

Scribbles

Bringing colour to your lives

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From the Editor's desk...

Let's contribute to making this world a peaceful and happy place.

We have, as part of our journey in this endeavour, presented to you a brief on 25 countries (one from each alphabet, except X).

We hope you learn more about the planet we live in.

I thank all contributors from each of the Sanmartini teams in making this very special to us.

When you're down and out, there seems no hope at all
But if you just believe there's no way we can fall
Let us realize that a change can only come
When we stand together as one!

Michael Jackson & Lionel Richie – 'We Are The World'

Together... One World



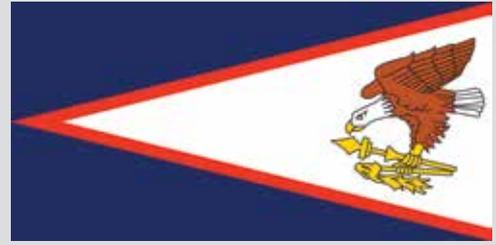
All the best for 2016.

Ananda Jagann

A

American Samoa

Capital: **Pago Pago**
 Currency: **US Dollar**
 Language: **Samoan**



It's a subconscious truth that the happiest moments of our life often reside in the minute and unrecognised things. It goes true for countries as well where some of the people still live by their values and cherish them but aren't so recognised in the modern world. One such country is American Samoa, home of a small group of Polynesians residing in Samoan islands. American Samoa consists of five main islands and two coral atolls. This wonderful community (That's right – the whole country is almost a single community sharing a common religion of Christianity among them), shares a deep empathic relationship among them and their family members. Let us take a glide along this wonderful country and see how different they are from us.

American Samoan economy thrives on their fine skills of farming and their innate ability to make exquisite articles. Being an island, exporting fish is a very profitable business option for them and



every year Samoans export canned tuna worth millions of dollars to the US.

The system of governance is very effective among them. Group of extended families constitute an aiga and each aiga is headed by matai who in turn has a chief heading it known as the ali'i.

The tragic part is that while our homes got bigger, our hearts shrunk. Though number of hospitals and care homes soared, our desire to care and empathise with elders got marginalised. Looking the way these Samoans live their lives, I remember those three little words "PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS". Perhaps it is "care" that separates humans from the fauna kingdom and this small community is a fine reminder

Did You Know?

- *The only animals on the islands are rats, snakes and a few birds.*
- *In Samoa, young men are in charge of the food - including the gathering and the cooking.*

for us. These people eat together and offer meals to their children only after the eldest member of the family, has it. Elders are most respected and their decisions are obeyed. They guide the whole family and children learn about the cultural heritage of their country by observing their elders. Children consider elders as their idols and follow their advice. What else could be the real worth of a life than to leave a cultured generation behind!

Apart from their valued culture, they also share a passion for certain games like wrestling, rugby etc. They have reached the quarter-finals of Rugby World Cup several times. How interesting it is to know that Diwali is also celebrated here! Several movie scenes including from the Lord of the Rings have been shot here. Samoan islands have wonderful beauty gushing around and it's definitely a place that will create memories. In case you are excited wondering how it would be like to wander free on beautiful islands sipping their traditional kava (a local drink made from the root of the pepper plant) and your wallet being excited too, take a tour of the Samoan islands and give yourself a treat of a lifetime!

Mukul Kumar Jha, *Technical Services, Chemplast Sanmar, Cuddalore (Team Socrates).*



Barbados

Capital: **Bridgetown**
 Currency: **Barbadian Dollar**
 Language: **English**



Barbados traditions are drawn from the West African and British cultures that shaped the island. The majority of the population is of African origin. However the island was a colony of the British Empire for over 300 years and so the English influence is very strong.

The architecture is largely in Victorian, Georgian and Jacobean styles. Many of these buildings remain today, especially in our World Heritage Site. These European styles were adapted for the Caribbean climate with the use of large



open verandas and gable roofs.

Barbados has a strong cricketing tradition; it has produced some of the world's finest cricketers

including Sir Garfield Sobers, the 3 Ws (Worrell, Walcott and Weekes) and the legendary opening pair Greenidge and Haynes. The sport of road tennis was invented in Barbados in the 1930s. Dominos is incredibly popular in Barbados. Kite flying and pitching marbles are popular childhood pastimes.

Some of the annual festivals are Crop Over – it reflects the history of the sugar industry, a protest against injustice and the ultimate liberation of enslaved people. The Hometown Festival – it commemorates the arrival of the first British settlers and The Oistins Fish Festival – this pays tribute to those who work in the fishing industry.



Did You Know?

- *It is well known that the Mongoose in Barbados never crosses the road unless someone is watching.*
- *Barbados has the 23rd highest ratio of cars per miles of road! No wonder there is traffic!*

During festivals, the tuk band (a collection of usually brightly attired musicians playing a bass drum, kettle drum and pennywhistle) generally accompanied by costumed figures such as the “Shaggy Bear”, “Mother Sally” and “Green Monkey” make their performances. This tradition is a call to get up and dance, or at least tap your feet! The songs of the tuk band are a blend of African music, with its heavy drum influence, and British folk music.

Cou-cou and flying fish is the national dish of Barbados. Cou-cou is made from corn meal and okras. It is traditionally served with steamed flying fish in a tomato-based sauce but may also be served with salt fish, red herring or stew. Another popular dish is “pudding and souse.” Pudding is steamed sweet potato. Souse is pickled pork. Souse was traditionally made from the scrap parts of the pig but today is often made from lean pork meat. Pudding and souse are usually served with pickled sweet potato or pickled breadfruit. The pickle is a combination of lime, cucumber, onion and hot peppers.

W Jesulin Edberg, *Instrumentation, Chemplast Sanmar, Cuddalore (Team Socrates).*

Cyprus

Capital: **Nicosia**
 Currency: **Euro**
 Language: **Greek**



The Republic of Cyprus, is an European island nation in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, close to Syria and Turkey. It is a country with more tourists visiting it (2.4 million) than its population (1.2 million, 1000 times less than India!). It is popular as it enjoys 340 days of sunshine!



The nation which got independence (from England) on 16 August 1960, has as its capital city Nicosia, the last divided capital in Europe. This is a result of a clash between the Greek and Turkish groups.

From 1974 to date, one third of the island remains a Turkish administered area.

Cyprus is said to be the birthplace of Aphrodite (Venus), the Greek Goddess of Love also known as Kypris or the (Cyprian). The myth says that she rose from the sea at Petra tou Romiou in Pafos.

About 79% are Greek and 18% are Turkish on the entire island. If we consider only the part recognised by the UN, the Greek side, then, nearly everyone is Greek. Nearly 3000 Indians also reside in Cyprus – primarily those working in the IT industry.

Marcos Baghdatis – A tennis player from Cyprus became famous for his stunt shots, Baghdatis was ranked 8th in the world, was a finalist at the Australian Open, and reached the Wimbledon semi-final, all in 2006.

Did You Know?

- *There are more than 1950 species of flowering plants in Cyprus, 140 of which are found nowhere else in the world.*
- *1260 species of fish circle the warm Mediterranean waters around Cyprus.*

Halloumi cheese originated in Cyprus and was initially made during the Medieval Byzantine period. Halloumi (Hellim) is commonly served, sliced – either fresh or grilled, as an appetiser. Grilled food over charcoal are called souvla. Pourgouri is a type of bread common in Cyprus. Seafood is very common, given that the country is an island! The mezedes is a large collection of different dishes served in small helpings – in a planned order to enhance the taste and texture.

