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Couch potatoes: Be warned

Sitting still for hours at a time might be a health risk regardless of what you do with the rest of your day.

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MICHAEL Jensen, a researcher at the Mayo Clinic, is talking on the phone, but his voice is drowned out by what sounds like a vacuum cleaner. “I’m sorry,” he says. “I’m on a treadmill.”

David Dunstan, an Australian researcher, uses a speaker phone so he can walk around his office at the Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute in Melbourne.

It’s not that Jensen and Dunstan are hyperactive. Rather, both are exercise researchers looking into the link between sitting down and premature death. And what they have found is disturbing enough that they both make sure they spend most of the day on their feet.

Jensen explains that he and his colleagues at Mayo, in Rochester, Minnesota, were studying weight control when they discovered that some people “spontaneously start moving around and don’t gain weight” when they have overeaten. These people don’t dash to the gym; they just walk more, hop up from the couch to run errands or find other excuses to get onto their feet. “This really got us thinking about this urge to move,” Jensen says, “and how important that might be for maintaining good health.”

That led them to a field known as “inactivity research”, which suggests that inactivity, particularly sitting, can be very bad for your health. It might sound like a statement of the obvious, but the killer point is this: Inactivity is bad for you even if you exercise. Heading to the gym is not a licence to spend the rest of the day on your backside.

In 2010, a team led by Alpa Patel of the American Cancer Society in Atlanta analysed the data from a 14-year study of 123,000 middle-aged adults. When they compared mortality rates of those who spent six hours a day or more sitting and those who reported three or fewer hours — and when they took into account other factors such as diet — they found something surprising: Extra time on the couch was associated with a 34 percent higher mortality rate for women and 17 percent higher for men in the 14 years after they joined the study. It is not clear why there is such a big sex difference.

In another study, a team at the University of Queensland in Australia analyzed data on the television viewing habits of 8,800 Australians. They calculated that each hour of television correlated with 22 minutes off the average life expectancy of an adult older than 25. In other words, people who watch six hours of television a day face the prospect of dying, on average, about five years younger than those who don’t watch any.

Many other studies have reached similar conclusions. In a review of all the evidence, Dunstan’s team concluded that there was a “persuasive case” that excessive sitting “should now be considered an important stand-alone component of the physical activity and health equation.”

The message is clear: Sitting still for hours at a time might be a health risk regardless of what you do with the rest of your day.

Just as you cannot compensate for smoking 20 cigarettes a day by a good run on the weekend, a bout of high-intensity exercise may not cancel out the effect of watching TV for hours on end. Patel’s study found that people who spent hours sitting had a higher mortality rate even if they worked out for 45 to 60 minutes a day. The researchers call these people “active couch potatoes”.

But it is not just sitting on the couch that worries them. If the harm comes primarily through the inactivity itself — discounting sleep, which brings its own health benefits — the researchers suspect that watching TV, reading a novel or sitting at a desk may be just as harmful.

“The sobering reality,” Dunstan says, “is that across a 14- or 15-hour waking day, we’re getting 55 to 75 percent sedentary time. Moderate to vigorous activity — what people like to call ‘exercise’ — occupies just 5 percent or less of people’s days.”
That’s not the lifestyle to which the human body is adapted. “From an evolutionary point of view, we are built to be active,” says Audrey Bergouignan, a human physiologist at the University of Colorado at Denver. “Your grandparents were not going to the fitness centre. They were active all day.”

Much of Bergouignan’s research involves bed-rest studies funded by space agencies. They are primarily concerned with the effects of low gravity on astronauts, but the results also apply to earthbound inactivity.

In a typical study, healthy and previously active volunteers are confined to bed for anything from a day to three months. “They develop metabolic features very close to what we observe in obese people and people with Type 2 diabetes,” Bergouignan says.

The studies reveal that inactivity produces a complex cascade of metabolic changes. For example, unused muscles not only atrophy but also shift from endurance-type muscle fibers that can burn fat to fast-twitch fibers that rely more strongly on glucose. Inactive muscles also lose mitochondria, the cells’ power packs, which can also burn fat. With the muscles relying more on carbohydrates for what little work they are doing, unburned lipids accumulate.

“You’re going to become very fatty,” Bergouignan says, which could be why sitting has been linked to heart disease.

Other changes involve insulin resistance, a diabetes-like condition in which glucose accumulates in the bloodstream even when the body produces insulin to sequester it. All of this happens very quickly in the astronaut studies. “In three days we have insulin resistance,” Bergouignan says.

Similar effects, she adds, occurred in a study in which normally active people were asked to curtail their exercise, in a study in which normally active people were asked to curtail their exercise, in a study in which normally active people were asked to curtail their exercise, in a study in which normally active people were asked to curtail their exercise, in a study in which normally active people were asked to curtail their exercise, in a study in which normally active people were asked to curtail their exercise.

That’s a message exercise advocates want to get lost. “We know that if you exercise 40 to 60 minutes a day, you’re going to have a health benefit,” says Inigo San Millán, director of the Human Performance Laboratory at the University of Colorado Hospital’s Sports Medicine Clinic in Denver.

Dunstan agrees. “We shouldn’t throw out the well-documented benefits of vigorous physical activity,” he says. Rather, we should think of extensive sitting as a risk factor that should be addressed separately.

But how? In his latest experiments, Dunstan has been bringing people into his lab so that he and his team can find out precisely what works. In a study published last year, volunteers visited on three separate days. The first visit, they simply sat watching TV. On the other two, they watched TV but stood up three times an hour to spend two minutes on a treadmill. One day they went at an easy pace; on the other, they walked more briskly. On each visit they were given lunch with a sugary drink.

The scientists discovered that short activity breaks reduced the volunteers’ blood sugar and insulin spikes after the drink by roughly 25 percent. “That is a good thing,” Dunstan says. “We want to avoid those big spikes.” Even more interestingly, ambling on the treadmill was just as effective as more energetic walking.

Jensen thinks that what makes these short bouts of activity effective is that they’re enough to burn off some of the glucose that has accumulated in your bloodstream. “Your bloodstream isn’t that big,” he says. “In the whole body it’s only five liters.” For non-diabetics, that translates to less than 10 grams of glucose in the bloodstream. “If you just burn off four grams — 16 calories — that’s a lot of glucose you’ve taken out of the bloodstream.”

It’s easy to burn 16 calories simply by pacing around the room. That’s also a really good way to clear the mind. “People who get up and move around for five minutes every hour are every bit as productive as people who sit there for hours at a time,” Jensen says.

Jensen suggests, “take a break and do the dishes.” If you are watching TV, get up and move around every 20 minutes, or whenever there’s a break.

