stops for refuelling in the Senegalese town of Kebemer.

Sahara was this one: "Once the Rally is under way... teams are on their own. "We had to keep up a speed of at least 80kph otherwise we'd be swallowed up by the dunes, and we couldn't see more than 100m beyond our noses because we were stuck in a sandstorm," Kirkpatrick recalls. "So we were bumping off rocks and basically driving blind, just hoping not to get sprayed with sand." Spray-painted with the Union Jack, his car certainly looked the part, but its ventilation system left much to be desired. "These cars overheat in cold England so imagine what happens when you're crossing Africa! We were expecting it to blow up at any moment but thankfully we made it,"

Kirkpatrick said. Some competitors were not so lucky. The 'Dukes of Hazzard' team, taking their name from the hit US TV series, had to abandon their orange car in the sand dunes after its chip blew. Others had to call on all their powers of ingenuity. After one vehicle's fuel pump packed in, its crew had to construct a gravity-fed fuel system from a hosepipe and a Jerry can mounted on the roof. The only hitch? They had to stop to top up the container every 48km. This year 400 teams applied for 200 places in the Ultimate Banger Challenge and the organiser admits to purposefully picking "the unsuitable and inexperienced". Linda Drury, a 38-year-old

travel operator from England, does not even hold a driver's licence, but is taking part in the 4,800km trek as navigator for fiancé Dave Wells. Driving a yellow and red Land Rover emblazoned with hearts, the pair will marry when they reach Banjul. Their best man and male match of honour are also competing in the rally and several of their new racing friends also plan to attend. While the founder and many of the participants may be British, the 2007 rally includes drivers from around the world, from the US to New Zealand, from Bulgaria to Wales. "The Latvians are my star nation, always entering teams, always public spirited, always helping teams who break

down," Nowill says. The amateur race is about participation not prizes and organisers are proud of the fact nothing except the cars gets imported so local communities reap more benefits - with drivers using local accommodation, restaurants and fuel suppliers. This contrasts with the publicity-fueled frenzy that surrounds the Dakar Rally, which has claimed 49 lives in its 29-year existence, 24 of them competitors. Two African children were killed in the 2006 professional race. Some give away sweets or T-shirts to the hordes of children that surround the convoy. "I've learnt the French for 'Give me a present,'" jokes

British computer consultant Robert Gooding. But for others like American Jeff Domzaliski, a 49-year-old accountant, the cultural experience has gone deeper. His team, The Good Knights, is named after the band he and co-pilot Keith Czerny play in back home in Cleveland, Ohio. Having made it to Banjul, the pair did an impromptu set with some Gambian musicians and one invited them back to his home. "We sat outside his two-room dirt poor shanty house in the shade of a papaya tree, singing songs and talking," Domzaliski recalled. "This was probably the most interesting day of our journey," he said. - Reuters

Youths hide as Russian army comes knocking

By Eleonore Dermey

WHEN the bell of the Zuyev's small Moscow apartment rang one evening in December, 19-year-old Andrei was right to fear the worst. "It was 10 in the evening. A man in civilian clothes appeared at the door and declared that he had come for Andrei to bring him to the army enlistment office," said Valentina Zuyeva, Andrei's mother, who was still in shock several days after the visit descended into violence. A small, reserved woman, Valentina repeatedly told the recruitment officer that her son was exempt from military service for reasons, but to no avail. She said the soldier demanded a bribe. When the Zuyevs refused, the officer called in reinforcements: a soldier in uniform and two police officers "half drunk" and armed, Valentina said. The latter knocked down Andrei's father, who lost consciousness. They then seized Valentina and Konstantin, Andrei's 14-year-old brother. Catching him by the neck they tried to strangle the boy, she said. Andrei, who had remained in his room, then gave in and agreed to follow the four men to the recruitment office. There, the soldiers pulled out his file and realised that his name was not actually on the list and that he had thus been seized illegally. The Russian army, which boasts just over a million soldiers, suffers from an atrocious reputation, damaged further by recent incidents of violent hazing. In one, Andrei Sychev, 19, had to have his legs and genitals amputated after being beaten at the end of 2005 by other soldiers in his barracks in the Ural mountains. In mid-December the defence ministry said 22 soldiers had died from hazing and 193 had committed suicide since the beginning of the year. The military acknowledges there is a problem, but denies there is any particular crisis. "Hazing starts right from kindergarten where some teachers abuse the children," Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov said in the aftermath of the Sychev case. But with growing numbers of young Russians doing all they can to avoid the two annual draft drives, the authorities are set this year to introduce a conscription period cut from two years to one and a half, then from 2008 just one. Yet the need to fill the ranks and strict limitations on alternative service mean that the authorities go to great lengths to chase down those trying to avoid the widely hated service. Days before the end of last year's autumn draft, General Vasily Smirnov, head of conscription for the defence ministry, said that nearly 10% of those required to present themselves had failed to turn up. Maria Fedolova, of the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers, a grass-roots group defending the rights of conscripts, said the Zuyev incident was "not an isolated case." "The enlistment officers make their sweeps regularly and do not look at the documents that the families submit to them to prove they are not liable to be drafted," she said. Raids are not limited to apartments; it is not unusual to see soldiers stopping young men of enlistment age in the street to bring them to the enlistment centres. At the end of September, just before the launch of the autumn draft, several non-governmental organisations, including the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers, denounced systematic violations of the rights of conscripts. In a report based on the year's spring draft, the committee complained of misinformation given to conscripts and their parents, pressure exerted on them and violation of proper procedures. - AFP

For kids, MS just half the battle

Multiple sclerosis, a degenerative illness of the nervous system, is affecting children as young as 18 months. With no cure, MS is a complex condition at a tender age, writes JUDITH GRAHAM

TIFFANY Jones stood before her classmates at Hillcrest High School, trembling with emotion. It was time to present her anatomy class project — and reveal a secret she'd closely guarded.

Eyes downcast, Jones described a high school senior with multiple sclerosis, a degenerative illness of the nervous system. "Numbness, tingling, poor balance, muscle weakness, bladder (problems) and forgetfulness" are among the girl's symptoms, she explained.

The 18-year-old "tries to stay positive because she has a lot of support from her family, friends and her church," Jones continued, her voice cracking. "But it makes her feel less of a person at times because she is living with a disease that she can't do anything about. Her name is — Tiffany Jones."

Jones paused, trying to keep her composure, as her classmates stared, some with their mouths open.

"There have been many nights that I sit up and cry just thinking about how I don't want the rest of my life with this disease. I often wonder if I will be able to do the things I want in life," she continued, as the paper in her hand fluttered.

"Will people think of me as a different person when they find out I have a disease or will they think of me as just being Tiffany?"

Until recently, multiple sclerosis was considered an adult illness. The medical community mostly overlooked children with MS-type symptoms — a type of neglect that is unfortunately common for chronically

ill kids, especially those with relatively uncommon nervous system disorders, medical experts observe.

But now, youngsters with MS are getting more attention as researchers search for the origins of this incurable, chronic illness that strips nerves of their protective myelin coating and interferes with the brain's functioning, leading to the kind of problems Jones described to her classmates.

As many as 10,000 US children and teenagers — some as young as 5 — but more than 100,000 to 150,000 kids have symptoms but can't be diagnosed with certainty, according to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

The youngest known patient diagnosed with MS was 18 months old, but more commonly the disease surfaces after puberty when teenagers' bodies are changing and being flooded with hormones.

Resources are scarce for these patients. With few exceptions, support groups are mostly for adults MS patients. There are no medical guidelines for treating MS in children.

None of the drugs used for adult MS patients have been tested extensively in school-age youngsters or teens. And it's still common for pediatricians and family doctors to assume children can't get the disease, making misdiagnosis routine.

"Neurologists know about this disease, but they're reluctant to treat children and adolescents because there are so many issues — dealing with



Tiffany Jones, 18, foreground, a student at Hillcrest High School in Country Club Hills, Illinois who suffers from multiple sclerosis, smiles with her teacher, Brenetta Allison, after a class presentation in November last year.

school, with development, with behavioural issues, with the family," said Dr Lauren Krupp, a neurologist who directs the National Pediatric MS Center at Stony Brook University Hospital in New York.

For instance, in adults MS progress more slowly in children, and "when we look at imaging studies of the brain, they look different in children with MS than adults," said Dr Nancy Kuntz, a paediatric MS specialist at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

That may be because young people's brains are still developing, suggested Dr Tanuja Chitani, director of a paediatric MS centre at Massachusetts General Hospital, noting that young people with MS appear to have more problems with processing language and visual/spatial perception.

Perhaps most puzzling is the relationship between MS and

another condition — disseminated encephalomyelitis, which kids get more often than adults. ADEM, as it's known, is an abnormal immune system response to a viral illness that typically lasts a few days or weeks but sometimes can recur.

"Often, it's hard to sort through what constitutes a bout of ADEM and what is an initial episode of multiple sclerosis in a child," said Dr Joy Derwenskus, an assistant professor of neurology at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine. The distinction is important because treatments for the two conditions differ.

