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First COVID-19 Vaccine



Last week, Russia became the first country that made a COVID-19 vaccine.

The Russian president, Vladimir Putin, said that the vaccine went through all necessary tests and that it was ready to use. Putin also said that his daughter already received two shots of the vaccine and that she did not have any unexpected health problems. Russian officials said that the vaccine could protect a person for two years.

However, scientists from all over the world do not believe that the vaccine is good. They say that the necessary tests last many months and they involve thousands of people. Experts do not believe that Russia tested the vaccine well, and they say that people can get a false sense of security.

Hiroshima and Nagasaki Bombings



In August 1945, the US dropped two atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The US said that they wanted to end World War II more quickly and to save American lives.

However, officials estimate that 120,000 people died in Hiroshima and 74,000 people died in Nagasaki. Many people died within days after the bombings. They had health problems connected with the radiation.

People who survived are now usually in their 80s and 90s. They still remember the bombings, and the events are a traumatic experience for them. However, many people have cancer, which is the main and the most dangerous effect of radiation.

US and Japanese scientists study radiation together. Scientists check safe radiation limits for hospitals and for space missions.

Old Letter in a Chimney



Builders were tearing down an old chimney in a house in England when they found a letter. A little boy about 73 years ago addressed the letter to Father Christmas (Santa).

The boy wanted chalk, house shoes, and any toy that Santa had to spare. The builders were surprised to find this letter in the chimney. They also could see that children ask for a lot more these days.

The builders put a picture of the letter on Facebook. Surprisingly, the person who wrote the letter contacted them and met with them. The builders gave the old man what he wanted all those years ago.

Coronavirus in Classrooms



The school year starts soon, and many parents wonder if schools are safe for their children. Some parents worry that their children could get sick with COVID-19 in classrooms.

In schools, students use many objects; for example, they use a microscope in a science class. It is sometimes necessary to share some objects which means that many students touch the same object in one class. In some classes, students share scissors, paper, or pencils.

Experts say that it is not very common to catch COVID-19 when you touch an object. However, they still recommend to sterilize shared objects to minimize the risk. Every student should have individual material that is sterilized and wrapped in plastic. However, this does not happen in most schools, and it will be difficult to change this.

Tourists in Maya Bay



Maya Bay in Thailand was in the media in 1999 when Hollywood arrived there to film 'The Beach'. One of the film's actors was Leonardo DiCaprio.

Due to the movie, tourists started coming to the beach there. As many as 4,000 visitors used to arrive on boats every day.

Since there were so many tourists, the natural life was ruined. To protect the beach, people closed it now for four months. When it reopens by the end of September, only 2,000 visitors a day will be allowed to the beach.

A scientist said that he and the other scientists made a mistake – they thought that the money from the movie was very important, but now they see that they must protect the beach.

An actress from the film said that people are obsessed with fame and celebrity. They do not come to the beach because it is beautiful but because of the film. She said that Thailand is amazing and there are many beautiful beaches.

3D-printed houses



Ten grey buildings were built in Shanghai. They may look like normal houses from a distance, but they are quite special. They are China's first buildings made with 3D printing technology.

The houses were built without using bricks or tiles. The walls are made of a special mixture of materials like sand or concrete. This material is printed by 3D printers which were developed in East China. The printers lay one layer of the material on top of another.

The layers are well connected and they will not deform. The layers are only three centimetres thick, but they are five times harder than normal materials.

Vladimir Putin plays ice hockey



Russian President Vladimir Putin played ice hockey in Sochi. It was a friendly game with no winners or losers. It was a show and everybody enjoyed it.

Players of the game were former professionals or amateurs like Putin. The League was created by Putin in 2011. Thanks to the League, athletes older than 40 could keep competing.

Ukrainian troops and pro-Russian soldiers fought in a Ukrainian city recently. The hockey event began with the moment of silence for the victims. A Russian flag hung next to a Ukrainian flag.

Dragons in New York



There is a new exhibit in a zoo in New York. Visitors can see three Komodo dragons there. Two are male and one is female. The trio is still just teenagers. They are just over five feet long (1.5 metres). The adult males can grow up to nine feet (2.7m) from nose to tail and weigh around 163 kilos.

These dragons are from the Indonesian islands. They can eat small as well as large animals like deer and buffalo. If a dragon bites its prey and the prey does not die, the dragon can simply wait. The prey dies later because the dragon's saliva is toxic.

Difficult words: exhibit (show), trio (group of three), prey (animal that is eaten by another animal), saliva (liquid in the mouth).

People will fly



A man took off inside a big building in Washington DC. He wore a hydrogen and nitrogen-powered jetpack. This was a part of an event which explores science, technology, culture and the arts.

It's not the first time jetpacks have taken off. A company in New Zealand developed jetpacks which are going to be commercially available. Governments allowed the company to carry out manned test flights. The company is one step closer to its goal. Over 10,000 people asked the company about the jetpacks as they are interested in buying them. Sadly, the jetpacks won't be for everybody. They will cost around \$150,000.

Police saved a little girl



A Chinese man kidnapped his employer's daughter. He put a 30-centimetre knife against her neck. He demanded money from his employer.

Around 50 officers arrived at the scene. They offered the man some cash, but he wanted his boss's money only. The man carried around the little girl in his arms for more than an hour.

The child's shoes dropped off and the police took advantage of this. They told the man to help her with her shoes. He put down his knife and the police arrested him.

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