Patel adds that this may actually come as good news to the millions of people who have not been able to get close to the recommended daily exercise levels. “The nice take-home message,” she says, “is that anything is better than nothing. Just getting up and moving at all is taking a big step in the right direction.”
Total shares its technology with QP, Qatargas and Dolphin Energy

TOTAL Research Center-Qatar (TRC-Q) has been instrumental in organising high-level trainings for Qatar Petroleum, Qatargas and Dolphin Energy since the beginning of the year. After the first trainings in reservoir engineering, solar energy, corrosion and air quality, Total continued its programme and held a new technical training last month on ‘seismic reservoir characterisation.’

It was given by Jean-Luc Piazza, an expert from Total’s headquarters, a branch of Aamal Company QSC and Aamal Trading & Distribution (ATD), Qatar’s sole distributor of Bridgestone tyres, concluded its 60-day ‘Change to Bridgestone’ promotion by announcing the grand raffle winner and other winners of prizes, including Apple iPhones and iPads. Avilino Junior Pomse was the grand raffle winner of a Nissan Qashiq sports utility vehicle and received the key from the very best in class after sales service.

Aamal names promotion winners

Aamal Trading & Distribution (ATD), a branch of Aamal Company QSC and Qatar’s sole distributor of Bridgestone tyres, concluded its 60-day ‘Change to Bridgestone’ promotion by announcing the grand raffle winner and other winners of prizes, including Apple iPhones and iPads. Avilino Junior Pomse was the grand raffle winner of a Nissan Qashiq sports utility vehicle and received the key from Sheikh Mohamed bin Faisal Al Thani, Vice Chairman of Aamal. Jai Shankar, Acting General Manager of ATD, said: “As always, Aamal and Bridgestone will continue offering the most reliable premium products backed by the very best in class after sales service. ATD and Bridgestone will collaborate on similar promotional campaigns in the future that will further highlight our continuing commitment to exceeding customer expectations and achieving 100 percent customer satisfaction.”

Homing in on fire safety

A workshop organised by Oryx GTL provided simple but potentially lifesaving tips and practical exercises on fire prevention and emergency response at home, extending the company’s long-standing commitment to the health, safety and well-being of its workforce to some 250 female employees, spouses, daughters and relatives.

The company has had an exceptional last 12 months in terms of health and safety accomplishments, setting new world class ‘zero harm’ benchmarks and establishing itself as one of the Gulf’s safest energy firms. It is all part of the corporate commitment towards operational excellence and sustainable development.

The inaugural Ladies’ Fire Awareness Workshop at Al Sharq Village and Spa sought to build on the momentum generated by Oryx GTL’s highly effective ‘Safety beyond Zero’ messages. Theory sessions and practical exercises, including how to operate a fire extinguisher and which type of equipment to use for a particular fire type, were interspersed with question and answer opportunities.

The interactive and fun day culminated with a fire extinguishing competition, with iPads, foot massage and vouchers awarded to five winners.

Oryx GTL PRC manager, Katia Youssef Abboud, co-ordinated the workshop in conjunction with the head of Safety, Gerald Curtis Charles, HSE Trainer Adel Lawson and Emergency Services Specialist Andries Frederick Decker.

Abboud said the workshop was a proactive method of reducing fire emergencies and the damage caused by them.

“It is vital for those who spend more time at home with children to be equipped with simple yet potentially overwhelming positive.”

The company hopes that by extending its zero harm philosophy outside the workplace, it can help provide a more secure, safe and fire-free life for Qatar’s cherished homemakers.
Qatar-based popular Indian singer Nadir Abdul Salam has signed a contract with popular British singer Sami Yusuf’s music production company Andante Records. With this, Nadir diverts his talent to the world of value-driven spiritual music.

Andante Records is to release shortly the debut album of the 16-year-old singing sensation. It features 10 songs fusing Eastern and Western styles. In keeping with Nadir’s reputation for impeccable reproduction of language and dialect in his singing, the album combines Arabic, English, Malayalam and Hindi and captures Nadir’s extraordinary voice and is a spiritually uplifting work that marks the flowering of a remarkable talent.

It was during Yusuf’s 2012 concert in Doha that Nadir was spotted by Andante Records. Nadir has been studying at Qatar Music Academy while honing his talent in the Spiritique genre made popular by Yusuf, Founder and Managing Director of Andante Studios.

Andante Records says: “With so many people having vested interests, a wonder child can sometimes be overhyped. That can’t be said about Nadir. He had no formal training in his early years, but his talent was obvious when he first moved to Qatar and his parents noticed he could sing songs perfectly in a variety of languages. This multilingual approach survives to this day and Nadir sings Arabic, English, ghazals, Hindi, Tamil and Malayalam with equal aplomb.” His soulful singing is characterised by his rendition of Arabic songs with impeccable dialects such as classical, Khaliji, Lebanese, Egyptian and Algerian. He was dubbed the “Ambassador of India for Arabic Songs” by a former Indian ambassador.

Qatar Petroleum International (QPI) held a company-wide suhoor gathering at the St. Regis Hotel on Sunday to mark Ramadan. Attended by Nasser Al Jaidah, CEO of QPI, the executive leadership team and over 100 employees and their families, the event provided an opportunity for participants to connect at a social level and share the spirit of Ramadan, which promotes solidarity, community and goodwill.

The event also aimed to strengthen social cohesion between employees and management, which supports staff throughout the year by hosting recognition ceremonies, merit award schemes and other gatherings.

Al Jaidah stressed the company’s commitment to organising such events and said: “We give top priority to our employees, they are our main driver towards leadership and excellence, and the backbone of the company’s activities that promote performance excellence.

“The Holy Month is an ideal time to reinforce social values, improve social cohesion, and spread a culture of cooperation and collaboration among our valued employees.”

imalvadi (Indian Children’s Group) organised a Quran contest in various categories. The winners were: Fadi Abdul Aziz, Mohamed Adil, Fathima Abdul Aziz and Ridwa Gassim (first row); Huda Abdul Qadir, Najah Abdul Latheef, Munif Muneer and Aymen Myhammed Haneef (second row); and Ahmed Najad, Salina Ismail, Rizwin Rafeeq and Haneen Ahmed.

Starwood Hotels & Resorts celebrated iftar with taxi drivers from across the Middle East as part of its commitment to Ramadan.

Now in its fourth year, Starwood’s ‘Iftar for Cabs’ campaign brought more than 34 hotels from across the region, including The St. Regis Doha, together for a worthy cause. During iftar, packs of food and beverages were distributed to cab drivers at the main entrance of each hotel. Catering teams at each hotel prepared packs. Associates from across various departments within the hotels, including catering, administration and guest services, joined forces. “Iftar for Cabs is our way to say thank you to cab drivers across the Middle East. The initiative in its fourth year represents the spirit of the Holy Month of Ramadan. “We are extremely proud of all our associates who came together to make this year’s Iftar for Cabs’ another big success and I want to thank them for their continued support,” said Guido de Wilde, Senior Vice President & Regional Director, Starwood Hotels & Resorts.