Understanding the link between viruses and MS is one of the main goals of a new network of six paediatric MS centers established by the

National MS Society in 2005. Studying the origins of the disease in young people should be easier than investigating adults because kids have had been exposed to fewer viruses or environmental agents, Richert said.

Improving clinical care and support services for young people is another objective for the centers, whose Midwest location is the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

"The biggest single problem these kids have is: They don't know anyone else like them," said Maria Milazzo, a paediatric nurse practitioner at the Stony Brook MS center.

Nicole Caron was so scared after being diagnosed with MS in 2005 at age 15 that she didn't tell any of her friends what was wrong — or even admit the truth of her illness to herself. A

basketball and soccer player, Nicole first felt numbness in her fingers, then extreme fatigue. Within a few months, she began getting excruciating headaches, blurred vision and pain behind her left eye.

The final diagnosis came after a brain scan and a spinal tap, but relief at knowing what was wrong was quickly followed by fear and denial.

"I didn't want to believe anything was wrong," said Nicole, who lives in North Attleboro, Massachusetts, and is being treated at Massachusetts General Hospital.

"I thought, if I kept it to myself it would be all right. And I knew, everyone at school would gossip, and I didn't want to be the centre of attention."

But the more Nicole concealed her worries, the lonelier she became. "I felt like a bad person because I wasn't telling anyone the truth," the teen said.

After a month, she began letting friends know what was going on but unlike cancer or other better known diseases, none of them had ever heard of MS.

Twice a week, Nicole had to leave school to go to doctors' appointments; once, a teacher commented in class on her excused absences. "I started to cry, I was so upset," said Nicole, who gives herself daily injections of the drug Copaxone to help stall the progression of MS. Several weeks later, she disclosed her illness to the teacher.

For her mother, Judy Caron, the hardest part is accepting the unpredictability of MS, whose symptoms can come and go without warning.

"As a parent, you always try to fix everything for your children, but with this disease you have absolutely no control," she said.

"Carol Jones — Tiffany's mom — repeats a similar sentiment. "What's so scary about MS is, you can't tell what the future

holds. You just don't know day to day what tomorrow is going to be."

Tiffany's symptoms first surfaced in July 2005, after multiple visits to doctors and medical tests, a definitive diagnosis came a year later.

In between, this slim dancer and pom-pom squad member with enormous dark eyes couldn't understand why her arms and legs were going numb or why she'd suddenly stumble or drop a cup she'd picked up from the counter.

"It makes you feel so uncertain and so afraid," said the soft-spoken girl, who started three-times-a-week injections of the drug Rebif in November.

For support, Tiffany and her mom turned to a group of adult MS patients who meet monthly. "It's really helpful to know what other people go through," but many of the group members are going numb or why she'd suddenly stumble or drop a cup she'd picked up from the counter.

"I was thinking one day that could be me," she said.

At school, Tiffany told a few close friends about her illness but kept it concealed from other classmates and her teachers, she said.

She wanted people at school to know how her life had changed, but she didn't want to have to tell them.

Then, an assignment for her anatomy class became an inspiration to come forward.

Standing before her classmates, Tiffany spoke of her illness, her struggle and her confusion about what it means to stand on the edge of adulthood, trying to accept a life-long battle.

"At times, I still feel like MS is taking over my life. I'm still struggling with that," she said, but "I have to tell myself to stop wondering what will become of me. I know that no matter what, I will be here." *Chicago Tribune/MCT*

2006 brought dramatic healthcare advances

By Carolyn Probst

SURRED by emerging health threats such as avian flu, bioterrorism, new research tools and a revolutionary understanding of basic human biology (thanks to the human genome project), scientists and doctors say we are on the brink of transforming medical treatment in the 21st century.

"Imagine a world where we will be able to tell each patient whether they need to take action to pre-empt, altogether the development of costly and painful diseases. Imagine telling them that they do not need to take expensive medications for life, because they are not at risk of disease," said Dr Elias Zerhouni, director of the National Institutes of Health, during his 2007 budget request to Congress last spring. "Our hope is to usher in an era where medicine will be predictive, personalised and pre-emptive."

Cancer

The first vaccine developed to prevent cancer was approved by the US Food and Drug Administration last summer. Gardasil, the new vaccine, proved 100% effective in preventing cervical cancer in a two-year test of more than 10,000 girls and women.

The disease is caused almost exclusively by a highly common sexually transmitted virus called the human papilloma virus, or HPV.

There are about 500,000 new cases of cervical cancer each year worldwide, and 300,000 deaths, including 3,700 in the US. In addition, a new study during the vaccine trial showed preventing HPV-related vaginal and vulvar cancer.

Other vaccines to prevent virus-related cancers are under development.

Diabetes

In September, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases announced its findings in the first international, multicenter trial of the Edmonton Protocol — a standardised approach to transplanting insulin-producing islet cells.

The clinical trial, involving 36 adult volunteers, found that the approach could dramatically benefit patients with severe complications of type 1 diabetes mellitus. The Edes Mellitus Trial (EMT) was designed to gauge how well the transplanted islets would function in reg-

ulating blood sugar levels.

A year after final treatment, 44% of the transplant recipients no longer needed any insulin injections, and an additional 28% had enough islet function to avoid hypoglycemic unawareness, a severe complication of diabetes.

Also, an inhaler that delivers measured doses of aerosolised insulin was cleared for use by both type 1 and type 2 diabetics in 2006 and could replace some of the pumps, pens and needles diabetics use.

Cardiovascular care

Stem cells to repair damaged heart muscle and improve cardiac function were the big breakthroughs in heart disease in 2006. Researchers are finding ways to replace dead and malfunctioning cells so the weakened heart can regain its pumping power.

Specialised heart stem cells also being used to establish new blood vessels to supply oxygen to the heart, according to the National Institutes of Health.

A simple new blood test is telling doctors when to adjust drug treatment for congestive heart failure.

It measures a protein identified as proBNP, which is released when the heart is in trouble and is used to diagnose the disease and to tell physicians when patients are getting worse, so that they are not over-treated.

Women's health

A dramatic decrease in breast cancer rates was announced at the annual San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium in December.

An analysis of federal cancer statistics found that about 4,000 fewer women had breast cancer diagnosed in 2003, the year after millions of women quit taking estrogen and other hormones to help deal with the symptoms of menopause.

Since the steepest declines occurred in women ages 50 to 69 with estrogen-receptor-positive breast cancer, the most likely explanation is the decrease in hormone replacement therapy, said Dr Peter Ravdin, research professor in the Department of Biostatistics at the National Cancer Center in Houston.

However, additional data are needed to prove the cause-and-

effect relationship. In addition, the morning-after pill went over-the-counter, and women got their own knee-replacement implants that address the thinner, narrower shape of a woman's knee.

What's next?

● **HIV test:** This month, the University of Medical Center researchers said they have developed a highly sensitive test to identify which drug-resistant strains HIV are developing in a patient's bloodstream. The test, which detects genetic changes in HIV, may help guide treatment by predicting whether a patient is likely to become resistant to a particular HIV drug and help scientists understand how the constantly evolving virus develops drug resistance.

● **Good genes:** Top Australian scientists say that within 10 years, people will be able to find out how good their genes are at fighting disease, which environmental risks they are susceptible to, and steps they should take to prevent the onset of bad health.

● **Diagnosis chip:** The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases reported in December that new "GreenChip" technology developed by an international group of researchers will soon be used to quickly and accurately diagnose infectious diseases.

● **GreenChip** is a glass slide with 30,000 pieces of genetic material taken from thousands of viruses, bacteria, fungi and parasites.

When human fluid and tissue samples are applied to the chip, the microscopic genetic probes are susceptible to any closely related genetic material in the sample being tested, so that a correct diagnosis can be made.

● **Bird flu:** The fear of a bird flu pandemic has spurred researchers and vaccine manufacturers to step up efforts to develop a vaccine.

The hope is to have a vaccine specifically for the pandemic strain, if or when the ever-changing avian virus mutates into a form that can easily infect and spread disease among humans.

Even just a strain that is not a perfect match could prevent people from dying, according to researchers at Stanford University Medical Center who are at the forefront of the effort. — *Fort Worth Star-Telegram/MCT*



Music to the ears ... Newborns listen to music through large headphones in the maternal home of the First Nairobi Hospital in Kosice-Saca, east Slovakia. The experimental programme started four years ago and reportedly plays a vital role in the well-being of children. Mozart and Vivaldi pieces are the most popular.

HEALTH BRIEFS

Excessive jogging increases risk of arthritis
PEOPLE who jog more than 60 minutes per week are at greater risk of developing arthritis in their hips, a study conducted by the University of Heidelberg concluded. The osteoarthritis that can develop is characterised by joint pain which can be relieved by medication known as Cox inhibitors, which block the effects of special enzymes, specifically Cox-1 and Cox-2 enzymes. According to the study, excessive jogging increases the risk of developing osteoarthritis in the hips. The study, conducted by the university's orthopaedic clinic and reported in a German physician magazine, said no problems arose in the long-distance joggers' knees. The study also said people who jogged shorter stretches need not worry about developing arthritis. In these cases, there was no increased risk of arthritis in the knees or hips.