Syrtos, folk dance performed by men and women in a circle, is very popular in social gatherings, weddings and religious festivals. It symbolises the harmony between male and female roles in the Cypriot society.

Antikristos is a dance where men and women gracefully dance together in couples, in rows across from each other to express the joy of life and love.

G Sanjay Kumar, SRSTI, Chemplast Sanmar, Cuddalore (Team Socrates).



Dominican Republic

Capital: **Santo Domingo**
 Currency: **Dominican Peso**
 Language: **Spanish**



D

The Dominican Republic is located on the island of Hispaniola, in the Greater Antilles archipelago in the Caribbean region. Christopher Columbus arrived in Hispaniola on December 5th 1492 and claimed the land for Spain. In 1821, the country declared independence from the Spanish crown and called itself Spanish Haiti.



The country declared independence from Haiti in 1844. Following a brief declaration as a Spanish colony in 1861, the country again declared independence from Spain in 1865. Subsequent years were filled with brief U.S.

occupations, short lived governments with iron fisted leaders with many allegations of human rights violations. The Dominican Republic is a representative democracy with three branches of power: executive, legislative, and judicial. The president and vice-president run for office on the same ticket and are elected by direct vote for 4-year terms.

The culture and people of the Dominican Republic are a mixture of the cultures of the Spanish colonists, African slaves and Taino natives. The local informal and conversational Spanish is called Dominican Spanish, which closely resembles other Spanish vernaculars in the Caribbean and the Canarian Spanish. In addition, it

borrowed words from indigenous Caribbean languages particular to the island of Hispaniola. The cuisine is predominantly Spanish, Taino and African. The typical cuisine is quite similar to what can be found in other Latin American countries. However, the names of the same are different. The Dominican Republic is known for the creation of the musical style and genre called meringue, a type of lively, fast-paced rhythm and dance music consisting of a tempo of about 120 to 160 beats per minute.

On the negative side, the Dominican Republic has become a trans-shipment point for Colombian drugs destined to Europe as well as the United States and Canada. Money laundering via the Dominican Republic is favoured by Colombian drug cartels for the ease of illicit financial transactions.

Aravind Thayat, *Sales, Chemplast Sanmar, HO (Team Apollo).*

Did You Know?

- **Dominicans almost never smoke cigarettes but the country is a major exporter of tobacco in the world.**
- **Dominicans are very religious. Everywhere in the country, you can see the inscriptions about God - on machines, in cafes, in shops.**



E Ethiopia

Capital: **Addis Ababa**
 Currency: **Ethiopian Birr**
 Language: **Amharic**



There is an exotic multi-cultural society rich in history and located East of Suez. This is the home of Lucy, a 3.2 million year old Australopithecus female fossil. It has 80 different ethnic groups, four vertically segregated caste groups while several religions co-exist here peacefully. The languages used today in this land originate from an ancient language that is only used by the orthodox priests during religious ceremonies and rituals.

In this country, men and women have clearly defined, traditional roles. Parents have much stricter rules for daughters when compared to their sons.

Their staple food is a flatbread pancake. Cinnamon, ginger, cumin and chilli peppers are common spices used. Sesame oil



is a preferred cooking oil medium. At the end of the meal, the women make an elaborate ceremony of roasting coffee beans, grinding and serving hot coffee to guests. People

observe fasting rituals on days of the week and month as specified by the orthodox priests.

These people wear cotton dresses mostly due to the predominantly hot and humid weather and the women's Kameez have colourful borders and patterns.

Introductions, exchanging of pleasantries and making connections is far more important than 'getting down to business'. Relationship and exchanging favours is a pre-requisite to concluding business. People of this wonderful country never say no to a proposal but this does not mean that they will actually transact the deal with you.

Now then, this description more or less fits over a dozen countries from Latin and South America to Asia and Africa. It certainly rings a bell in proximate geographic index. But give a few labels and it all becomes unique. The flatbread is Injera, the spicy stew is called Wat, chilli pepper is called peri-peri, the ancient language is Geéz, the coffee is called Bunna. The dominant religious denomination is the Orthodox Church.

All that you need to be told then is of a country called Ethiopia and its Capital Adis Ababa. Reminds me of a very old British Airways TV commercial with a tagline – "The world is smaller than you think".

Capt. S Krishnamurthi, Operations, Sanmar Shipping, HO (Team Apollo).

Did You Know?

- It is one of the very few countries in the world that has never been occupied by foreign powers. Italy tried twice but was defeated by the Ethiopians.
- Ethiopia – This African country is also mentioned in the Koran, the Iliad, and the Odyssey.



Faroe Islands

Capital: **Tórshavn**
 Currency: **Faroese Króna, Danish Krone**
 Language: **Danish / Faroese**



F

“Islands of the Sheep and the Paradise of the birds” described the Irish monks, the early settlers in Faroe islands in 565 AD. The Faroe islands is a group of 18 major islands between the Norwegian Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean with fairytale landscapes, recently selected by the National Geographic as the world’s most appealing island community in the world. In 9th century Norwegian farmers settled here in search of new lands. Though attached to the medieval Norwegian Kingdom from later half of 12th Century they developed their own culture, language and other social institutions. The dual monarchy of Norway and Denmark since the 14th Century ceased in 1814 and the Faroe islands remained under the sovereignty of the Danish. Since 1948 the Faroe islands are a self governing nation within the Kingdom of Denmark.

The Faroese are of the Viking descendants from Norway or of Scottish descent. The Faroe is a cultural melting pot consisting of 77 nationalities among its 48,000 population. The Faroese are noted for their friendliness. Crime is not rife and there is no prison, any long term prisoners are sent to Denmark. The islands are windy, cloudy and cool throughout the year with over 260 annual rainy days. The weather changes so quickly and frequently that a well-known Faroese saying is ‘if you don’t like the weather, wait five minutes’.

Fishery has been the major industry contributing to 95% of its export. Whaling which is the hunting of whales is very prevalent since 13th century. Though there are several religious communities, approximately 85% of the Faroese belong to the Faroese Evangelical Lutheran Church and 13% to the Plymouth Brethren. The Faroese cuisine is dominated by animal products. Traditional food includes skerpikjöt (dried mutton), whale meat, puffins and few

vegetables. Tourists are encouraged to take walk along the village paths (used since ancient times for travel) during which many stories associated with the place is enumerated by the local guides which speaks about their history and culture. Though all the modern hangouts like pubs and clubs are present, large part of their social life revolves around people visiting each other at their homes.

Ólavsøka, a cultural and sports festival with boat races, football matches and other events is celebrated on July 29 every year. Hoyma, their winter festival is a tradition of throwing their doors open for neighbours where they all gather in few houses and sing and dance.

KA Ramenaathan, Sales, Chemplast Sanmar, HO (Team Apollo).



Did You Know?