The Minister of Energy and Industry H E Dr Mohammed bin Saleh Al Sada attended Ghabga organised by Qatar Petroleum at Four Seasons Hotel Doha on Tuesday. QP directors, department managers, CEOs, managing directors and other top officials of QP’s joint ventures and subsidiaries were also present.
Rowling made a bold move and, no doubt, is feeling vindicated by the critical acclaim the book has received. But there’s a catch: Until the news leaked about the author’s real identity, this critically acclaimed book had sold only 500 to 1,500 copies.

social influence, the outcomes would be largely random and would also become more unequal as the social feedback became stronger.

What we found was highly consistent with the cumulative-advantage hypothesis. First, when people could see what other people liked, the inequality of success increased, meaning that popular songs became more popular and unpopular songs become less so. Second and more surprisingly, each song’s popularity was incredibly unpredictable: One song, for example, came in first out of 48 we sampled in one “world,” but it came in 40th in another.

In the real world, of course, it’s impossible to travel back in time and start over, so it’s much harder to argue that someone who is incredibly successful may owe their success to a combination of luck and cumulative advantage rather than superior talent. But by writing under the pseudonym of Robert Galbraith, an otherwise anonymous name, Rowling came pretty close to re-creating our experiment, starting over again as an unknown author and publishing a book that would have to succeed or fail on its own merits, just as Harry Potter had to 16 years ago — before anyone knew who Rowling was.

Rowling made a bold move and, no doubt, is feeling vindicated by the critical acclaim the book has received. But there’s a catch: Until the news leaked about the author’s real identity, this critically acclaimed book had sold only 500 to 1,500 copies, depending on which report you read. What’s more, had the author actually been Robert Galbraith, the book would almost certainly have continued to languish in obscurity, probably forever.

The Cuckoo’s Calling will now have a happy ending, and its success will only perpetuate the myth that talent is ultimately rewarded with success. What Rowling’s little experiment has actually demonstrated, however, is that quality and success are even more unrelated than we found in our experiment. It might be hard for a book to become a runaway bestseller if it’s unreadably bad (although one might argue that the Twilight series and Fifty Shades of Grey challenge this constraint), but it is also clear that being good, or even excellent, isn’t enough. As one of the hapless editors who turned down the Galbraith manuscript put it: “When the book came in, I thought it was perfectly good — it was certainly well-written — but it didn’t stand out.”

Ironically, that’s probably how those 12 editors felt about the original Harry Potter manuscript. Now, of course, they look like idiots, but what both our experiment and Rowling’s suggests is that they might have been right all along.

Had things turned out only slightly different, the real Rowling might have met with the same success as the fake Robert Galbraith, not the other way around. As hard as it is to imagine in the Harry Potter-obsessed world that we now inhabit, it’s entirely plausible that in this parallel universe, Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone would just be a “perfectly good” book that never sold more than a handful of copies; Rowling would still be a struggling single mother in Manchester, England; and the rest of us would be none the wiser.

(Duncan J Watts is a principal researcher at Microsoft Research and author of Everything Is Obvious (Once You Know the Answer): How Common Sense Fails Us.)
HEALTH

Elderly with diabetes 50pc likelier to have disability

Disability was defined as either crimped mobility or an impaired ability to perform daily activities such as bathing, eating, using the phone, shopping and using transport.

PARIS: Older adults with diabetes are between 50 and 80 percent likelier to have a disability compared to people without the disease, according to a review published yesterday.

Researchers at the Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute in Melbourne, Australia, trawled through more than 3,200 previously published studies that explored the link between diabetes and disability.

They narrowed the catch down to 26 studies that compared like with like.

Most of the people in these studies were aged over 65 — an age category in which Type-2 diabetes, also called adult onset diabetes, predominates.

Disability was defined as either crimped mobility or an impaired ability to perform daily activities such as bathing, eating, using the phone, shopping and using transport.

Lead epidemiologist Anna Peeters said the association between diabetes and disability was long known but until now poorly identified. The causes remain mysterious, she said.

“It’s possible that the high blood glucose concentrations experienced by people with diabetes might lead to chronic muscle inflammation, eventually resulting in physical disability, and some studies have shown that diabetes is associated with rapid and worsening muscle wasting,” she said.

“The complications associated with diabetes, such as heart disease, stroke, and kidney disease, can all result in disability.

“As the world’s population ages, and diabetes becomes more common, it seems clear that we will see an increased need for disability-related health resources,” the paper says.

The paper appears in the journal The Lancet Diabetes and Endocrinology.

According to the UN’s World Health Organisation (WHO), 347 million people around the world have diabetes, a disease in which the body fails to break down glucose in the blood through the hormone insulin.

Ninety percent of these have the Type 2 form of the disease, which typically shows up in adulthood or late childhood, driven by obesity and a sedentary lifestyle.

Menthol cigarettes pose greater health risk than standard ones

BY BRADY DENNIS

THE US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said for the first time Tuesday that menthol-flavoured cigarettes appear to pose a greater risk to public health than standard cigarettes, largely reaffirming the findings of an agency advisory committee two years ago and potentially laying the groundwork for tighter regulations in the future.

In a 153-page “preliminary scientific evaluation”, the FDA found that although there is “little evidence” to suggest that menthol cigarettes are more toxic than non-menthol cigarettes, the mint flavour of menthol masks the harshness of tobacco, making it easier to get addicted and harder to quit.

Despite those findings, the FDA stopped short Tuesday of proposing specific restrictions or a ban on menthol, instead saying it would solicit public input for the next two months before deciding how to proceed. That probably means that any potential regulations remain months, if not years, from becoming reality.

The issue of menthol in cigarettes has long been controversial, in part because menthol cigarettes overwhelmingly are favoured by African Americans and teenagers. Sales of them account for about a quarter of the U.S. cigarette market. But about 80 percent of black smokers prefer menthol, as do nearly half of all young smokers.

When Congress gave the FDA power to regulate tobacco in 2009, lawmakers banned candy-, fruit- and spice-flavoured cigarettes, saying manufacturers had used such products to lure young smokers into addiction. But the law exempted menthol, instead instructing the FDA to study the issue to determine whether restricting or banning menthol would benefit public health.

In 2010, an FDA advisory panel made up of doctors, scientists and public-health experts convened to weigh that question. The next year, the group issued a 250-page report saying that menthol made it easier to get hooked and more difficult to quit smoking. The group concluded that “removal of menthol cigarettes from the marketplace would benefit the public health in the United States.”