Folic acid helps retard age-related deafness
TAKING a supplement of folic acid, a member of the vitamin B group helps retard the hearing problems associated with old age, according to a study conducted at the University of Wageningen in the Netherlands. The three-year study looked at 728 people between the ages of 50 and 70, half of whom were given a daily dose of 0.8mg of folic acid, while the others received a placebo. Those taking the folic acid showed lower hearing loss. The researchers at the university and at the Wageningen Centre for Food Sciences, under Jurga Durga, suspected that the folic acid improved blood flow to the auditory nerve. Folic acid is routinely taken by women seeking to become pregnant and during the initial weeks of pregnancy to prevent serious neural conditions such as spina bifida and anencephaly in the foetus.

Loneliness linked to poor nourishment
ELDERLY people who experience loneliness are more likely to be poorly nourished, according to a German association for senior citizens. Loneliness spoils the appetite of many elderly people who lose the incentive and energy to eat the required variety of healthy foods. An additional reason for the problem is that taste, smell and thirst sensations decrease with age. The stomachs of elderly people also are less distensible and signal the feeling of fullness earlier, experts at the association said. According to the association, about 15% of elderly living at home have a deficient diet compared to 65% of senior citizens living in care facilities. Coupled with typical age-related problems such as the loss of muscle and organ function, poor nutrition can result in serious health problems, the association said.

Syphilis back with a vengeance in China
SYPHILIS, which was largely eliminated in China between 1960 and 1980, has returned with a vengeance and urgent intervention is needed to curb the epidemic, according to researchers in China and the US. In a study published in the January 13 issue of the *Lancet*, experts said the resurgence of syphilis in China increased to 6.5 cases per 100,000 people in 1999 from less than 0.2 cases per 100,000 in 1993. "Syphilis has returned to China with a vengeance. The data demonstrates a syphilis epidemic of such scope and magnitude that it will require terrific effort to intervene," said lead researcher Myron S Cohen, director of the Center for Infectious Diseases at the University of North Carolina. When the Communist Party took power in 1949, China was suffering one of the biggest syphilis epidemics in human history and the government launched a prolonged campaign to eliminate sexually transmitted diseases.

Diet, exercise work for older, obese adults
IT'S never too late for obese adults to improve their health risks through diet and exercise, the results of a new small study suggest. The researchers, who enrolled 27 obese men and women age 65 or older, found that calorie cutting and exercise helped participants shed pounds and lower their blood pressure, blood sugar and blood fats called triglycerides. What's more, there was a sharp drop in the number with metabolic syndrome, a collection of conditions that raise a person's risk of type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Diet changes and exercise have been shown to improve heart disease risk factors in young and middle-aged obese adults, but less is known about the benefits for older adults. But the new findings show that older obese adults can indeed alter their lifestyle and benefit from it, according to Dr Dennis T. Villareal of Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. "We demonstrate that older adults can successfully lose weight and are compliant with interventions," he said. — *Reuters, DPA*

TimeOut

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GULF TIMES FEATURES
Wednesday, January 17, 2007