- *The country’s football team won their first competitive match against Austria in September 1990, which prompted a massive Faroese party.*
- *Streymin bridge is the only bridge over the Atlantic Ocean in the world, connecting the island Strey moy to Eysturoy.*



G

Gibraltar

Capital: **Gibraltar**
 Currency: **Pound Sterling, Gibraltar Pound**
 Language: **English**



The first thing, that struck my mind, when I heard “Gibraltar” was “Taxi”. Though it sounds absolutely weird, I would let you know the relevance between Gibraltar and Taxi later on. Gibraltar is a British overseas territory, spread over a landscape of 6.2 sq. kms. with a handful population of 32000 people. Gibraltar is located on the entrance of Mediterranean Ocean at the southern end of ‘Iberian Peninsula’.



Gibraltar derives its name from ‘Gibel Tariq’, which is named after the leader Tariq–Ibn-Zeyad, who led the eight century conquest of Spain by combined force of Arabs and Berbers crossing from Africa. They called themselves as Moors. After the Moorish era, a treaty of Utrecht

dated back in 1713, had given this territory to Britain, which had a decade long conflict with Spain. Gibraltar is a strong traditional society with an attractive blend of British and Mediterranean customs. The main areas of tourist attraction at Gibraltar are ‘The rock of Gibraltar’, is a crown property of United Kingdom, which houses rare species of macaques named ‘Barbary macaques’ and it’s a well known breeding ground for more than 2500 species

of cross continent migrating birds. 40% of Gibraltar’s landscape was already declared as natural reserve in 1993.

The Moorish Castle complex is another area of tourist’s interest, which is made up of fortified walls and gates. This castle still demonstrates those Muslim conquerors who built and renovated, during various periods of their invasion. The gate house, walls and bastions as well the tower of homage date from second Moorish period (1333) contemporary with the building of Alhambra – Granada located at Spain.

“Taxi” is a Gibraltarian pop rock band, which has a wide Hispanic fan base and was nominated for Latin Grammy awards in 2010 for the best pop album category. This has been driven by 3Ds – Dylan Ferro, Dani Fa and Danny Bugeja. So wish you all a pleasant “Taxi” to Gibraltar!

PM Raj Bino, *Customer Support, Sanmar Foundries, Viralimalai (Team Nyx).*

Did You Know?

- ***Around 12% of the workforce is employed by Gibraltar’s big online gaming industry.***
- ***Britain has 300 years of sovereignty over the Rock and almost all of its inhabitants want to remain with Britain.***



Honduras

Capital: **Tegucigalpa**
 Currency: **Honduran Lempira**
 Language: **Spanish**



Honduras literally means “depths” in Spanish. The name refer to Columbus’s alleged quote that “Gracias a Dios que hemos salido de esas Honduras” (“Thank God we have departed from those depths”). Honduras became independent from Spain in 1821 and in 1823 became part of the United Provinces of Central America federation. After 1838 it was an independent republic and held regular elections. Comayagua was the capital of Honduras until 1880, when it was transferred to Tegucigalpa.

Honduras is a vibrant country, brimming with clear turquoise waters, pristine beaches, lush jungles, breathtaking mountains, challenging rivers, and fascinating ancient ruins. The main tourist attraction is the restoration at Copan, the second largest city of the ancient Mayan Empire. The baleada is a representative dish of the Honduran gastronomy consisting of a flour tortilla which is folded and filled with sour cream. Other popular dishes include carne asada (roasted meat), sopa de mondongo (tripe soup), montucas (corn tamales filled with meat and vegetables) and so on.

Being a predominantly Catholic country, Honduras gives special attention to the celebrations of Holy week and when it comes to celebrations, Hondurans leave a lot other countries behind. They celebrate national holidays and special events in the form of carnival, fairs and parades throughout the year. The most popular carnival in the country is “The Carnival of Friendship” which is a week-long celebration with music, exhibitions and special food.

The country has become a hotbed of crime steering a darker side of it to be revealed. Many poor areas are ruled by gangs and drug related crime is high. Murder is the leading cause of death for young females and violent crime against women has become so common it has its own name: femicide. On top of this, there is a prevalent ‘macho culture’ in the country whereby many men have no respect for women. They see

females as second class citizens who become their husband’s property when they marry. Rape is acceptable if an attractive woman refuses their advances and murder is justified if a wife has been unfaithful or disobedient. Death



has become big business in Honduras, as evidenced by 24-hour funeral parlour in downtown San Pedro Sula.

Love is the medicine of all moral evil. By it the world is to be cured of sin.

Dipankur Kumar Sinha, *Customer Support, Sanmar Foundries, Viralimalai (Team Nyx).*

Did You Know?

- *Platano Forest was nominated as one of the new seven wonders of the world.*
- *Comayagua has one of the oldest clocks in the world.*
- *Honduran cuisine’s most notable feature is that it uses more coconut in both sweet and savoury dishes.*



Ivory Coast

Capital: **Yamoussoukro**
 Currency: **West African CFA Franc**
 Language: **French**



Did You Know?

- *The African country of Côte d'Ivoire was the first black Republic and first non-English speaking country to win an Academy Award.*
- *A symphytognathid spider *Anapistula caecula* (Natuurinformatie) may be the smallest of all the world's spiders. It is endemic to Côte d'Ivoire.*



Thousands of years prior to the arrival of the Europeans in the 1460s, independent tribes occupied present-day Côte d'Ivoire.

By the late 1400s, the Portuguese began to show a significant interest in Côte d'Ivoire. They were interested in spreading Christianity, purchasing slaves, and discovering new trade routes. The Portuguese soon established several trading centres along the country's coast, but poor coastal harbours helped to spare the country from the build up of a large slave trade. However, the Europeans desperately sought the country's supply of ivory (from the tusks of elephants) and gold, so trading and exploitation of these goods continued. The country's nickname, the Ivory Coast, originated because of the country's well-known supply of ivory. It became republic on August 7, 1960.

Today, the sixty unmistakable ethnic gatherings that make up the Côte d'Ivoire are inexactly assembled into four primary social areas which are separated according to environment, financial movement, dialect, and general social qualities.

They survived mostly on gathered seeds and fruits and hunted animals.

Popular local dishes include kedjenou (chicken with braised vegetables), attiéke (cassava ground into couscous-like grains and eaten with fish or meat) and specialties such as pan-fried frog's legs. Coast Soccer is very famous and widely followed.

Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy as nearly 75 percent of the entire population depends on income from farming. Fishing and forestry are other prominent economic sectors.

Côte d'Ivoire is the world's leading producer of cocoa, and is the third largest producer of coffee in the world (behind Brazil and Columbia). Côte d'Ivoire also became Africa's leading exporter of pineapples and palm oil.

Maheshwaran S, *Maintenance, Sanmar Foundries, Viralimalai (Team Nyx).*



Jordan

Capital: **Amman**
 Currency: **Jordanian Dinar**
 Language: **Arabic**



Jordan festivals are a pleasing blend of religious and cultural celebrations. Jordan has emerged as one of the main touring destinations in Middle East. Tourists are increasingly beginning to understand the relevance of the many Jordan festivals. As a result, some of these festivals have now gained international fame and seek global participation.

Hakaya Festival

Hosted in the capital city of Amman, this is one of Jordan's most prestigious, annual cultural festivals. The festival is essentially an attempt to rejuvenate the traditional art of storytelling. In Jordan, storytelling isn't just about recreation. In a society still bound by conservations regarding progressive education and commercialisation, storytelling is a medium of informing the masses.