Meanwhile, the tobacco industry steadfastly defended its use of menthol, saying it is no more harmful than any other type of tobacco.

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Cigarette maker Philip Morris USA submitted its own report to the FDA, asserting that its scientific review had shown that restricting the use of menthol in cigarettes was “neither necessary or justified.” Another report, backed by R J Reynolds Tobacco and Lorillard Tobacco, maker of Newport, the country’s most prevalent brand of menthol cigarettes, warned of grave unintended consequences if the government banned menthol.

“The evidence unequivocally shows that the result would be a dramatically larger illegal cigarette market than currently exists,” it said. “As a result, there also would be severe negative impacts on public health, including exposure of smokers to more harmful contraband cigarettes, increased access of youth to tobacco, increased criminal activity particularly in urban communities, reduced government revenues and loss of jobs.”

Until Tuesday, the FDA had taken no public action on the topic for more than two years. Given the long wait, some tobacco-control advocates said the decision to seek more input was too timid even as they called the FDA’s findings a step in the right direction.

“There is a real public-health cost to this delay,” said Stanton Glantz, director of the Centre for Tobacco Control Research and Education at the University of California at San Francisco. “But better late than never.

“If FDA proceeds logically based on these conclusions, they’re going to have to ban menthol,” he added.

Matthew Myers, president of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, had a similar reaction. “The key to what FDA did today is whether it’s the start of a serious effort to regulate menthol cigarettes,” he said. “The key isn’t what they did today, it’s what they do after today. “It’s clear that action is called for and called for quickly,” he added.

Mitch Zeller, the head of the FDA’s Center for Tobacco Products, told reporters that there is “no holdup” in trying to settle the menthol issue. He said the agency merely wants to have a solid scientific basis for whatever regulations it might eventually pursue. “As a regulatory agency, we can only go as far as the regulatory science will take us,” he said. “The bottom line is, we need more information,” he added.

WP-BLOOMBERG
All work, no rest for SRK
Superstar Shah Rukh Khan has been spending long hours at work, with a surgical procedure in May, has been juggling with morning shoots, surgeries and shooting for his upcoming movie "cooler". The actor was advised at least 10 hours of sleep to help his recovery, but has increased his workload, instead. But just last week, King Khan shot a tough song with his Chemn Express co-star Deepika Padukone. He was busy for two days with the song on the third day, he shot an ad too! Also, he has assumed with shooting his Chemn Express till early hours in the morning, and two days home in time enough part for about four hours of sleep before he wakes up 8 am, a source. Then he returned for his meetings. Shah Rukh was also advised to avoid crowded public places, but for a star of his stature, becomes a tough task, especially when he is caught in the midst of promotions for Chemn Express. The movie, directed by Rohit Shetty, releases on August 9.

BOLLYWOOD NEWS
Swaro Bhaskar in the zone
Swaro Bhaskar is on a roll since her critically and commercially successful performance in hit movie "Boulevard" and with three films "Yeh Jawani Hai Deewani" and "Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna" — in which she played the role of a lost girl — "29 years old said of the imagination of a designer store in London. "Talking about Shah Rukh Khan, Swaro said, "It is a comedy based on travel, romantic comedy and I played a character and I deduct it but it was not seen in Times Web Mona and Lovey..."

Ratal Agnihotri to team up with son again
Ratal Agnihotri will once again be seen playing the lead role in his son A Kool's film "Mamangam", which is his mother in his second film "Purani Jeans". This will mark the second time that Ratal is working together in Purani Jeans. It is being reported that Ratal will be playing his mother in the film, which is a different project. His son, A Kool, has been working on the film for some time now, and has already shot some portions of the film. The film is set to release in late 2014, and is expected to be a big hit at the box office.
A mirror to expat life in Gulf

THERE are millions of expatriates working in the Gulf from all over the world whose real life experiences range from the most stunning to the banal. But it's a fact of life that their experiences are seldom written about, and haven't elicited the kind of attention it should in the global media. Journalists working in the region too have been forced to address to the bare necessities of their work.

V M Satish, an Indian journalist working in Dubai, has chosen to break out of the mould. He recently published Distressing Encounters – Real Life Stories from a Reporter's Diary, which is a random collection of his 665 selected stories that have been published in various newspapers across the Gulf region spanning over two decades. The book is a bold look at facets of life in the Gulf and fully captures the trials and tribulations of people, mostly Indians, who have come with big dreams.

In this interview, V M Satish talks about his inspiration for bringing out this book, and how the suffering of people made him look at life in a different perspective. Distressing Encounters is a compilation of your reports published in various newspapers. Since they have already been published, why did you think of bringing them out in a book format?

It is true that the value of a news story is lost within 24 hours. However, I decided to bring out selected stories published in 10 leading English newspapers over 20 years, i.e. Distressing Encounters as a guide to fellow journalists, journalists, journalism students and the community. Some really touching stories helped the marginalised expatriates through the help of readers.

I thought a book containing such stories will be a future reference point to throw some light on expat life in the Gulf. Some of the stories that led me to defamation cases, police cases and jail warrants have included to show how media freedom is challenged and defended in a region with controlled media. I hope DE will dispel a negative perception about journalism in this part of the world.

As the title suggests, it talks mainly about the travails of Gulf experience. Why didn't you focus on the success stories also?

Even though most stories are real life nightmares confronting many expatriates, these negative stories helped the subjects get help or move concerns. Therefore, I consider these stories as positive, helping to open the concerned people’s eyes. One example is a pregnant expat woman, whose electricity and water connection was disconnected because her family was living in a bachelor accommodation area. After my story was published, electricity was resumed within 24 hours!

Similarly, behind every success story there are hundreds of failures and my role as a journalist has been to highlight both sides. In the Gulf, there is any number of journalists to highlight cash-spinning success stories and I used to be a business reporter doing the same thing. I realised that not many are keen to report failures. A multinational supermarket chain crossing 100 chains is a success story, but hundreds of small grocers in the vicinity of a hypermarket are closed down, leading to their owners’ suicides! I chose to be with the failed grocers. However, unique success stories are included, the story of a Kerala expatriate, who looks similar to famous Bahraini rockstar Ali Bahar. This resemblance brought him a huge fortune as Behrars fans thronged his small teashop in Sharjah.

Another success story in the book is that of Dr Azad Mooppen, who is heading one of the largest healthcare chains in the Gulf. His story is how he struggled in the beginning without many patients or bank finance to start a few clinic. The most successful man in the UAE is Superdaad, Daad Murad, who is trying to father 100 children. His story attracted a lot of readers from around the world — picked up by international news media — he is heading one of the biggest families in the world.

Among the people you have met and written about, can you name two who have moved you most?