Television Listings

	SUPER MOVIES	STAR MOVIES	ESPN SPORTS	FOX SPORTS	HOLLYWOOD CH.	ZEE TV	DISCOVERY CH.	STAR PLUS
5am to 1pm	0500 Ash Wednesday (3) 0700 Heart Of The Storm (2) 0900 Monsoon Wedding (2) 1100 Antworks (2) 1300 San Antonio (3)	0535 The First Power 0715 Truth 0850 Freaky Friday 1030 The War At Home 1230 Running With The Hitman	0500 College Basketball Southeastern 0630 Conf. Kentucky vs S. Carolina Live 0700 Madden Nation 0730 Women's College Gymnastics 0900 ICC Cricket 0930 Strongest Man 1000 Sportscenter Live 1100 College Basketball Big 12 Conference 1230 Fox vs Oklahoma St 1300 College Basketball Big East Conf. Connecticut, Pittsburgh	0600 Fox Sports World Report 0700 Football Asia 0730 Hyundai A-League Highlights 0800 Men's College Basketball 0900 Maryland Terpins At Virginia 1000 Fox Sports World Report 1100 Race World 1200 ACC Sunday Night Hoops Duke @ Miami	0500 Everything 0600 Muchmusic 0700 Muchmusic Special 0800 The Art Of The Photograph 0830 Muchmusic Video 0900 Star! Daily 0930 In Fashion 1000 Raw 1030 So 90s 1130 Muchmusic Countdown 1300 Listed	0530 Sales Slot 0630 Jai Ganesh 0700 Construction 0730 Mazlein Apni Apni 0850 Pandey Aur Pandey Wars 0830 Kohi Apna Sa 0900 Kahani Ab Tak 0925 Jhalak Exposé 0930 Mamta 1000 Sindoor Tere Naam Ka 1030 Banoo Teri Dulhan 1100 Kasamh Se 1130 Saath Phere 1200 Ghar Ki Lakshmi Belyam 1230 <i>Movie: Jaanam Samjha Karo</i>	0540 Massive Machines 0600 Extreme Machines 0700 Kings Of Construction 0755 Mega Builders 0850 Junkyard Mega-Wars 0945 Ultimate Cars 1010 A Racing Car Is Born 1105 Mythbusters 1200 Kings Of Construction 1255 Mega Builders	0500 Antarksh Kasauti Zindagi Kay 0530 Pasat 0630 Saarthi 0700 Kunkum Ek Pyara Sa Bandhan 0730 Antarksh 0800 Kesar 0830 Shanti 0900 Saarthi 0930 Kahaani Ghar Ghar Ki 1000 Meri Saheli 1030 Bhabhi 1100 Kahiin To Hoga 1130 Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Kabhi 1200 Kasauti Zindagi Kay 1230 Mirch Masala 1300 Meri Saheli
1pm to 7pm	1500 Truth (2) 1700 Little Secrets (1) 1900 If Only (3)	1405 Cyborg 2 1545 Legally Blonde 2 Red, White & Blonde 1720 The Engagement Ring 1855 Ring	1500 Madden Nation 1530 College Basketball Big Ten Conf. Iowa At Indiana Repeat 1730 College Basketball Southeastern Conf. Kentucky vs S. Carolina	1400 Fox Sports World Report 1500 World Cup Jumping 1600 Top Volley 1700 International Basel, Switzerland 1800 Fox Sports World Report 1900 Gillette World Sports	1400 The Spin 1430 Muchmusic Video 1500 Star! Daily 1530 Best! Movies! Ever! 1630 ABCs Of Rock 1700 The Story Of... 1800 The Wedge 1900 Star! Inside	1430 Film cont. 1530 Kasam Se 1600 Saath Phere 1630 Jab Love Hua 1700 Sindoor Tere Naam Ka 1730 Banoo Mein Teri Dulhan 1800 Maayka 1830 Kasam Se 1900 Saath Phere	1350 Mega Machines 1445 Extreme Engineering 1540 Extreme Machines 1635 Ultimate Cars 1700 Junkyard Mega-Wars 1800 Ultimate Ten 1900 Superweapons of the Ancient World	1330 Mum Tum Aur Hum Antarksh 1340 Kahaani Ghar Ghar Ki 1500 Kesar 1530 Saarthi 1600 Shanti 1630 Shagun 1700 Shararat 1730 Karam Apna Apna 1800 Kasauti Zindagi Kay 1830 Kunkum Pyara Sa Bandhan 1900 Bhabhi
7pm to 9am	2100 Chicago 2300 Stranger Game (3) 0100 Blair Witch 2 The Book Of Shadows 0300 If Only (3)	2030 Hoosiers 2230 Zyzzyx Road 0000 Freaky Friday 0140 Running With The Hitman 0320 Ravenous	1930 ESPN Original Documentaries 2030 Sportscenter 2130 Classic Boxing 2230 College Basketball Big 12 Conference Texas vs Oklahoma St 0030 X Games Classix 0100 ICC Cricket 0130 Strongest Man 0200 Sportscenter Live 0300 College Basketball Atlantic Coast Conf. North Carolina/Clemson Live	1930 Elourgolf 2000 NHL Edmonton Oilers At Minnesota Wild 2300 2007 PGA Tour Bob Hope Chrysler Classic Rd 1 Palm Desert, Ca 0200 Inside The PGA Tour 0230 Elourgolf	1930 Spotlight 2000 The Newmusic 2030 Muchmusic Video 2100 Star! Daily 2130 Look-A-Like 2200 Fashion Television 2230 Raw 2300 Number Ones 0000 Arts & Minds 0030 The Originals 0100 Muchmusic Special 0200 The Art Of The Photograph 0230 Muchmusic Video 0300 Star! Daily 0330 In Fashion 0400 Raw	1930 Ghar Ki Lakshmi Belyam 2000 Johnny Aala Re 2030 Maayka 2100 Kasam Se 2130 Bidwin 2200 Sales Slot 2300 Banoo Mein Teri Dulhan 2330 Sindoor Tere Naam Ka 0000 Kasam Se 0100 Saath Phere 0130 Jab Love Hua 0200 Urja 0230 Narseva Narayan Seva 0300 Meditation	2000 Classic Car Club 2030 British Biker Build-Off 2100 Mythbusters 2200 Battle of Chernobyl 0000 FBI Files 0100 Go Warrior 0130 Test Case 0200 Mind Body And Kick Ass Moves 0350 Junkyard Mega-Wars 0445 Ultimate Ten	1930 Kesar 2000 Saarthi 2030 Mum Tum Aur Hum 2100 Shagun 2130 Antarksh 2200 Virasaat 2300 Kunkum Pyara Sa Bandhan 2330 Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Kabhi 0000 Karam Apna Apna 0030 Kahaani Ghar Ghar Ki 0100 Kahiin To Hoga 0130 Antarksh 0200 Kasauti Zindagi Kay 0230 Virasaat
5am to 1pm	GEO TV 0530 Fun Club 0600 GMA Advance Booking 0630 Songs 0705 Celebrity Online 0730 Razzmatazz 0805 Kluhuv 0830 Advance Booking 0905 Good Food 0930 Noor Jehan 1000 Kkusum 1030 Sheeshay Ka Mehal 1100 Ye Meri Life Hai 1130 Aashna 1200 Safaid Posh 1230 Jassi Jaisi Koi Nahin	AMERICA PLUS 0500 ER 0600 GMA Recorded 0800 Gilmore Girls 0900 All My Children 1000 Veronica Mars 1100 Gilmore Girls 1200 All My Children 1300 Stingers	FUN CHANNEL 0500 Out There 0530 In a Heartbeat 0600 Skale 0630 Scout Safari 0700 Veronica Mars 0725 Dennis 0730 Heathcliff 0815 Princess Sissi 0840 Journey To The Heart Of The World 0900 Dennis 0925 Gulliver's Travels 0945 The Why Why Family 1010 Peter Pan And The Pirates 1035 Jin Jin And The Panda Patrol 1100 The Littles 1120 Little Mouse On The Prairie 1145 Gulliver's Travels 1205 Huckleberry Finn 1230 Dennis 1255 Heathcliff	BBC WORLD 0500 BBC News, Weather 0530 World Business Report 0545 Sport Today 0600 BBC News, Weather 0630 Asia Today 0645 Asia Business Report 0700 BBC News, Weather 0730 Hartatalk 0800 BBC News, Weather 0830 World Business Report 0900 BBC News, Weather 0930 World Business Report 1000 BBC News, Weather 1030 World Business Report 1045 Sport Today 1100 BBC News, Weather 1130 Nurses On The Frontline 2/4 1200 BBC News, Weather 1230 Hartatalk 1300 BBC News, Weather	ORBIT NEWS 0500 NBC Nightly News 0530 ABC World News 0600 MSNBC's Situation W/T. 0630 CNN Today 0700 NBC Nightly News 0730 ABC Nightline 0800 Newshour With Jim Lehrer 0900 MSNBC Scarborough 1000 MSNBC Hardball 1100 ABC Nightline 1130 NBC Nightly News 1200 ABC World News 1230 NBC Early Today 1300 ABC World News This Morning	CNN INTERNATIONAL 0530 World Sport 0600 Anderson Cooper 0700 World News 0730 World Sport 0800 CNN Today 1100 Business International 1200 World News 1230 World Sport 1300 Larry King	DISNEY CHANNEL 0520 Classic Cartoons 0530 Tarzan 0550 Classic Cartoons 0600 House Of Mouse 0625 Lilo And Stitch 0650 Kim Possible 0710 Emperor's New School 0725 Recess 0750 Fillmore 0810 Lilo In Space 0835 Classic Cartoons 0900 Mickey's Club House 0925 Little Einsteins 0950 That's So Circus 1010 Stanley 1035 Higglytown Heroes 1100 Goof Troop 1125 Recess 1145 Kim Possible 1210 Lilo And Stitch 1235 House Of Mouse 1255 Quack Pack	CHANNEL IV INT. 0500 Double Shot: UK 0600 Poparazzi 0630 The Record Shop 0700 Double Shot 0730 Casuar Garden #15 0800 Double Shot 0900 Fashion File 0930 Double Shot 1000 One-Tastic 1030 This Covered 1100 Parental Control #6 1130 Double Shot 1200 Poparazzi 1230 The Record Shop 1300 For The Record Jesse McCartney
1pm to 7pm	1300 Pyaree Shammo 1405 Mehndi Walay Haath 1430 Khuda Kee Basti 1505 Tere Pehlo Mein 1530 Kaajal 1605 Advance Booking 1630 Fun Club 1705 Saas Bahu Ki Handi 1730 Mai Khayal Hoon Kisey Aur Ka 1805 Mehndi Walay Haath 1830 Khuda Kee Basti	1400 Veronica Mars 1500 GMA Live 1700 Stingers 1800 One Tree Hill 1900 Veronica Mars	1320 Princess Sissi 1345 Journey To The Heart Of The World 1410 The Littles 1430 The Why Why Family 1455 Peter Pan And The Pirates 1520 Jin Jin And The Panda Patrol 1545 The Littles 1610 Little Mouse On The Prairie 1635 Gulliver's Travels 1700 Huckleberry Finn 1725 Dennis 1750 Heathcliff 1815 Princess Sissi 1840 Journey To The Heart Of The World	1330 Talking Movies 1400 BBC News, Weather 1430 World Business Report 1445 Sport Today 1500 World News Today Including World Business Report 1600 BBC News, Weather 1630 Asia Today 1645 Sport Today 1700 BBC News, Weather 1730 Hartatalk 1800 BBC News, Weather 1830 Fast Track 1900 BBC News, Weather	1330 MSNBC Live First Look 1400 ABC World News This Morning 1430 NBC News Today 1500 NBC The Today Show 1800 PBS Newshour With Jim Lehrer 1900 MSNBC Hardball	1400 Business International 1500 World News Asia 1600 World News 1630 World Sport 1700 World News Asia 1800 Your World Today	1320 Classic Cartoons 1330 Tarzan 1400 Recess 1415 Lilo In Space 1435 Kim Possible 1500 Brandy And Mr Whiskers 1525 Recess 1550 Lilo And Stitch 1600 Emperor's New School 1625 Fairly Odd Parents 1650 American Dragon 1710 Kim Possible 1735 The Suite Life Of Zack And Cody 1800 That's So Raven 1825 Fillmore 1845 Recess 1900 Brandy And Mr Whiskers	1315 Double Shot: UK Living 1330 Soundtracks 1430 Double Shot 1500 The Rock Show 1530 Kung Faux #7 1600 Flava 1700 Double Shot 1800 Remote Control 1900 The Ticket
7pm to 9am	1905 Tere Pehlo Mein 1930 Kaajal 2005 Aashna 2030 Noor Jehan 2105 Rishley 2205 Saas Bahu Ki Handi 2230 Mai Khayal Hoon Kisey Aur Ka 2305 Mehndi Walay Haath 0005 Tere Pehlo Mein 0030 Kaajal 0105 Aashna 0130 Noor Jehan 0205 Ye Meri Life Hai 0230 Sheeshay Ka Mehal	2000 CSI 2100 Smallville 2200 Veronica Mars 2300 Cold Case 0000 Rome 0100 CSI 0200 Veronica Mars 0300 Cold Case 0400 Rome	1900 Black Hole High 1930 RenegadePress.Com 2000 Brainbunch 2030 The New Tomorrow 2100 Foreign Exchange 2130 Even Stevens 2200 Time Blazers 2230 Silver Sun 2300 Out There 2330 In a Heartbeat 0000 Skale 0030 Scout Safari 0100 Black Hole High 0130 RenegadePress.Com 0200 Brainbunch 0230 The New Tomorrow 0300 Foreign Exchange 0330 Even Stevens 0400 Time Blazers 0430 Silver Sun	1930 Asia Today 2000 BBC News, Weather 2030 World Business Report 2045 Sport Today 2100 BBC News, Weather 2130 Hartatalk 2200 BBC News, Weather 2230 Fast Track 2300 BBC News, Weather 2330 The Siberia Timebomb 0000 World News Today Including World Business Report 0100 BBC News 0115 Sport Today 0130 World Business Report 0145 Asia Business Report 0200 BBC News, Weather 0230 Asia Today 0245 Asia Business Report	2000 MSNBC Countdown W/K. Olbermann 2100 MSNBC Live 2200 ABC Primetime 2300 MSNBC Live The Situation W/T. 0100 MSNBC Live Hardball 0200 ABC Nightline 0230 ABC World News 0300 NBC Nightly News 0330 ABC World News 0400 MSNBC Live Countdown W/K. Olbermann	2200 Insight 2300 World Business Report 2330 World News 2350 World Business Report 0000 World News Europe 0030 World Sport 0100 Business International 0200 Insight 0230 World News 0300 CNN Today	1925 Fairly Odd Parents 1950 Phil Of The Future 2010 The Suite Life Of Zack And Cody 2035 That's So Raven 2100 Smart Guy 2125 Boy Meets World 2150 Classic Cartoons 2200 House Of Mouse 2225 Lilo And Stitch 2250 Kim Possible 2310 Emperor's New School 2325 Recess 2350 Fillmore 0010 Lilo In Space 0035 Classic Cartoons 0100 Mickey's Club House 0125 Little Einsteins 0150 Jo Jo's Circus 0210 Stanley	1605 Documentary: Making A Living 1630 Discovery: The Big Ideas 1700 World News 1705 Outlook 1800 World Briefing 1805 World News 1840 Analysis 1850 Sports Roundup 1900 World News 1905 World News 1920 World Business Report 1930 World Briefing 1940 Sports Daily 2000 World Briefing 2005 Documentary: Making A Living 2100 World News 2105 World, Have Your Say 2200 World News 2205 World Briefing 2220 World Business Report 2230 Discovery: The Big Ideas 2300 World News 2305 Documentary: Making A Living 2330 On Screen 2350 World News 0000 World News 0005 Newshour