Festival of Rabee' Awal

Rabee' Awal refers to an entire month of religious festivities in Jordan. This is one of the most sacred months in the Islamic calendar. During this month, the Mawlid or the birth of Prophet Muhammad is celebrated. The dates are often changed according to the lunar calendar but usually, in Jordan, it is celebrated around the end of March. The entire nation seems overpowered with a feasting frenzy. This is perhaps the best time to taste the native delicacies of Jordan.

Amman International Theatre Festival

This annual, theatre festival is regarded as the biggest of its kind across the entire Middle East and in North Africa. Held annually in April, the festival is an attempt to promote native theatre artists and their cultural heritage. The performances are rendered in English and Arabic. This

has become a sought-after theatre event in the Arab world. Many international dignitaries and some Hollywood stars too can be spotted. Usually, the festival is hosted for about 8 days. Visitors can choose the days on which they want to attend.



S Praveen Kumar, GET, Flowserve Sanmar, Karapakkam (Team Midas).

Did You Know?

- *The Jordanians believe that praising children excessively can invite bad luck and is generally avoided.*
- *It is considered polite to refuse a meal three times here before actually accepting it.*
- *The structures on most of the Petra Archaeological site have been weakened by the salt that is blown from the Dead Sea and which crystalises on the building's columns.*



K

Kosovo

Capital: **Pristina**
 Currency: **Euro**
 Language: **Albanian / Serbian**



After the World War II, Yugoslavia was set up as a federation of six republics. In addition, two autonomous provinces were established within Serbia: Vojvodina and Kosovo. The decade long unrest after Tito's death in 1980 led to split of Yugoslavia in 1992-93. This was not all. The call for a separate Kosovo nation gathered momentum in 1991. Serbia responded to this separatist call from Kosovo by launching a brutal crackdown on the territory's Albanian population resulting in a conflict. This was only brought to end after NATO military intervention in 1999. Until 2008 the Kosovo province was administered by the UN. In February 2008 Kosovo was declared an independent secular republic country.

Though a number of countries have recognised Kosovo as a separate country, India along with Russia & China, is yet to recognise it. However the diplomatic relations between the Republics of Serbia & Kosovo is becoming better based on 2013 Brussels agreement.

MG Krishna Kumar, IT, Sanmar Corp. Divn., Karapakkam (Team Midas).

For centuries, the ethnic Albanian villagers have lived in Kosovo within extensive families among members consisting of 70 to 100 which were ruled by a chosen patriarch. Up to this date, the Kosovar society is still built on family units in the majority of the rural areas, even though the family structure has progressively eroded since the end of World War II.

Progress towards modernisation started advancing in the 1970s, when the modern educated elite initiated the process. However, outside the major cities, in the rural areas, it has been unable to alter the loyalty towards tradition.

G Arjun, Trainee, BS&B Safety Systems, Karapakkam (Team Midas).

The diversity of festivals makes it possible for people of different tastes to find themselves in a city this small.

Etno Fest is a cultural event held during summer. As the years passed the festival progressed into something bigger than the exposure of traditional food and folkloric music. The very famous The Pristina Music, Wine and Beer Festival are also a summer event that is held annually from 30 August to 5 September. It offers different types of beer and wine for half the price. Similarly people of Kosovo are interested in sports activities like car racing and street ball.

M Vishal, GET, Flowserve Sanmar, Karapakkam (Team Midas).

Did You Know?

- **70% of Kosovo population is under 35 years.**
- **The Newborn monument is a typographic sculpture and tourist attraction. It is painted differently and unveiled on 17 February every year.**

Kosovo is famous for its Medieval Monuments, it consists of four Serbian Orthodox Christian Churches and monasteries built in the 13th and 14th centuries. They represent the fusion of the eastern Orthodox Byzantine and the western Romanesque ecclesiastical architecture to form the Palaiologian Renaissance style. It has a distinct style of mural painting.

Srinivasa Chandrasekhar Saripalle, IT, Sanmar Corp. Divn., Karapakkam (Team Midas).



Liechtenstein

Capital: **Vaduz**
 Currency: **Swiss Franc**
 Language: **German**



The name 'Liechtenstein' was given to the region by the Prince of Liechtenstein, who purchased the County of Vaduz (1712) and the lands of Schellenberg (1699) and united them to form the Principality of Liechtenstein in 1719. Liechtenstein is named after a princely castle in the



town of Maria Enzensdorf in Upper Austria, built by Hugo von Petronell-Liechtenstein around 1130. This castle is said to stand on a rock known as the light ('Licht') stone ('Stein').

Liechtenstein is bordered by Switzerland to the West and South and Austria to the East and North. It has

an area of just over 160 square kilometres (1/3 of Chennai) and an estimated population of 37,000. Liechtenstein is the sixth-smallest country in the world. Being small in size, Liechtenstein has been strongly affected by external cultural influences, most notably those originating in the southern German-speaking areas of Europe.

Their national dish is 'Ribel', which is made using cornmeal or wheat semolina. Cider and wine are the main drinks. Today, Liechtenstein's wine has an excellent reputation.

Liechtenstein is a business centre with proven financial expertise. Most people in Liechtenstein work in the services sector. When it comes to manufacturing and industry, Liechtenstein specialises in high-tech products in the fields of machine building and food products. Liechtenstein is a member of the European Economic Area (EEA).

Did You Know?

- *Liechtenstein is the world's major exporter of false teeth. There are even two false-teeth factories specialising in making dark-brown teeth, for export to countries.*
- *The average citizen of Liechtenstein doesn't even lock their door because crime in the country is so low.*

Gutenberg Castle and Schloss Vaduz are two of the medieval attractions that are a must-see while touring Liechtenstein. The highest peak in the Drei Schwestern, Kuhgrat, provides awesome views of the surrounding countryside.

In the past, tourism was focused on hiking and winter sports in the country's Alpine resorts (Malbun and Steg). Today, however, Liechtenstein offers a wide range of sporting activities and a vibrant cultural scene that attract a large number of visitors all year round.