The Sindhi businessman Mohan, who was haunted by credit card companies haunted me a lot. With 14 cards and two personal loans (Dh250,000), he called me seeking help and his plea for help was published. However, he committed suicide after one month — the number of credit cards he spread on his car seat is still fresh in my memory.

I stopped using credit card and discourage others from using it. I have also been campaigning against suicides throughout the UAE. While all the characters have moved me, the smart Filipino salesgirl, Catherine Arsciwals, whose story, Cashless Cashier Returns Home empty-handed, really touched me.

Six years after working in a convenient store, handling millions of dirhams, she returned home without much savings, even to lease two graves for her ageing parents, let alone buy a house to live peacefully during floods or typhoons in her country. She represents thousands of average expatriates who cannot make it big and return home with a number of diseases, debt and no one to take care in their old age! I am happy to have bailed her out from a debt trap!

The book says this is the first volume. When is the second one due? Will it be different from the first?

I have started working on the second volume, as many stories could not be accommodated in the first. Depending on the feedback from readers, I will restructure the second volume, mainly as a guide to journalists and journalism students. More stories from other journalists (across the Gulf) will be included in the second volume.

As a close observer on expatriate life in the Gulf, what do you think is the future of expats in the UAE and its Gulf in general, especially since the Gulf countries are going through politcal changes, including the big need to provide jobs for nationals?

There is no doubt that expatriates will have to go back, once the local talents are developed fully. However, I don’t see a situation where some work currently done by expatriates at lower wages will be replaced by the Arab youth. Unemployment is a problem and there should be a solution to it. I am hearing about Omanisation or localisation ever since I landed in the Gulf about 14 years ago. There is a pressing need to find well-paid jobs for the educated youth in the Gulf.

Do you think the condition of labourers has improved in the Gulf despite all the focus on their miserable living conditions?

As a journalist, I have witnessed major changes in the Gulf countries due to media intervention. Labour welfare measures like improved working conditions, especially in summer, are introduced after consistent media reports.

Earlier several workers used to fall sick or die during summer, heat stroke, etc. Now there is midday break during the peak summer season — companies violating the rule are fined. To stop non-payment or delayed salary, the UAE has introduced a wage protection system. Strikes and labour unrest used to be rampant, but now there is a lot of improvement. The book is a collection of stories that reflect all these changes in the Gulf over the past 14 years.

Life in the Gulf has stunted or diminished the literary talents of expatriates. Do you think there are the reasons?

I don’t agree with that because many expatriate writers are emerging. The case of Benyamin, Malayalam writer, whose book Aaduvaitham has been a great success. That is in fact a real life story narrated by a novelist. I believe KSR Menon, a seasoned journalist, has now authored a new novel, which is doing very well on Amazon. The overall interest in literature and writing is coming down due to a number of reasons, especially the proliferation of visual media, lack of reading, etc.
BMW Z4: Fast, agile and totally hedonistic

BY MARTIN LOVE

MY FAVOURITE was the little green Mini, but the Superfast Matchbox with exposed engine block and flame decals was a close second. There was also the Land Rover Defender with those rubbery wheels you could pull off, the ambulance with its tiny opening rear doors and the green truck with a swinging hook and a hanged red thread... Mention the word Matchbox and for many people you open a box of memories. In my case a box that came with two blue mesh trays and a push-button lid, the contents of which were lined up and driven round the patterns on the kitchen lino while I made soft yowling and growling sounds which left me with a sore throat.

It is 60 years since Jack Odell first designed a dinky car for his daughter to take into class. Her school only allowed toys that could fit inside a matchbox, so Odell crafted a scaled version of a green and red road roller. A dump truck and a cement mixer followed and then, over the decades, everything from Alfetta to Zodias.

All those years spent pushing small cars across the floor helps us prepare for day when we finally get behind the wheel of a dream car such as this BMW Z4 roadster. Just like all those Matchboxers, it too is scorchingly fast and can pull itself through the most amazing bends. It even makes its own yowling and growling sounds.

The Z4 is a two-seat, front-engined, rear-drive roadster that traces its genes back to the crazy Z1 of 25 years ago – most famous for its bizarre drop-down doors which folded into the sils. You could drive roof down and doors folded for a full “open car” experience. This Z4 has regular doors. But slip into the low-slung bucket seat and pop open the roof and you’ll be transported back in time. The driving position is extreme. Your eyes are virtually on a level with the long, vented bonnet and the interplay of forces from the rear axle at your back and the humungous engine in front is exhilarating.

The immediate, gravity-defying handling makes it easy to imagine some great hand is careening you across the kitchen floor.

Look down into the open Z4 from the pavemen and you’ll see that more than half its length is given over to the engine. Back seats, boot, pah! Beneath its veneer of civility it is that most basic thing – four wheels, two seats and a big engine. The power from the direct-injected 2-litre turbocharged four-cylinder engine means you’ll hit 60mph in about five seconds. You can opt for the six-speed manual or the eight-speed automatic – either way the top speed is limited to 155mph. That’s fast enough, really. Stamp on the throttle and you jump away from the lights like one of those trick water-skiers being jerked off the jetty.

The car comes with a folding metal hardtop which takes 19 seconds to open or close and it works at up to 35mph. I opened it at 30mph – but I couldn’t escape the sense that the roof was going to catch the wind and whip the car into the air – or was it just that old Matchbox feeling again?

Price £33,845
Top speed 155mph

Exotic cars are hot wheels for teens in London

BY HANNAH WINTER

RENS in a deprived area of east London are sparing no expense when it comes to impressing their friends for a few hours by hiring exotic cars with a price tag that can sometimes rival the cost of the flats where they live.

Lamborghinis, Ferraris and even Bentleys that once were the preferred wheels of the wealthy are showing up on the gritty streets of Tower Hamlets, rented by 16-year-olds to celebrate their National Record of Achievement (NRA) ceremony, a prom-like celebration at the end of compulsory schooling.

“It’s showing off, basically. Playing music, going from area to area to area,” said Pouyur Rahman, a pupil at Swanlea School, who attended the ceremony this year and split a £400 ($610) fee with a friend to rent an Audi S4 for four days.

“Showing off your car, just everyone looking at you. It’s like your spotlight,” Rahman said.

“When everyone was coming you just feel excited for the kids,” said Ibrahim Hussain who went through the rite of passage last year and works part-time at his brother’s car-hire business, which rents out vehicles for the ceremonies.

“Certain people obviously don’t want to spend the money, you can understand that, their parents might be not working. But certain kids, obviously, they’re crazy, they’ll save up from young and they just want to hire it,” Hussain said.

Tower Hamlets is home to the largest Bangladeshi community in Britain, and the majority of pupils taking part are of Bangladeshi origin.