RADIO STATIONS

QBS ENGLISH SERVICE
0600 Holy Qur'an and its Translation
0615 The Breakfast Show, News Summary at 0700
0845 Arabic/Islamic Programme
0900 Hip Hop Zone
1000 The Mix
1100 News Summary
1105 Midday Show
1300 The News
1315 French Transmission
1600 In All Directions
1700 Evening Show
1800 The News
1815 Evening News contd.
2000 News Summary
2005 World Chart Show
2100 Music in Stereo

QBS FRENCH SERVICE
1315 Opening, Welcome; Weather, Doha's activities and events; Music;

Schedule of the day
1330 News: Mabrouk, Ziani's Qatari press review; Number 1 French Top 40
1345 Apple CDs
1415 Spicy Rai, Rap and electro with talk show.
1530 Sarakeralam
1535 Haute tension; Teenagers' problems
1600 Back to English service

QBS URDU SERVICE
1858 Opening Music
1900 Opening & Holy Qur'an Hamd or Na'at
1915 Islamic Heritage
1930 News
1945 Qatar Development
Mahmood Ahmed
2000 Mix Songs
2015 Moshaira (Obaid Tahir)
2100 Phone Femaash
Bano Sulaiman
2200 National Anthem

RADIO ASIA
MALAYALAM SERVICE
0500 Manjirukum Pular Kalam
0530 Life Magazine
0630 Keralaeyam
0700 Sarasakeralam
0800 Hello Rainbow
0900 CMG
1000 Comedy Serial
1030 Alukas
1100 Daily Diary
1130 Sneha Veedu
1200 Sneha Sandesham
1235 Nam Engottu
1420 Atlas Daily Si
1500 Viva Dhaparvam
1530 Quiz Time
1600 Kerala Link
1605 Suvama Nakshatram
1702 Snehithare Ithale
1800 Hotline
1900 Sneha Sandesham
2000 Nenchi Ninte Rangam
2100 Isai Malai
2130 Uraavam Padalam
2215 Naravanthram

2300 Songs News by the hour
ASIANET RADIO 657AM
MALAYALAM SERVICE
0600 Opening, Viswasa Deepthi, Islamic Speech
0615 Today's Programmes
0620 Asianet Varthakal
0630 Nika Udayavamangal
0730 Sreekanandan Nair Show
0800 Suprabhatam
0835 Charithrathil Innu
0900 Tele Quiz
0930 Daily Serial
1000 News Headlines
1002 Chayamakkani
1020 Tharapadam
1100 News Headlines
1102 Doner Natuvazhikal
1135 Comedy Corner
1200 Asianet Varthakal
1210 Alukas Nammal
Thammil
1300 News Headlines

1302 Ashamsakalode Sky
1400 Asianet Varthakal
1405 Sabseena
1425 Hit Movies
1430 Bin Moosa Sanchari
1500 News Headlines
1502 Atlas Ganopaharam
1555 Islamic Quiz
1600 Atlas Virithantham
1615 Tamil Malar
1645 Tomorrow's Programme
1650 Asianet Varthakal/close

BBC WORLD SERVICE
0500 World News
0505 World Briefing
0520 World Business Report
0540 Analysis
0550 Sports Roundup
0600 World News
0605 The World Today
0700 World News
0705 The World Today
0800 World News

0805 World Briefing
0820 World Business Report
0830 World Briefing
0840 Business Daily
0900 World News
0905 The World Today
0910 World News
1005 Documentary: Making A Living
1030 Discovery: The Big Ideas
1050 World News
1105 The World Today
1130 On Screen
1200 World News
1205 World Briefing
1220 World Business Report
1230 World Briefing
1240 Analysis
1250 Sports Roundup
1300 World News
1320 World Update
1400 World News
1405 World Briefing
1420 World Business Report
1430 On Screen
1500 World News
1505 Newshour
1600 World News

1605 Documentary: Making A Living
1630 Discovery: The Big Ideas
1700 World News
1705 Outlook
1800 World Briefing
1805 World News
1840 Analysis
1850 Sports Roundup
1900 World News
1905 World News
1920 World Business Report
1930 World Briefing
1940 Sports Daily
2000 World Briefing
2005 Europe Today
2100 World News
2105 World, Have Your Say
2200 World News
2205 World Briefing
2220 World Business Report
2230 Discovery: The Big Ideas
2300 World News
2305 Documentary: Making A Living
2330 On Screen
2350 World News
0000 World News
0005 Newshour