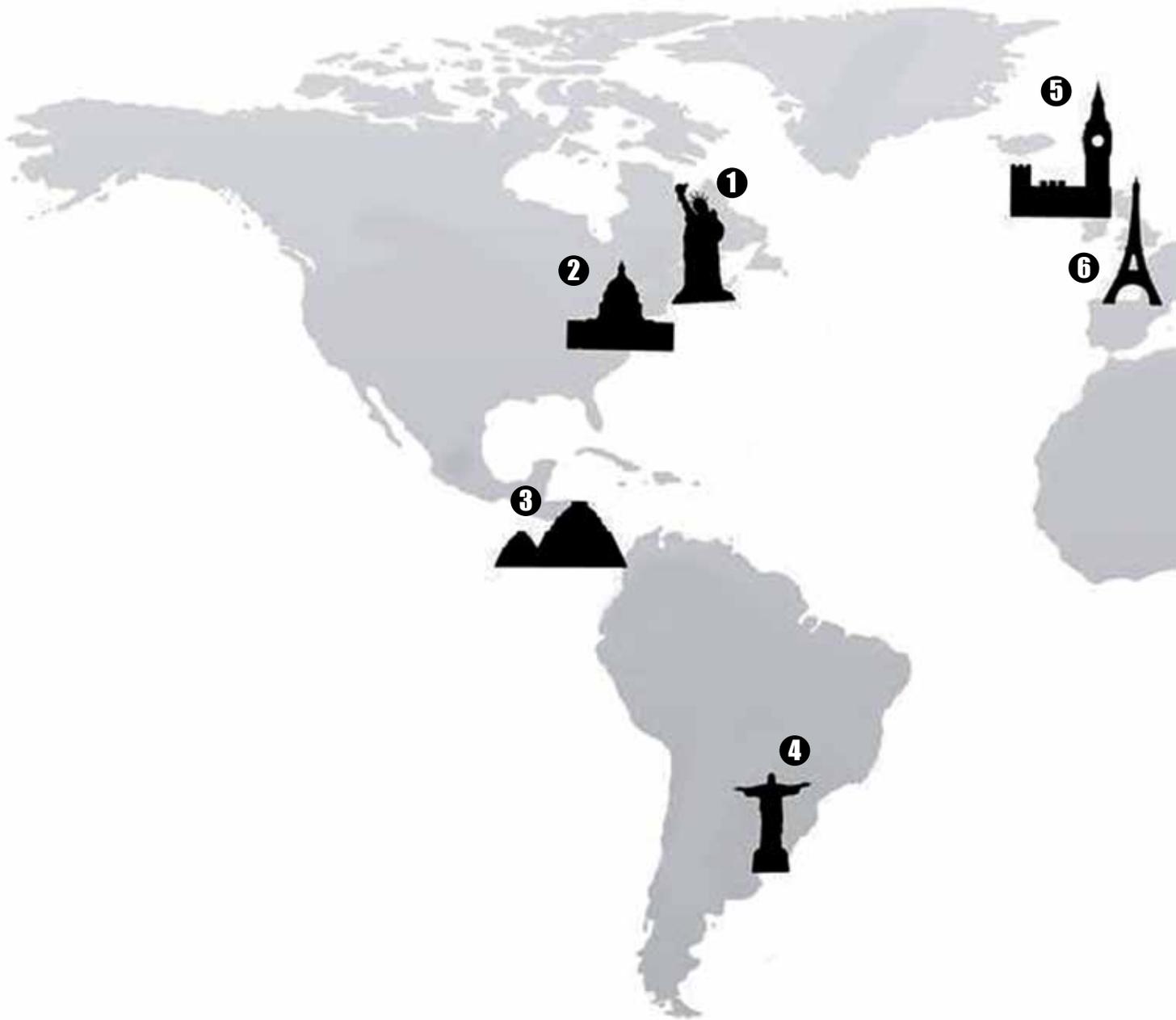
A Francis Kamel, HR, Flowserve Sanmar, Karapakkam (Team Midas).

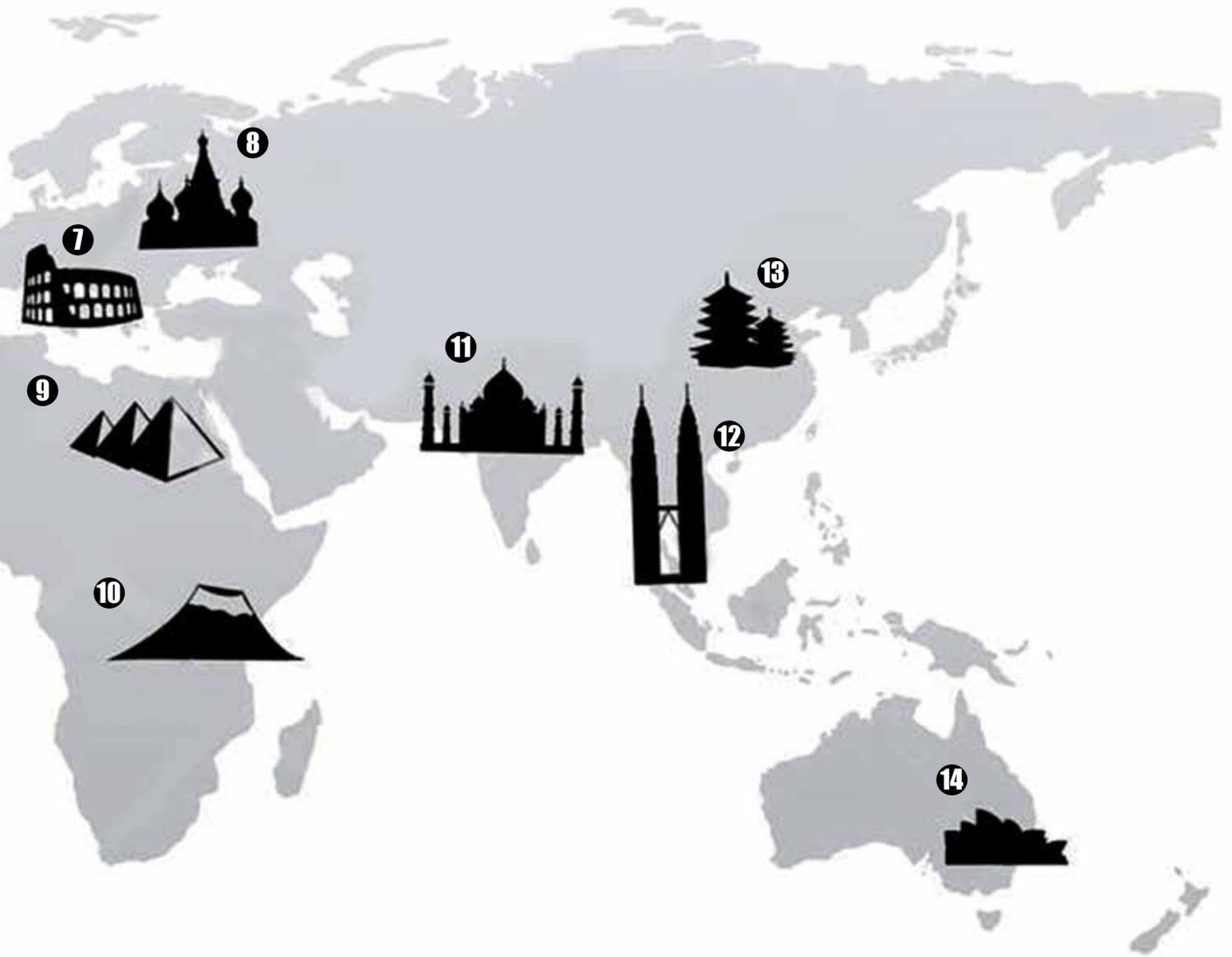


Famous landmarks around the world

Given are fourteen famous recognisable landmarks of the world, a must-see for the avid traveller. Identify these monuments and the countries they are situated in.

The first three correct entries win a prize each. Rush your entries to scribbles@sanmargroup.com





M

Macedonia

Capital: **Skopje**
 Currency: **Macedonian Denar**
 Language: **Macedonian**



Macedonia, once the Kingdom of the Great Alexander, a land-locked nation located in south-eastern Europe. The current border runs along mountain chains that separate the republic from Bulgaria, Greece, Albania, Kosovo and Serbia. The country consists mostly of mountains separated by flat river valleys. Mother Teresa (Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu) was born in Skopje, the capital of Macedonia. It is the only country that got independence from Yugoslavia through Ahimsa without shedding a single drop of blood.