Abdul Hasnath, a senior youth worker with the Osmani Trust youth and community organisation, said the prom-like celebrations probably caught on 14 or 15 years ago, with pupils hiring limousines, but have gotten more lavish – and expensive – since.

“It was quite small at that time, but obviously now it’s probably the biggest date on their diaries, including Eid (the Muslim holiday) and everything else,” he said.

BIG DAY

The students, who at 16 are too young to drive, are chauffeured through the neighbourhood either by drivers connected with car hire companies or by friends or relatives. Glad in evening wear, they pose for pictures before attending the NRA ceremony at school, during which awards and certificates are distributed, and then head out for the night.

Many of those in the more expensive rides switch later to ‘after-cars’ - saloons or larger vehicles - which they can travel in together, often getting involved in road races. Videos of the day, set to pounding hip-hop and R&B soundtracks, are posted on YouTube.

For some teens, the substantial sums are hard to get together. Stephan Bolompa, a student at Swanlea, said that when he first approached his mother with the price of booking a car, it was too much to take from the family budget.

In the end, he was only able to go to the ceremony in a showy ride thanks to a friend’s mother, who borrowed a Range Rover Sport for free with the help of a company connection.

Getting the vehicle meant a lot to him: “Just the feeling that you’re actually taking part in the ceremony by having a car, it’s a good feeling,” he said.

REUTERS
Makers of security technology address a need for speed

BY MARJORIE CENSER

A S demand for security tech-
ology — from metal detec-
tors to imaging scanners — has grown, the companies that produce and operate it have seen a boom in business. But the surge may be ebbing in the United States, and these companies say they’re increasingly looking abroad to sell their technology as well seeking ways to improve existing systems to deal with travelers’ most common request: Make the screening process faster.

Take Rapiscan Systems, which is based in Torrance, California. The company produces a range of security technology, including the baggage scanners used by the Transportation Security Administration. Rapiscan has provided security at many of the recent Olympic Games, including at Salt Lake City and Beijing, said Peter Kant, the company’s executive vice president.

After years of growth — the busi-
ness went from $123m in sales in 2003 to nearly $400m in 2012 — Kant said there are fewer opportunities for new work in the United States, particularly in defence.

So Rapiscan, the largest subsidiary of OSI Systems, is increasingly moving into services work, through which it can help users operate their systems more efficiently. In Mexico, for exam-
ple, Rapiscan has 750 employees work-
ing at checkpoints equipped with the company’s scanners, he said.

“The technology is currently in a mature cycle,” he said. “The move now is how to keep or increase security operations” while trimming costs.

Both Rapiscan and Smiths Detection, a subsidiary of the British company Smiths Group that sells prod-
ucts ranging from X-ray baggage scan-
ers to systems to detect radiation, are also looking to improve their products.

This month, Smiths Detection announced that its new explosive-
detection system, which focuses on high-speed screening of checked bag-
gage, has received TSA certification. The belt moves at 98 feet a minute, allowing it to screen up to 1,800 bags an hour, according to the company, which has its US headquarters in the Maryland Western Shore community of Edgewood. Rapiscan’s high-speed baggage-screening system, targeted at large bags, last month received a certifi-
cation from a European aviation body, the company said. Both companies are hoping to sell their technology abroad. Kant said he sees potential work in India, Korea and Brazil, among others.

Rapiscan just completed work at the Confederations Cup soccer tournament in Brazil and will be supplying security technology to the Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, next year.

Lance Roncalli, managing direc-
tor and vice president of sales for the Americas at Smiths Detection, pointed to Africa, the Middle East and Latin America as potential growth markets.

“These aren’t products that people are going to necessarily stop buying,” he said. In particular, he said, security breaches tend to drive growth. “When we have an event like the Boston Marathon, there’s always a big focus on, of course, not allowing that to hap-
pen,” Roncalli said.

“I wouldn’t say [security technology is] a fast-growth market, but it’s a growing market,” said Timothy Quillin of the financial services firm Stephens. “I would’ve thought that there would be some kind of a hull or decline off of those relatively high levels of spending post-9/11, but I think security spending just continues to go up.”

Still, it isn’t an easy business. Company executives say they’re under constant pressure to improve their offerings so they don’t miss new threats.

Roncalli said this has meant Smiths Detection must ensure that its technology can be improved over time. “If you deliver it today and you can’t add to the library of substances it can detect, it becomes obsolete very quickly,” he said.

Rapiscan found itself party to contro-
versy after building body scanners used by TSA to screen travelers. After Congress and the public complained that the technology was too intrusive, the standards for the scanners were altered.

After Rapiscan said it couldn’t re-
profit its technology to meet the new requirements in time, the TSA, and the company agreed to end the deal — can-
celling about $5m in remaining work-
and to send the company’s scanners to other federal agencies.

Quillin said the debate over pri-
vacy hasn’t taken a significant toll on the outlook for security technology companies.

The balance “between security and liberty” is an ongoing discussion, but I don’t think the discussions that we’ve had about privacy and liberty have changed in aggregate spending on security,” he said. “I don’t think that we as a society ... have decided that we want to reverse course.”

Apple developing iPhones and tablets with bigger screens

APPLE could roll out smart-
phones and tablets with big-
gger screens in a move analysts say is an attempt to catch up with a trend set by a major rival Samsung. The Californian tech giant and its Asian suppliers are testing smart-
phone screens larger than four inches and tablet screens slightly less than 13 inches, the Wall Street Journal reported, without naming the suppliers.

Samsung, which has released a series of handsets and tablets with increasingly larger screens, has seen its global market share rise as consumers flock to their products putting Apple under pressure to follow suit.

The paper said it was not clear if such designs would ever make their way onto the market, but analysts said smartphones with bigger displays are increasingly popular because they meet the needs of users.

“Such designs are understandable as people tend to use their smartphones more for apps than for making calls,” Kuo Ming-chi, at the Taipei-based KGI Securities Investment Advisory Co, told AFP. Currently, the iPhone 5 has a four-inch screen, compared with Samsung’s S4, an improved version of the South Korean company’s popular predecessor the S3 and which boasts a five-inch screen. Such handsets are often referred to as “phablets” because their size sits in between a phone and a tablet. By offering multiple screen size options and handset prices, Samsung has seen its market share rise to 33.1 percent in the three months to March, while Apple was lagging with 17.9 per-
cent, according to research by Strategy Analytics. During the same three-
month period, Samsung also witnessed its global tablet market share climb to 17.9 percent, up from 11.3 percent a year ago, while Apple’s market share dived to 30.6 percent, a sharp decline from 58.1 percent the previous year, according to IDC.

While admitting Apple may still defend its argument that smartphones should be designed for one-hand use, Kuo said the continued improvement of battery and processor technologies could lead to re-thinking that policy.