Television Listings

	BBC PRIME	NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC	STAR WORLD	GRANADA UK	MOVIE CHANNEL	MGM	TV LAND	SUN TV
5am to 1pm	0600 Holly City 0700 Garden Challenge 0730 Balmory 0750 Tweenies 0810 Fimbles 0830 Tikabilla 0900 Teletubbies 0925 Yoho AhoY 0930 Balmory 0950 Tweenies 1010 Fimbles 1030 Big Strong Boys 1100 Location, Location, Location 1130 Masterchef Goes Large 1200 Diet Trials 1230 Garden Challenge	0500 Lockdown 0600 Wild Sex 0700 Hollywood Science 0800 Amazon Claws 0900 Planet Wild 0930 Monkey Business 1000 Seconds From 1100 Disaster 1100 Air Crash 1200 Investigation Investigation	0600 The King Of Queens 0630 The Simpsons 0700 Seinfeld 0730 Hollywood Squares 0800 Friends 0830 Cheers 0900 Oprah Winfrey Show 1000 Miami Vice 1100 Kevin Hill 1200 Man Vs Beast	0500 Ruth Rendell Mysteries Road Rage 0600 Boon (Series 2) 0700 Cadfael (Series 2) 0830 Recipe For Disaster 0900 London's Burning (Series 9) 1000 Where The Heart Is (Series 5) 1100 Please Sir! (Series 3) 1130 Emmerdale 1230 Coronation Street	0515 Agents Secrets 0715 Kung Fu Hustle 0900 Chasing Christmas 1100 The Alamo	0510 Hollywood Hot Tubs 0650 Movers & Shakers 0810 Rich Kids 0945 The Secret Invasion 1120 Alias Jesse James 1250 Nutcracker, The Motion Picture	0600 Homicide Life On The Street 0700 Stargate Atlantis 0800 Beauty And The Beast! 0900 Navy Ncis 1000 Survivor Panama (XII) 1100 NYPD Blue 1200 Bones	0620 Indha Naal Iniya Naal 0630 Endrum Galatta 0700 Top 10 Movies 0730 Nalamthana 0800 Kondattam 0830 Surya 0900 Bandham 0930 Nimmadhi 1000 Chellamadi Nee Enaku 1030 Sorgam 1100 Afternoon Bulletin 1130 Movie
1pm to 7pm	1300 Escape To The Country 1345 The Weakest Link 1430 Top Special 1500 Open All Hours 1500 My Family 1530 As Time Goes By 1600 Hetty Wainthropp Investigates 1700 Holly City 1800 Big Strong Boys 1830 What Not To Wear	1300 The Living Edens 1400 Lockdown 1500 Wild Sex 1600 Seconds From 1700 Air Crash 1800 Investigation Investigation	1300 Oprah Winfrey Show 1400 Table For 3 1500 General Hospital 1600 Tru Calling 1700 Baywatch 1800 The Simpsons 1830 Cheers	1300 Ruth Rendell Mysteries Road Rage 1400 Boon (Series 2) 1500 Crossroads 1600 Bootsale Challenge 1630 Recipe For Disaster 1700 Monster Garage 1800 Where The Heart Is (Series 5)	1330 The Lost World 1530 Avalanche 1700 Chasing Christmas	1415 The Vikings 1610 Gun Moll 1750 Love Bites	1300 Windfall 1400 C.S.I. Miami 1500 Beauty And The Beast 1600 Navy NCIs 1700 Homicide Life On The Street 1800 Stargate Atlantis	1400 Malarum Mottum 1430 Kutty's Choice 1500 My Dear Bhootham 1530 Mutham 1600 Evening News 1630 Kasturi 1630 Anandham 1700 Malargal 1730 Evening News 1800 Anjali 1830 Kolangal
7pm to 5am	1900 Cash In The Attic 2000 My Family 2030 As Time Goes By 2100 Masterchef Goes Large 2130 Diet Trials 2200 Cutting It 2300 Silent Witness 0000 Absolutely Fabulous 0030 The Catherine Tate Show 0100 Cutting It 0200 Open All Hours 0230 Silent Witness	1900 Lockdown 2000 Seconds From 2100 Air Crash 2300 Investigation 2300 Lockdown 0000 The Living Edens 0100 Lockdown 0200 Wild Sex 0300 The Living Edens 0400 Megacities	1900 Friends 1930 Seinfeld 2000 American Idol 2200 Table For 3 2300 Seinfeld 2330 Friends 0000 American Idol 0200 NGC Feed 0300 J.A.G. 0400 American Idol	1900 Doctor At Large 1930 Emmerdale 2000 Coronation Street 2030 William And Mary (Series 3) 2130 The Persuaders 2230 Caught 2300 Crossroads 0000 Bootsale Challenge 0030 Recipe For Disaster 0100 Monster Garage 0200 Where The Heart Is (Series 5)	1900 Little Black Book 2100 Grand Theft Parsons 2300 The Anchorman The Legend Of Ron Burgundy 0100 Beat 0300 Grand Theft Parsons	1925 Just A Little Harmless Sex 2100 My American Cousin 2230 Starcrossed 0005 Howling In A Sister Is A Werewolfer Is A Werewolf 0135 Caged Fury 0310 True Blood	1900 C.S.I. New York 2000 Medium 2100 Missing 2200 24 0000 Navy NCIs 0100 Bones 0200 C.S.I. New York 0300 Medium	1900 Arasi 1930 Lakshmi 2000 Surya 2030 Putham Pudhusu 2100 News In Tamil 2200 Thirai Masala 2300 News In Tamil 0300 Putham Pudhusu 0400 Mangayar Choice 0430 Nalamai Vazha
5am to 1pm	0500 Asia Market Watch 0700 Today's Business 0800 Squawk Box 1100 WorldWide Exchange	0600 Sky News On The Hour 0630 CBS News 0700 Sky News On The Hour 0900 Sky News On The Hour 0930 CBS News 1000 Sky World News 1030 Review & Business 1100 Sky World News 1130 Review & Business 1200 Sunrise	NO TRANSMISSION		0610 WWS Sky Shop 0625 V Trailers 0630 Lakeer - Forbidden Lines 1025 V Trailers 1030 Vijaypath	0700 Dora The Explorer 0730 Rubbadubbers 0745 Postman Pat 0800 Blues Clues 0830 Barney 0900 Pocoyo 0930 A House That's Just Like Yours 1000 Connie The Cow 1015 Pingu 1030 Bottle Top Bill 1045 Lunat Jim 1100 Dora The Explorer 1130 Yakkity Yak 1200 Rugrats 1230 Wild Thornberrys	0700 Song Sequence 1030 Movie: Vadikka! Enn Vadikka! 0700 Song Sequence 1030 Movie: Maya Modhiram	0700 Ente Kathapathrangal 0730 Melody 0800 Raja Part Kanakambaram 0830 Music Moments 0900 Aanandam 0930 Chechi 1000 Kolangal 1030 Bharya 1030 News 1045 Movie: Superman
1pm to 7pm	1300 Power Lunch Europe 1400 US CNBC Squawk Box 1600 Squawk On The Street 1700 US Morning Call 1800 European Closing Bell	1500 Sky News Today 1800 Lunchtime Live With Kay Burley	1500 Holy Qur'an 1530 Garfield 1600 Marsipiami 1630 Play With Me Sesame 1700 2030 CE 1845 Trace Evidence 3 Eps	1330 Cinemala 1355 Cookery Show 1400 Vaikannadi 1500 Mahatma Gandhi Colony 1525 Saranavathi 1555 Swantham 1555 Sunshi 1600 News Time 1630 Malayogam 1700 Shree V 1730 Amma Manasu 1800 Samadooram 1830 Dany the Mandrake	1425 V Trailers 1430 Biwi No 1 1800 Main Meri Patni Aur Woh	1300 All Grown Up 1330 Movie: Enga Thambi 1400 Yakkity Yak 1430 Rugrats 1500 Wild Thornberrys 1530 Basil Brush Show 1600 My Parents Are Aliens 1630 Unfabulous 1700 Darcy's Wild Life 1730 Fraggle Rock 1800 Dora The Explorer 1830 Rubbadubbers 1845 Postman Pat	1300 Song Sequence 1330 Movie: Enga Thambi 1600 Mayajalam 1630 Velli Vizha 1700 Thirai Chiripigal 1730 Movie: Vedan	1330 Comedy Time 1400 Venal Mazha 1430 Hai Kids 1500 Kutties Choice 1530 News 1630 Neelakuruni 1630 Marassayadhe 1700 Kanakkinaavu 1730 Pranayam 1800 Kalyanee 1830 Minnu Kettu
7pm to 5am	2000 US Power Lunch 2100 Europe Tonight 2130 Street Signs 2200 US Closing Bell 0000 The Tonight Show With Jay Leno 0045 Late Night With Conan O'Brien 0130 NBC Nightly News 0200 Pokerheaven.Com Online Series Of Poker	2000 Sky News Today 2300 Live At Five 0000 Sky News On The Hour 0100 Sky News On The Hour 0200 Sky News With Martin Stanford 0330 PMQ's 0400 Sky News At Ten	1945 According To Jim 2015 The Greatest 20 EPS 2130 C S I 2200 English News 2215 Feature Film 0000 Transmission of Al-Jazeera Channel	1900 Swamy Ayappan 1930 Sanmanasullavarku Samadhanam 1955 DSF Update 2000 Asianet Varthakal 2030 Munshi 2035 Cinema Diary 2105 Cinemala 2135 Kannadi 2200 Gulf Varthakal 2230 Jagadeesh Show 2330 Amma Manasu 0000 Music Dreams 0030 Newshour	2145 Jhankar Beats 2200 Telemart English Guru 2215 V Trailers 2220 Gunaah 0150 Jhankar Beats 0205 Ithihaas	1900 Blues Clues 1930 Pocoyo 2000 A House That's Just Like Yours 2030 Connie The Cow 2045 Pingu 2100 All Grown Up 2130 Yakkity Yak 2200 Basil Brush Show 2230 My Parents Are Aliens 2300 Unfabulous 2330 Darcy's Wild Life 0000 Fraggle Rock 0030 Hey Arnold	2000 Sirippu Vedigal 2030 Movie: Pudhu Pudhu Raaganagal 2300 Song Sequence 0200 News 0230 Song Sequence 0430 Movie	1900 Kayamkulam Kochunni 1930 Bharyamar Sookshikkuka 2000 Comedy Time 2030 News 2100 Music Moments 2130 Kalikkalam 2200 Ninnalude Choice 2230 Sensations 2300 Priyam Priyatharam

All programmes are subject to change.

INFORMATION

PRAYER TIME

Fajr 5.01am, Shoroq (sunrise) 6.21am, Zuhr (noon) 11.44am, Asr (afternoon) 2.46pm, Maghreb (sunset) 5.03pm, Isha (night) 6.38pm.

DOHA ZOO

Open from 8am to 12 noon and 2.30pm to 7pm daily. Tuesdays are reserved for women. Friday for general public in the afternoon only.

CONSUMER COMPLAINTS

Tel: 4408555

HOSPITALS

Visiting Hours:
Hamad General Hospital, Women's Hospital and Rumailah Hospital: 6am to 7.30am, 4pm to 8pm.

HELP LINE

Is drinking a problem for you or someone you love?
Call Alcoholics Anonymous: 5605901

LATEST DVD, VIDEO RELEASES

ENGLISH: *Silther* (Nathan Fillion, Michael Rooker); *Bailey's Billion*

(Jackie Burroughs); *Seven Swords*; *Basic Instinct 2* (Sharon Stone); *Tamara* (Jeena Dewan, Katie Stuart); *Twins Effect II* (Gillian Chung, Charelle Choi); *Countdown*; *Wolf Creek*; *Superman Returns* (Brandon Routh); *Five Fingers* (Ryan Phillippe, Laurence Fishburne); *Mission Impossible III* (Tom Cruise).