About two third of the population belong to the Macedonian Orthodox Church, some 30 percent are Muslims and there is a small number of Catholics living in the country.

The Millennium Cross is a 66 metre-high cross situated atop the Vodno Mountain in Skopje, and is the biggest cross in the world. It was constructed to serve as a memorial for 2,000 years of Christianity in Macedonia and the world.

Another interesting feature about this country is that it has as many as 34 mountain peaks, each more than 2,000 metres high above the sea-level; with Mount Golem Karb being the highest at 2,753 metres. Most peaks in Macedonia have never been visited by people. According to NASA, Kokino is the fourth oldest astronomic observatory in the world.

Ohrid Lake is the oldest and one of the deepest lakes in Europe (max depth 288m). It is estimated to be 4

million years old and has 200 endemic species that haven't been found at any other place in the world. It was declared a World Heritage site by UNESCO in 1979.

The Macedonian Cultural Festival is organised every year to showcase the rich culture of Macedonia through music, singing, display of Macedonian folkloric dancing and Macedonian traditional food.



Once a party-rule communist country, now the political system of Macedonia is one of a modern parliamentary republic. Yet, Macedonia is economically weak, politically-unaware and faces ongoing ethnic tension.

KS Sampathkumar, *Production, Chemplast Sanmar, Mettur (Team Atlas).*

Did You Know?

- *Alexander the Great, who was king of the former Kingdom of Macedonia, was the first world-size conqueror who extended his empire across Greece and Persia to India and Egypt. During his time, the Kingdom of Macedonia was the most powerful in the world.*



Netherlands

Capital: **Amsterdam**
 Currency: **Euro**
 Language: **Dutch**



N

Netherlands is a small, densely populated country located in Western Europe. The name literally means “Lower Countries”, influenced by its low land and flat geography, with only about 50% of its land exceeding one metre above sea level. Most of the areas below sea level are man-made. It is the world’s second-largest exporter of food and agricultural products. This is partly due to the fertility of the soil and the mild climate.

In 2013, the United Nations World Happiness Report ranked Netherlands as the seventh happiest country in the world, reflecting its high quality of life.

The people of Netherlands are basically Germans. They share a common culture and are generally seen as the pioneers of capitalism, and they emphasis on a modern economy, secularism and a free market. This influenced British Empire and the United states.

Traditionally, Dutch cuisine is simple and straightforward, with many vegetables and little meat. Breakfast and lunch are typically bread with toppings while dinner is meat and potatoes, supplemented with seasonal vegetables.

There is an abundance of lively festivals in the Netherlands, celebrating life, flowers and music. One important festival is the greatest flower show at the Keukenhof garden. There will be around eight million flowers on view in a spectacular display from March to May.

The procession with about 20 floats staging giant dolls made of flowers, jugglers, dancers and players make their way in a 25-mile route from Noordwijk to Haarlem is another festival. This is celebrated in the month of April.

The cycling is a ubiquitous mode of transport in the Netherlands. The Dutch are estimated to have 18 million bicycles which is more than its population.

The Delta project is considered by the American Society of Civil Engineers as one of the seven wonders of the modern world. The main goal of the Delta project is to reduce the risk of flooding in South Holland and Zeeland.



The Room for the river plan, that grants more flow space to rivers, protects the major populated areas and allows for periodic flooding of indefensible lands. Another successfully executed project which protects the country from river flooding.

Had we learned from Netherlands, we would have avoided the Chennai rains disaster!

V Subramanian, *Plant Services, Chemplast Sanmar, Mettur (Team Atlas).*

Did You Know?

- *Gin was invented in the Netherlands under the name of Jenever and was originally used for medicinal purposes in the 16th century.*
- *The first country to legalise same sex marriages in April 21, 2001.*
- *Amsterdam is one of the capitals with the most museums in the world.*



Oman

Capital: **Muscat**
 Currency: **Omani Rial**
 Language: **Arabic / Urdu**



Oman is a beautiful country in the Arab peninsula. Muscat - a port on the Gulf of Oman, was a prosperous trading centre and an influential regional city. It was during the 7th century AD that Oman adopted Islam.

Developments

Oman was occupied by Portugal in 1508 and Turkey in 1659. After becoming a self governing region, it was long ruled by Sultans. In 1970, Qaboos bin Said Al Said replaced his father and took control of the country and this ancient land completely gained its independence. Oman's new Sultans developed oil industry, new roads, hospitals and schools, allowing girls to attend school and establishing adult literacy programs.

Economy & Food

Dates, limes, nuts, and vegetables are cultivated in the north and livestock are raised in the southwest, but the major product is oil. Natural gas production and copper mining were developed in the early 1980s to diversify the economy. Soups are also common.

Tourism

Tourism has grown to the point that it is expected to be one of the largest industries in the country. Oman has one of the most diverse environments in the Middle East, and is well known for its cultural offerings. Muscat is recognised for its many tourist amenities.

Events & Festivals

Oman holds a number of festivals and events. Many of these feature its rich culture and arts. The four major festivals celebrated are Muscat Festival, Traditional Boat Races, Salalah Tourism and Cultural Theatre Program.

Oman can be visited to enjoy the natural beauty, warm and friendly people, beautiful pristine beaches and quite



interesting market with traditional Omani products and antiques. It is the country with stunning contrast of deserts, mountains and beaches.

The article is based on the information given by one of my ex-colleagues Mr. Jai Rupani, who is settled in Oman.

KB Manoharan, *Projects, Cabot Sanmar, Mettur (Team Atlas)*.

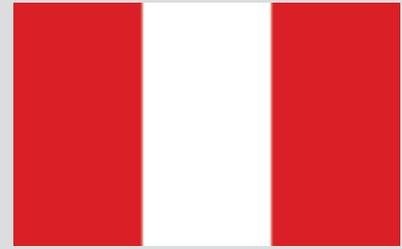
Did You Know?

- There is a shrub in Oman known as *myrtus communis* or *yas*. Its leaves are used for making perfume.
- The highlands of Oman have raised irrigation system. Through it, water is carried from mountain streams. Known as the 'Aflaj Irrigation Systems', it has been listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Peru

Capital: **Asuncion**
 Currency: **Peruvian Nuevo Sol**
 Language: **Spanish / Quéchua**



P

Peru is a country fairly comparable with India as it shares much similarities in the early, medieval history and also in the present. Peru gets its name from its historic Inca ruler 'Biru' like our country "Bharath".

Peru can also be called a peninsula like that of ours with a vast Pacific coast on one side and all the other sides surrounded by land of neighbouring South American countries. The recorded and accounted history of Peru dates back to 9000 BC during which it was inhabited by nomadic hunter gatherers who lived in coastal caves. Then followed the rise and fall of several small kingdoms like



The Salinar, The Nazca, and The Huari which were locally important. The first Empire that united the Highlands and Coasts of Peru and gave the country a geographic extent was The Inca empire which was the most longlived, and prosperous empires of Peru. The native Peruvians who were called Amerindians by Columbus who discovered this beautiful part of our World, still maintain the rustic Incan flavours in all aspects of their lives like music, dance, lifestyle, festivals, etc.