“Bigger displays mean greater con-
sumption of power. But that thinking may change with bigger batteries and improvement of chip manufacturing technologies which have made energy consumption more efficient,” he said.

Kuo added Apple might also try big-
gger screens for its tablet products to meet the demand of users who hope to work on their devices.

“But then again, tablets with bigger screens may be too heavy to carry for some users. That is something Apple may need to find a compromise on,” he said. The current iPad has a 9.7-inch screen while iPad Mini is armed with a 7.9-inch screen.

WP-BLOOMBERG

AFP
Learn Arabic

How to negate the verb in present:

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ana La Aktubu</td>
<td>I do not write</td>
</tr>
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<td>Anta La Taktubu</td>
<td>You do not write</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti La Taktubuna</td>
<td>You do not write (f)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howa La Yadrusu</td>
<td>He does not write</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiy’ya La Tadrusu</td>
<td>She does not write (f)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hoy en la Historia

July 25, 2003

1978: The world’s first “test-tube baby” was born. Louise Brown was conceived by the process of in vitro fertilization (IVF), pioneered in Britain.

1992: The Olympic Games began in Barcelona, the first Olympics without boycotts since 1972 due to the ending of the Cold War.

1997: Former Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot was sentenced to life imprisonment.

2007: Pratibha Patil was sworn in as the first woman president of India.

Scientists reported that the first human migration to the Americas across the Bering Strait (also known as Beringia) occurred no later than 18,000 years ago.

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1997: Former Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot was sentenced to life imprisonment.

2007: Pratibha Patil was sworn in as the first woman president of India.

Picture: Getty Images © GRAPHIC NEWS

ALL IN THE MIND

Can you find the hidden words? They may be horizontal, vertical, diagonal, forwards or backwards.

AMAZON, ARKANSAS, COLORADO, CONGO, DANUBE, ELBE, EURYPIATES, GANGES, HUDSON, INDUS, JORDAN, LIMPOPO, LOIRE, MEKONG, MISSISSIPPI, MISSOURI, MURRAY, NILE, ORINOCO, RHINE, RIDO GRANDE, SEINE, SHANNON, THAMES, TIBER, TIGRES, VOLGA, YANGTZE, YUKON, ZAMBEZI.

LEARN ARABIC

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</tbody>
</table>

Baby Blues by Jerry Scott and Rick Kirkman

Hagar The Horrible by Chris Browne

Zits by Dennis Young and Denis Lebrun

PLUS

THURSDAY 25 JULY 2013
How to play Hyper Sudoku:
A Hyper Sudoku Puzzle is solved by filling the numbers from 1 to 9 into the blank cells. A Hyper Sudoku has unlike Sudoku 13 regions (four regions overlap with the nine standard regions). In all regions the numbers from 1 to 9 can appear only once. Otherwise, a Hyper Sudoku is solved like a normal Sudoku.

How to play Kakuro:
The kakuro grid, unlike in sudoku, can be of any size. It has rows and columns, and dark cells like in a crossword. And, just like in a crossword, some of the dark cells will contain numbers. Some cells will contain two numbers. However, in a crossword the numbers reference clues. In a kakuro, the numbers are all you get! They denote the total of the digits in the row or column referenced by the number.

Within each collection of cells - called a run - any of the numbers 1 to 9 may be used, but, like sudoku, each number may only be used once.
CINEMA / TV LISTINGS

SHOWING AT VILLAGGIO & CITY CENTER

TEL: 444233900 44451701

MALL

1

Honey Bee (2D/Malayalam) – 3.00 & 3.30pm
Texas Killing Fields (2D/Crime) – 11.00pm
D-Day (2D/Hindi) – 3.00pm

2

Pattathu Yaanai (2D/Tamil) – 8.00pm
Darling Companion (2D/Drama) – 11.00pm
Issaq (2D/Hindi) – 3.00 & 3.30pm

3

1968 Tunnel Rats (2D/Action) – 8.30pm
Pattathu Yaanai (2D/Tamil) – 10.30pm

LANDMARK

1

Honey Bee (2D/Malayalam) – 3.00pm

2

Issaq (2D/Hindi) – 8.30pm
Darling Companion (2D/Drama) – 11.30pm

3

1968 Tunnel Rats (2D/Action) – 8.30pm

ROYAL PLAZA

2

Issaq (2D/Hindi) – 3.00 & 3.30pm
Texas Killing Fields (2D/Crime) – 11.00pm

3

Bhajatey Raho (2D/Hindi) – 3.00 & 9.00pm
Darling Companion (2D/Drama) – 11.15pm

3

Monster University (3D/Animation) – 9.00pm
Four Sisters & A Wedding (2D/Comedy) – 11.00pm

INFORMATION

MUSIC AND RAMADAN 101 4:00 PM, LIGHT OF LIFE IN THE ONAL NEWS
YOUR HEALTH 9:00 AM, A series of health tips to benefit the community throughout the observance of the month of Ramadan.
LIFE IN THE LIGHT OF FAITH 2:00 PM, 5:00 & 9:00 PM, The program focuses on how “a life in the light of faith” uplifts and inspires people to live in the fullness of God.
RAMADAN 101 4:00 PM, 7:30 & 10:30 PM, The program is a crash course to help you jump right into the spirit of the holy month. Every day the audience is introduced to a new word, this way you can learn more about the traditions and rituals of Ramadan.
MUSIC AND INFORMATION ALL DAY, Leads of music and of course information through QF Radio’s Factoids series.

QF RADIO 91.7 FM ENGLISH PROGRAMME BRIEF

LIVE SHOWS Airing Time Programme Briefs
SPIRITUAL HOUR 6:00 AM A time of reflection, a deeper understanding of the Teachings of Islam.
CHILDREN OF ADAM & EVE 9:00 AM, 2:30 PM, The Program will provide spiritual sustenance during the month of Ramadan bringing scholars of religions and special guests to discuss various topics of interest for our everyday lives.
YOUR HEALTH 9:00 AM, A series of health tips to benefit the community throughout the observance of the month of Ramadan.
INTERNATIONAL NEWS 12:30 PM, The latest news and events from around the world.
LIFE IN THE LIGHT OF FAITH 2:00 PM, 5:00 & 9:00 PM, The program focuses on how “a life in the light of faith” uplifts and inspires people to live in the fullness of God.
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SPORTS

03:45 Atletico Miniro vs Olympic
07:45 Reading vs Olimpia
09:30 Genoa vs Arsenal
10:00 FIFA TV
10:30 Melbourne Victory vs Liverpool
12:15 Napoli vs Arsenal
14:00 Bari All Stars vs Chelsea
14:30 Olimpia vs Atletico Miniro
16:30 Bari All Stars vs Chelsea
18:30 Moto GP 2013 - USA Round
19:45 Wal vs England
23:30 Olimpia vs Atletico Miniro