HINDI: *Apna Sapna Money Money* (Janita Shroff, Sunil Shetty); *Unns* (Sanjay Kapoor); *Rehgzar* (Jimmy Shergil, Saloni); *Vivah* (Shahid Kapoor, Abhishek Bachchan); *Umrao Jaan* (Aishwarya Rai); *Vivah* (Amrita Rao); *Don* (Sharukh Khan); *Jaane-e-Mann* (Salman Khan, Akshay Kumar, Priy Zinta); *Zindagi Rocks* (Sushmita Sen, Shiney Ahuja); *Rocky* (Zayed Khan, Isha Shrivani); *Woh Larhne* (Shiney Ahuja, Kangana Ranaut); *Yun Hota Toh Kyaa Hota* (Pareeh Rawal, Konkona Sen Sharma); *Jaane Hoga Kya* (Aftab Shivdasani, Bipasha Basu).

ARABIC: *Emarat Yacoubian*; *Alumniel Hob*; *Oreed Kholaan*; *Dars Khsousy*; *Zari Tarek*; *Ghaway Hob*; *Malesh Ahna Bentahdel*.
(Information courtesy: Q-Mart Audio Video at The Mall).

USEFUL NUMBERS

Police, Fire, Ambulance	999
HMC	4392222
Women's (Rumailah)	4393333
HMC (Emergency)	4393507
Veterinary	653083
Water & Electricity	991
Flight Inquiries	4622999
Doha Seaport	4457457
Museum	4442191
Cinema	4671811
Mumtaz Post (24-hr Service)	4415566
Ministry of Interior	4432211
Ministry of Health	4483555
Ship Phone Service	4864444
Ministry of Interior main switchboard	4330000
Public Department for passports, nationality and residence	4882882
Capital Security Department	4444420
Criminal Information Department	4477477
Boundaries and Coasts Security	4414488
Civil Defence Department	4413666
Public Relations Department	4448720
Rescue Service	4682888

YOUR STARS

ARIES (Mar 21- April 20): Be aware that a female you work with may be trying to hold you back. Children may be less than honest with you. Try to include the one you love in your plans today. +++

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Your stubbornness coupled with your mate's jealousy don't make for a favorable time. You will have to be careful not to fall into traps set by jealous colleagues. Don't make promises you can't keep. +++

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Spend some quality time with your lover. Stress coupled with diet will add to stomach problems. Too much talk will lead to disputes. +++

CANCER (June 22-July 22): Check your project over carefully if you were not the only one contributing to the end result. Opportunities for new and exciting relationships will be yours if you get out and join groups. Don't make excuses. +++

LEO (July 23-August 22): The emotional state of peers may cause a problem for you. You'll find it easy to charm members of the opposite sex today. You may find that you are a little lucky today. +++

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): You may have difficulties finishing projects you start. Sudden changes regarding your domestic scene are probable. If you're looking to do something worthwhile, consider volunteer work. +++

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Don't try to get even without having all the facts. Don't turn down offers that include sports activities or children. Take part in stimulating debates that will allow you to show off your intelligence. +++

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Things may not be as they sound. You can get ready to celebrate your new direction. Take time to talk things over. Travel for business or pleasure. +++

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Do not expect others to do your work. Group endeavors will provide you with entertainment. People who try to persuade you to do things their way will annoy you. +++

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): You must make sure that all your personal documents are in order. Opportunities for romance will develop through group endeavors; however, the association isn't likely to last. This could be a serious relationship. +++

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Be innovative. Abstain from getting involved with married individuals. Put your efforts into physical fitness programmes or competitive sports. +++

PISCES (February 20-March 20): You should be on the road. Residential changes, renovations, or moves are likely to disrupt your routine. Club memberships or donations could be expensive and prove unnecessary. +++

Cameron ready for next mega film



By Andrew Gumbel

IT MIGHT seem odd that the director of the most successful film in Hollywood history would fail to make another feature for more than 10 years. Then again, anyone who has worked with James Cameron (pictured) – including those who worked on his blockbuster smash, *Titanic* – could probably list a few reasons why.

Yes, he has consistently proved himself to be box-office gold, thanks to such titles as *Aliens*, *The Abyss* and the first two *Terminator* movies. Yes, he has a unique gift for science fiction and action-adventure films that marry cutting-edge technology with surprisingly profound philosophical reflections on the impact of that technology on our fate as human beings.

But the man is also, by all accounts, a nightmare to work with. Studios have come to fear his habit of straying way over schedule and over budget. He is notorious on set for his uncompromising and dictatorial manner, as well as his flaming temper – he's been called the film-making equivalent of Attila the Hun.

On *True Lies*, his 1994 picture with

Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jamie Lee Curtis, he informed everyone on set that going to the lavatory was a fireable offence, and he meant it. On *Terminator 2*, his crew made T-shirts that read "You Can't Scare Me – I Work For Jim Cameron".

Titanic, meanwhile, was one of those movie-world triumphs that threatened at every stage to turn to total disaster. The original budget of \$100m, already considered extravagant, kept ballooning until it hit \$200m – at the time, the most money ever spent on a film production.

The shooting schedule, which started out at 138 days, mushroomed to 160 days – almost six solid months. *Titanic* missed its scheduled summer opening date, causing palpitations among the nervous executives at Fox who saw visions of another *Heaven's Gate* – Michael Cimino's notoriously lavish western that bankrupted United Artists in the early 1980s – ready to swallow them all.

Bill Mechanic, the executive who had the misfortune to take over the Fox studio while the *Titanic* production was in full swing, quickly calculated that the only

way he was going to make a cent was if the film became the biggest-grossing movie of all time. Luckily for him, it did.

After spending hours each day standing waist-deep in chilly, dirty Pacific sea water, many cast members came down with colds, flu or kidney infections.

Several left rather than endure the rigorous conditions any longer.

Three stuntmen suffered broken bones. The local Screen Actors Guild (SAG) representative fired off repeated complaints of mistreatment, although a SAG investigation determined there was nothing inherently unsafe about the set.

Kate Winslet, who starred opposite Leonardo DiCaprio, was so shell-shocked by the experience – she called it an "ordeal" – that she told one interviewer before the film even came out that she would not work with Cameron again unless it was "for a lot of money".

Cameron himself has never apologised for running his sets like a military campaign, although he has taken issue with several of the more specific accusations against him.

The difference, of course, is one of com-

penation. While Cameron earned a reported \$115m from *Titanic* and gave himself the luxury of several years' downtime, most of his crew members had to turn right around from the experience and work another job to keep feeding their families.

Now, though, Cameron is back. He hasn't been entirely idle over the past decade, shooting a handful of seafaring documentaries and shepherding the short-lived television series *Dark Angel*.

In the feature film arena, though, he has struggled to get his projects off the ground. Until 2005, he tried and failed to get funding for *Battle Angel*, a futuristic fantasy about a female fighter cyborg from the 26th century.

Since then, he has been devoting his energies to *Avatar*, a film that aims to give unprecedented realism to entire computer-generated worlds through the story of a paralysed former marine who creates an alien alter-ego for himself as part of an interplanetary war between humans and aliens.

Cameron first came up with the concept of *Avatar* a decade ago but realised he

needed to wait for film technology to catch up with his vision. When he first pitched the film in 2005, he estimated it would cost \$350m – a figure Hollywood simply couldn't swallow, even coming from the man who grossed \$1.8bn for *Titanic*.

Now the budget is down – at least theoretically – to \$200m, and Fox just gave him the green light for a tentative release date of summer 2009. *Avatar* will rely heavily on a technique known as motion-capture technology, in which live actors play the parts of characters who are then animated with computer imagery.

Peter Jackson used motion-capture technology, along with the actor Andy Serkis, to create Gollum in the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. For *Avatar*, Cameron has actually invented a new kind of camera which will enable him to see the computer-generated character through the lens even as he is filming the actors.

The hope, naturally, is that Cameron will, once again, push the limits of film technology and stun audiences with something they have never seen before. – *The Independent*

Anything for a comeback?

By Subhash K Jha

THERE'S a prevalent sense of shock and dismay about the length and breadth of Govinda's role in *Bhagam Bhag*, but the actor's response is significantly cryptic.

"All I'll say is that I went through the film with a horse's rein checking me in every scene... I can't really blame anyone. I went into *Bhagam Bhag* with eyes open, but blinkers on. I had to make a comeback and I had to do so in a big film. That opening *Bhagam Bhag* has provided for me."

"Beyond that I wouldn't like to say anything. If my role appears brief, I've no one to blame. But yes, there was a lot more I could've done. Why I didn't do it? I've no answer to that," Govinda said in an interview.

But his close friends differ from him. In fact, the whole industry is abuzz with talk of Govinda's shockingly supportive role in the new Priyadarshan comedy.

"Govinda has ended up looking like Akshay Kumar's sidekick," said a popular director, who has worked a number of times with Govinda and can't get over his shock.

Currently, Govinda is down with an acute attack of exhaustion, all thanks to his new film

I went into Bhagam Bhag with eyes open, but blinkers on, says actor-politician Govinda, who's being seen on Bollywood screens after a long break



Govinda with *Bhagam Bhag* co-stars Paresh Rawal (left) and Akshay Kumar (back) ... truncated presence.

Chal Chalo Chal, which he has been shooting non-stop for the last two months.