Later Incan empire was captured by the eagle eyes of the great Spanish conquistador Francisco Pizarro who executed the then Incan Chief and set his rule in Peru with the new capital city, The City of Lima. Like The British colonisation of India, the Kingdom of Peru was under the Spanish colonial rule for more than two hundred years (until early 1800s). The country has got into the groove of elections and parliamentary setup in the recent past.

Multi-layers of civilisations and varied demography has turned Peru, an interesting spot for foreign tourists. The people from various origins living together harmoniously with mutual respect reminds of India's unity in diversity. Peru has Spanish as the official language although the native Peruvians take pride in speaking their Incan Language "Quechua". The county still carries archaic and ostentatious monuments in every walk through the capital city which reminds us of its greatness and oldness. The mighty Huascaran peak in the wide Andean Mountains, the narrow but rich Pacific coast and the scenic beauty of lowlands of the Amazon basin would attract anyone traveling to Peru.

R Karthik, *Trainee, Xomox Sanmar, Chennai (Team Rhea)*.

Did You Know?

- *Peru is the only country whose name in English can be typed on a single row of a normal keyboard.*
- *There are some 90 different micro-climates in Peru, making it one of the most bio-diverse countries on the planet.*



Q

Qatar

Capital: **Doha**
 Currency: **Qatari Riyal**
 Language: **Arabic**



It is a pleasant surprise to acknowledge that Qatar is incredible in the aspect of being inclusive in pondering all other countries' citizens with open arms. Qataris are living in minority accommodating non-citizen residents amounting to two-thirds of its population. Having established the Monarchy rule since 18th century, the indigenous population descends from Bedouin tribes from the nomads of Arabian Peninsula.

People are more important than any other since valuing people in our life and respecting them has become the most soulful thing that is forever universally accepted. The people's attitude is very precisely shown in their generosity



of having foreign workers to greater majority. However, strictly, Qatar is still an Islamic society that

all of us would unanimously agree to. Islam being the official religion, it is practiced by 95% of the people. It will be much less of a shock upon your arrival if you know and respect the culture and traditions of the country.

'Socialising is the key for a healthy living'. A little socialising can go a long way in Qatar. People in Doha step outside their comfort zone to seek friendship. There

is an assurance given by most foreign workers that once we meet the Qataris, they become some of the most loyal friends we will ever have.

To say about food, many native varieties of dates and seafood are central to Qatar's cuisine, with sour apples and fresh almonds being local delicacies. Machbous is a richly spiced rice combined with meat and seafood is traditionally served from a large communal platter. Arabian coffee made of a lightly roasted bean that is sweetened and spiced with cardamom in small thimble shaped cups are served to guests. The elite serve the Qahwa helw (sweet coffee) on special occasions, it's a vivid orange infusion of saffron, cardamom, and sugar. It is always a privilege to describe the richness of a country and thanks to the team of Scribbles for making me privileged!

S Siva, Trainee, Xomox Sanmar, Viralimalai (Team Rhea).

Did You Know?

- *Although Qatar is originally a desert, it has a diverse range of flora and fauna.*
- *Qataris are so wealthy, that in winter they burn 500 riyal (\$137) notes for kindling.*
- *In Qatar the work week is from Sunday - Thursday.*



Romania

Capital: **Bucharest**
 Currency: **Romanian Leu**
 Language: **Romanian**



R

Did You Know?

- *Bigar Cascade Falls is the most beautiful waterfall in the world, it's been voted as Number One by the World Geography.*
- *Romania's 10-bani note issued in 1917 is the smallest paper money ever printed (dimensions: 1.08 x 1.49 in).*

Authentic, Natural and Cultural are the three words that best describe this European Land of Castles. Found at the southern end of the continent, the mystic country



has been the gateway for inhabitation of the continent. Surprisingly enough, this civilisation actually has a heritage that is as old as 400 centuries. The descendants of the Dacians from Grete and the Romans who have settlements form the mystic ethnic groups that reside in the mountainous

country. Their bravery is one that has been well depicted.

The beautiful Carpathian ranges, the castles and the lush green forests attract thousands of travellers and historians every year. The people's vivid imagination and intense spirituality have always been expressed through their architecture. The centuries old monasteries, churches, synagogues, castles found all over the country depict the country's tumultuous history. The reality inspired



mysterious stories of Dracula and the vampires that supposedly inhabit the castles of the Carpathians and Transylvania that have been the prototypes for all of the favourite movie castles are lucrative sites for the daring and adventure-loving.

Romanian cuisine is known for its great variety and taste. It is influenced by the repeated waves of different cultures especially the Greek, Roman and the invading Ottoman empires. Interesting to note are the plum brandy, pastrami and the Romanian cheese that are unique to the country. The variety in food is celebrated and incorporated into the many festivals that are celebrated throughout the year in various forms. The celebrations are diverse and are designed to appreciate every aspect of the country's culture.

The haunting beauty, the rustic landscape and the mysteries that hang on the walls of the age old castles of this surprisingly, lesser-known country, inspire one's awe and wonder still.

K Vignesh, *Trainee, Xomox Sanmar, Viralimalai (Team Rhea).*



S Seychelles

Capital: **Victoria**
 Currency: **Seychellois Rupee**
 Language: **Seychellois Creole**



Close your eyes, and just imagine. You are lazing on a talcum-powder beach, lapped by topaz waters and backed by lush hills. This is Seychelles.

The 115-island country lies in east of mainland East Africa. Seychelles tasted Independence in 1976 and is now progressing under the guidance of President James Michel republically.



A UNESCO World Heritage Site, “Vallee de Mai Nature Reserve” is located in Seychelles. It is the only place in the world to find the rare “coco de mer palm” (Coconut) and is home to rare birds like: Seychelles bulbul, Fruit Pigeon and the Black Parrot.

The country is also home to the heaviest land tortoise that is living in the wild. Named Esmeralda, the animal weighs 304 kilograms and is said to be around 150 years old.



Deep sea diving is a popular sport in Seychelles where divers get an opportunity to literally swim with the whales.

Among one of the lesser-known island countries, Seychelles is home to almost 90 thousand people. It is famous for its Wildlife Reserves, Tourism and Beaches. Main economy

of the country is Tourism and Fisheries. Therefore, apart from their language “Seychellois Creole”, English and French is very common at tourist spots.

Fish curry and rice is the most lovable and consumable food.

Seychelles is an ideal place to spend quality solitude time with family since the place is much closer to nature and far away from all kinds of human disturbances.



Aakash Kumar, GET, BS&B Safety Systems, Delhi (Team Poseidon).



Did You Know?

- *The basis of the school system is a free, compulsory, 10-year public school education.*
- *The country's fish consumption ranks among the highest in the world.*



Turkey

Capital: **Ankara**
 Currency: **Turkish Lira**
 Language: **Turkish**



T

A famous Turkish journalist, Ugur Mumcu, while commenting on diversity in Turkish culture, accumulated the facts in an interesting statement, “A Turkish citizen is a person who marries according to Switzerland civil law, gets punished according to Italian criminal law, gets prosecuted according to German Criminal Procedure, gets administered according to French administration law and gets buried according to Islamic law.”