08:00 News
09:00 Al Jazeera Correspondent
10:00 News
10:30 Inside Story
11:00 News
11:30 The Stream
12:00 News
12:30 Activate
13:00 NEWSHOUR
14:00 News
14:30 Inside Story
15:00 Witness
16:00 NEWSHOUR
17:00 News
17:30 The Stream
18:00 NEWSHOUR
19:00 News
19:30 ViewFinder Asia
20:00 News
20:30 Inside Story
21:00 NEWSHOUR
22:00 News
22:30 The Stream
23:00 Al Jazeera

SPORTS +

14:35 Border Security: India vs Pakistan
15:05 Auction Hunters: Championship Edition
16:00 License To Drill
16:55 James May’s Man Lab
17:50 Mythbusters
18:45 Sons Of Guns
20:05 How It’s Made
20:35 Auction Hunters
21:00 Rip Men
21:30 Sons Of Guns
23:20 Heilders

GADGETSHOW

13:00 Austin And Ally
15:00 That’s So Raven
16:30 Cars Toons
17:00 Austin And Ally
18:30 Shake It Up
20:05 A.N.T. Farm
21:05 Big Fat
23:20 Jessie

SPORTS EVENTS

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SPECIAL)

13:00 The Glades
15:00 The Mob Doctor
16:00 Emmerdale
16:30 Coronation Street
17:00 Ellen DeGeneres Show
18:00 The Glades
19:00 Switched At Birth
20:00 Fairly Legal
21:00 Bulls

SPECIAL)

13:00 Tareq Taylor’s Nordic Cookery
15:00 Rianan
17:00 Phil Spencer – Secret Agent
20:35 Extreme
23:00 Phil Spencer – Secret Agent

COMEDY

14:00 Police Academy 3: Back In Training
16:00 Larry Crowne
18:00 While You Were Sleeping
20:00 Giant
22:00 Everything Happens For A Reason

COMEDY

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LIFESTYLE

13:00 Tareq Taylor’s Nordic Cookery
15:00 Rianan
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23:00 Phil Spencer – Secret Agent

MOVIES COMEDY

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TELEVISION

14:00 Police Academy 3: Back In Training
16:00 Larry Crowne
18:00 While You Were Sleeping
20:00 Giant
22:00 Everything Happens For A Reason
How to stay fit while fasting and feasting

NEW DELHI: Those who fast during Ramadan often end up overeating leading to weight gain, acidity and digestion problems. Experts say one must follow a proper diet plan, avoid fried food and red meat and exercise regularly.

Arun Kumar, fitness head at Snap Fitness India, shares a few workout and nutrition tips for happy and healthy fasting and feasting.

Recommendations:
- Do cardio exercises like walking or cycling. It helps burn calories and improves stamina.
- One can go for low-intensity resistance training before Ramadan. It helps maintain muscle strength.
- Do warm-up and stretching exercises. Full body stretching helps improve flexibility and also in detoxification.
- You can do mat exercises like free squats, abs and push-ups.
- Yoga and meditation helps in detoxification.
- Low-intensity group exercises help burn calories. Also it’s fun as you exercise with the others.
- Workout for at least 20 to 40 minutes. Don’t exercise when you are fasting. One should exercise either before Sehri (meal before dawn) or after Iftaar (meal after sunset).
- Don’t do high-intensity exercises like high-speed running, stepper and heavy weight lifting as it can lead to joint or muscle injuries and complications like low blood pressure, hypoglycaemia and dizziness.

Diet recommendations:
- Eat food items like grains, barley, wheat, oats, millet, semolina, beans, lentils, bran, green peas, apricots, prunes and almonds.
- Avoid big meals and eat slowly.
- Drink prune juice to avoid digestive problems.
- Drink at least 3-4l of water.

Events in Qatar

From Qurtuba To Cordoba

When: Until August 31, 10am-10pm
Where: Katara Gallery 1 - 8th Fl 13
What: This exhibition displays a variety of ornamental details -testimony of past splendour- which is often taken for granted by Cordoba’s dwellers is and visitors.

The collection highlights emblematic monuments, walls, doors, towers, minarets and baths, including some examples of Mudéjar art, a more recent architectural style inspired by the influences of Al Andalus in the Iberian Peninsula.

Free Entry

Omar Khalifa – “Infinite”

When: Until Dec 15, 10am—10pm
Where: Katara Cultural Village
What: This outdoor photography installation installation examines ‘the nature of being’ Using digital multiple exposure techniques, an image is crafted that gives us a sense of other-worldliness and depth of perspective through the human form.

Free Entry

Qatar National Library Heritage Collection

When: Public tours twice every Sunday and Tuesday at 10am and 11:30am.
Where: Qatar National Library
What: Qatar National Library’s remarkable Heritage Collection is a rare trove of manuscripts, books, and artefacts documenting a wealth of Arab-Islamic civilisation and human thought. Among its more than 100,000 works, the collection contains an edition of Ptolemy’s Geographia, which was printed in Rome in 1478 and is the oldest printed map showing the name of Qatar or referred to in Latin as ‘Qatara’.

Free Entry

If you want your events featured here, mail details to plus@pen.com.qa.

In Focus

A mosque in Souq Waqif.

Send your photos to plus@pen.com.qa. Please mention where the photo was taken.

A summary of inesses of the day discussed by the Qatari community in the media.

- People are demanding that the authorities intervene to solve the problem caused by some drivers who park at the roadside to get food from restaurants nearby, unmindful of the traffic jam they are causing. This happens mostly in the evening when all are in a rush to reach home before iftar.
- Many teachers have complained about some school directors keeping their annual performance reports for a long time, which makes it difficult for them to see the evaluation and file any complaint within 15 days as required by the rules.
- Some people are demanding that the Supreme Education Council hold summer activity programmes in Independent schools for students and their parents, to provide entertainment and spread cheer.
- People have demanded monitoring of commercial centres that announce prizes for customers during Ramadan to ensure transparency.
- The authorities have been urged to stop youth from holding informal car shows on the Corniche road every afternoon as they cause traffic jams and inconvenience other drivers.
- Many patients who regularly visit Hamad hospital for injections have complained about delays, long waiting times and lack of privacy, as many of them are put in one room for biometrics and get their doses there.
- There is discussion about the results of the second term examinations. Seventy percent of the students passed.
- There is discussion in social media about a famous restaurant in Souq Waqif closed by inspectors from Doha municipality for failing to meet health rules.
- There is talk about the situation in Egypt and the speech by military chief General Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, in which he called for rallies on Friday against what he called terrorism.
- There is talk about the Ministry of Justice delaying its move to its new premises due to inadequate security there.