"It's the fastest film in my entire career of 20 years. Unfortunately, the non-stop shooting has taken its toll on my health. I was constantly travelling between Mumbai and Pune."

"I've been down with a series of ailments. I've now requested the director to complete the film in Mumbai. Now, I'm just resting for a bit. I can afford to do so, now that my comeback film *Bhagam Bhag* is a hit."

Recently Govinda celebrated his 42nd birthday.

"To my delight, I got as many



as 70 SMSs within hours. My wife Sunita and children hosted a party for me. We invited all my colleagues and production team with whom I've been working in the past few months, including, of course, the whole *Bhagam Bhag* team."

However, *Bhagam Bhag* co-star Akshay was conspicuous by his absence.

"I don't know why! I think he wasn't in the country," Govinda said lamely. And added, "I'm just so grateful to Akshay and Salman Khan for doing films with me."

Is Govinda's 17-year-old daughter going to be an actress?

"Both my children Narmada and Yash have full freedom to do what they want to do with their lives. I'm there to support them in every way possible way."

"Right now my daughter is off to London for a year to do a

course in jewellery designing."

The father's lonely heart is already wondering.

"I'll go and see her every month in London, my schedules permitting. Of course, I'm going to miss her."

"But every individual needs to harden himself against setbacks, needs to gather his own courage to withstand the tests of time. I've been trying to do a good job of it."

"The last six years, after my mother passed away, have been especially hard on me. The period of recovery began in 2006. Hopefully, things will get even better for me in 2007."

Govinda, who now has Nikhil Advani's film *Salam-e-Ishq* to look forward to, is also trying to change his habits.

"My reputation of an unpunctual actor should now be gone. I was up at 5am or 6am for *Bhagam Bhag* and *Salam-e-Ishq*," he said. — IANS

More Tamil films miss key festival release date

By Chitra Prakash

TAMIL Nadu's harvest festival Pongal being celebrated this week ushers in several new films but it will also see many that missed the release date.

While seven films are hitting the screens during the festival, as many as 10 have turned out to be non-releases.

A Bollywood hero stars in the best publicised of the seven films. *Guru*, with Abhishek Bachchan and Aishwarya Rai as the lead pair, is drawing attention in the state mainly for its director Mani Ratnam, who is a Tamilian. Trade pundits are waiting to see whether the magic of Ratnam and music director A R Rahman works for the film in Tamil Nadu, where regional actors are the largest crowd pullers.

Actor Vijay (pictured) plays the lead role in *Pokkiri*, a remake of Telugu hit of the same name by Mahesh Babu.

Dancing sensation Prabhu Deva has directed the film.

Ajith plays an unusual role for a hero in *Achwar*. Chella directs the film, which is about a hospital attendant taking on big-time criminals. Asin lends her glamorous touch to the action thriller.

Another action flick is *Thamizharam*, with Vishal as the vanquisher of villains. Newcomer Bhama is the female lead in the film directed by Venkatram Reddy.

T Rajender dons the lawyer's black coat in *Veerasamy*, which is scripted and directed by the actor himself. Debutant Ajees and Meghna Naidu play the lead pair.

Karthik plays a lawyer in *Kalakkara Chanduru* with Anu as his love interest under Ravi Raju's direction.

Suriya's younger brother Karthik makes his debut as hero in *Paruthiveeran*.

The 10 films that failed to make it as Pongal releases are: — IANS



Pachaikatti! Muthucharan, Umalee Umalee, Oram Po, Deepavali, Sabari, Kuppi, Ninaitale, Latchiyam Oru Thayin Asai, Thullura Vayasu, and Adavadi.

The Tamil Film Producers' Association attributes this to the insufficient number of cinema halls.

Many in the industry, however, say that films of second-string actors like 'Jayam' Ravi and Arya often face such odds. — IANS

TV actress Smita 'ready to tell a good story'

AFTER working in tear-jerkers and making a name for herself, television actress Smita Irani has ventured into production and says she is ready to tell a good story if viewers are prepared to watch it.

It's been two years since Smita's production company Ugrava went into theatre.

Her new serial *Virrudh*, which goes on air on Sony from January end or beginning of February, takes soaps to the next step. She has joined hands with writer Kamlesh Pandey who wrote the story of *Rang De Basanti*.

Smita herself plays a pivotal role. "I play a woman of today in *Virrudh*. She's able to draw a very fine balance between tradition and family."

"Sunny liked the story and we immediately started work. I've another project in the pipeline with Zee. It's very important for me to do quality work. The idea is to come up to the channel's requirements and yet do work that takes one away from the norm." — IANS



Dance show ...

(Right) Indian movie star Kareena Kapoor performs during a concert at the annual Muscat Festival last week in Oman. The Muscat festival aims to promote heritage, culture and tradition and to attract tourists.



Malayalam filmmaker Blessy eyes new frontiers

UPCOMING Malayalam filmmaker Blessy, who has made it big with family dramas, says he is a creator and is looking for new frontiers.

"I am moving out to new frontiers because I am a creator. My next film, a blend of comedy, black magic and romance, would be shot entirely in Kolkata," Blessy told reporters in Thiruvananthapuram after his latest film *Patanila* was screened for the media.

Produced by Thampi Antony, a US-settled actor, the new film would have

Dileep and Meera Jasmine in lead roles. *Patanila*, the third Blessy film released during Christmas last year, has not done well at the box office as expected, compared to his all-time hits like *Kazhcha* and *Thannurra*.

"*Patanila* is Kerala but a film that dwells into the Keralita society and talks about issues that have been discussed at length across the state for the past one decade. And this is no commercial gimmick and one meant to revive the fortunes of the film," said Blessy.

Chief Minister V S Achuthanandan, leader of opposition Oommen Chandy and several other top politicians have already seen the film and are said to be satisfied.

The film deals with the issues of globalisation and consumerism and addresses the issue of farmer suicides and harassment of women.

Superstar Mammootty plays a farmer, who moves from his village to a city to give better education to his two daughters. One of the girls is raped later. — IANS

GARFIELD



POOCH CAFE



BOUND & GAGGED

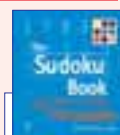


ADAM



SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9.



Yesterday's solution



This puzzle is taken from *The Sudoku Book: An Introduction to Sudoku with 101 puzzles*, by Sam Griffiths-Jones (RRP: £5.99, Harriman House). Visit www.dailysudoku.com for a daily graded puzzle, online Sudoku resources and links.

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

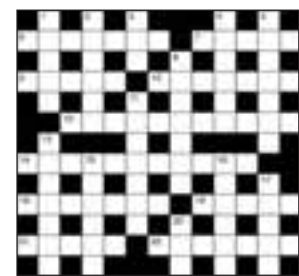
DOUBLE CROSSWORD

CRYPTIC CLUES

- ACROSS
- Railway supporter doesn't suffer from insomnia (7)
 - Secure release (6)
 - Ships at full speed? (5)
 - Observe where the bishop has influence (3)
 - Lay aside right to throw out (6)
 - Share of harbour charge (7)
 - Spoils mischievous child who has affected manner? (7)
 - Fishily captions? (7)
 - Exuberance expected of a medium well up in his art? (4,7)
 - Ready to leave a bequest? (7)
 - Does it hurt to be spruce? (5)
 - Could be freed, but put off (5)
 - Tell in detail how to find the number again (7)
- DOWN
- With which one presumably stops an animal (6)
 - Two lads and one romping girl (6)
 - Van goes where the fighting is (5)
 - Chop some of the wood (3)

QUICK CLUES

- ACROSS
- Din (7)
 - Late (5)
 - Avarice (5)
 - Touch (7)
 - Worsen (11)
 - Umpire (11)
 - Disprove (7)
 - Beginning (5)
- DOWN
- Characteristic (5)
 - Take (7)
 - Intercede (7)
 - Postpone (7)
 - Inequitable (6)
 - Beginning (6)
 - Serious (5)
 - Spray (3)
 - Affair (6)



Yesterday's solutions

QUICK CRYPTIC

- ACROSS: 1 Beneficial; 7 Tenor; 8 Worship; 10 Follower; 11 Lair; 13 Impale; 15 Victim; 17 Even; 18 Contrast; 21 Sailors; 22 Saver; 23 Despondent.
- DOWN: 1 Banal; 2 Narrowly; 3 Fowler; 4 Curt; 5 Athwart; 6 Stiffness; 9 Feremonty; 12 Distaste; 14 Puerile; 16 Poison; 19 Avert; 20 Pomp.
- ACROSS: 1 Forecastle; 7 Opals; 8 Titanic; 10 Turnover; 11 Tiff; 13 Murder; 15 Meagre; 17 Tent; 18 Handicap; 21 Footled; 22 Court; 23 Private eye.
- DOWN: 1 Flair; 2 Restored; 3 Cutlet; 4 Site; 5 Lending; 6 Contempt; 9 Coffee-pots; 12 Headache; 14 Rancour; 16 Bandit; 19 Cruise; 20 Slav.