- More journalists are imprisoned in Turkey than in any other country.
- Turkey’s Istanbul Tunnel is the world’s second largest underground railway - it began operation in 1875.
- Istanbul is the only city in the world built on two continents.
- “muvaffakiyetsizlestiricilestiriveremeyebileceklerimizdenmissinizcesine” is the longest word in Turkish language which has 70 letters. It is derived from the noun “muvaffakiyet”(success) and means “As though you are from those whom we may not be able to easily make into a maker of unsuccessful ones”.
- The Turkish alphabets does not include “X” or “Q”, but has other letter such as dot-less “I” (İ) instead.
- Despite the appearance of camels at holiday resorts, there’s no desert in Turkey and there are no native camels.
- An old Turkish tradition says “a stranger at one’s doorstep is God’s guest for at least three days.”

Javed Saifi, *Sales, Tyco Sanmar, Delhi (Team Poseidon)*.

- Turkey is not called Turkey. It’s actually been called the Republic of Turkey since 1923.
- In 1503, Leonardo da Vinci submitted plans for a bridge across Bosphorus - it was never built.
- Turkey is responsible for 80% of the world’s hazelnut exports.
- The first ever Christian Church to be built by man was in Antioch, Turkey.
- Most Turks did not have surnames until 1934.

Did You Know?

- *Nicholas, also known as Santa Claus, was born in Patara and became the Bishop of Demre, on Turkey’s Mediterranean Coast.*
- *Turks introduced coffee to Europe.*
- *Noah’s Ark landed on Mount Ararat in Eastern Turkey.*



U

Uruguay

Capital: **Montevideo**
 Currency: **Uruguayan Peso**
 Language: **Spanish**



Whenever the name Uruguay is heard, the first thing that comes to mind is FOOTBALL! Well, being a small nation, Uruguay has achieved greatness and a lot of recognition in world through Football. It is the national sport of the country. But there's much more to this small South American nation than just Football.



The name 'Uruguay' comes from the Uruguay river, which is thought to mean 'river of the painted birds' in the Guaraní language. Uruguay has a modern and socialised lifestyle with a European feel to it, this is primarily because of its large European population that emigrated from Europe in last two centuries. Uruguayans are friendly, peaceful and party loving people.

When it comes to food, beef is its mainstay. People eat ridiculous amount of meat here! There are about four times as many cows as people in Uruguay. Cattle farming is its main industry making it one of the leading producer of meat as well as the highest per capita consumer of meat in the world.



They have a replacement for coffee, known as "mate", which is the most popular beverage in Uruguay. It's a tea-like drink made of dried yerba mate leaves.

The famous dance "Tango" originated in this country. Every year a Tango festival is celebrated in the week of June 24th in a town called Tacuarembó. During this festival the whole town is alive with celebrations, parties and dancing. In

2013, Uruguay became the first country to legalise trade in cannabis. Also same sex marriage is legal in Uruguay.

It has the longest national anthem in the world – lasting almost six minutes. Luckily for Rooney and the boys, they only ever play the first verse at sporting events.

Although Uruguay has no official religion, more than one third of the population does not profess any religion. Christmas is called "Family day" and Holy week is called "Tourism week".

The education is free and secular. The president of Uruguay, Jose Mujica donates 90 % of his salary to charity.

All these make Uruguay a culturally rich and unique nation and surely after reading this one would feel there's so much we ought to know about small and unfamiliar countries such as Uruguay.

Akshay Kumar, Sales, Flowserve Sanmar, Delhi (Team Poseidon).



Did You Know?

- *Uruguay is the 2nd least corrupt country in Latin America (Chile is the first).*
- *Every house in Uruguay has its own name.*
- *Uruguay generates 95% of its electricity through renewable energy.*



Vatican City

Capital: **Vatican City**
 Currency: **Euro**
 Language: **Italian**



Did You Know?

- *Popes did not live at the Vatican until the 14th century.*
- *St. Peter's Basilica sits atop a city of the dead, including its namesake's tomb.*
- *For nearly 60 years in the 1800s and 1900s, Popes refused to leave the Vatican.*

Vatican city, capital of the Catholic Church, home to Pope - owner of impressive collection of art and history, all contained in the borders of the world's smallest country. Conveniently the country is circum-navigable on foot in just 40 minutes. We often get amazed at how the world ended up with this tiny nation. Actually the Pope used to rule the country known as PAPAL STATES that covered much of modern day Italy. It was around 754-1870, Pope constructed St. Peters Basilica, the largest church in the world and built a wall around the base of the hill.

But the kingdom of Italy next door, thought Rome would make an awesome capital and conquered it. As the nation was destroyed, Pope hid behind the walls of church and conflictly refused to acknowledge the kingdom of Italy existed and simultaneously complained about being imprisoned in Italy which according to him never existed.

Rather than risking religious civil war by getting rid of Pope, the kingdom of Italy decided to weigh him out, assuming he will eventually give up. But religion is nothing if not obstinate. Then 5 Popes and 60 years later, nothing changed which now brings us to Benito Mussolini, the then Prime Minister of

Kingdom of Italy, scored a political point by striking a deal; they gave land of Vatican to Pope and apology money as compensation. In return, Pope agreed to acknowledge Italy as a State and promised to stay neutral in war and politics. The deal was signed and Vatican was born.

Saheb Sood, Sales, BS&B Safety Systems, Baroda
(Team Zeus).

With its museums and basilica housing items of immense cultural importance, it is no wonder Vatican City has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The Vatican mints its own euros, prints its own stamps, issues passports and license plates, operates media outlets and has its own flag and anthem. One government function it lacks: taxation. Museum admission fees stamp and souvenir sales, and contributions generate the Vatican's revenue.

Most people in Vatican City are tourists there for the day or are workers, most of who live in Italy and only work in Vatican City. If you're dining in Vatican City the options are limited as there are only a couple of places for the public to eat. In the Vatican Museums there is a cafe near the Sistine Chapel rightfully called "Sistina."

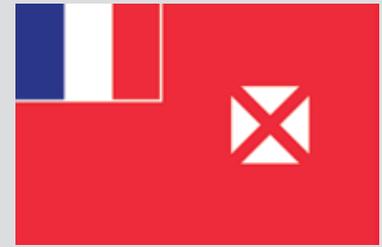
Nayan M Shah, Sales, Flowserve Sanmar, Vadodara
(Team Zeus).



W

Wallis and Futuna

Capital: **Mata-Utu**
 Currency: **CFP Franc**
 Language: **French / Wallisian**



Due to the heavy rain and floods in Chennai, The Hindu – one of India’s oldest newspaper was not published for the first time since 1878. Reading newspaper with a cup of tea/coffee has become a routine part of our life. However there are still countries in the world without even a Press. Let’s explore one such country with no Press, only one AM radio station and two television stations with population even smaller than most districts in India –Wallis & Futuna.

Wallis and Futuna Islands are located in the South Pacific Ocean. The residents of the islands voted to become an overseas French territory in 1959. The official language is French, but Wallisian, a Polynesian dialect, is also spoken.

The French President serves as the chief of state, the islands are divided into three kingdoms with a king to oversee each.

Both Wallis and Futuna have a subsistence-based economy. The land produces taro, yams, sweet potatoes, cassava, and breadfruit. There are no sales of local foods, except to foreigners.



The kava bowl and tapa cloth are important symbols of both cultures. Kava is drunk both ritually and secularly in Futuna. The kava bowl is used to honour chiefs and the existing hierarchy. Tapa cloth is made by women for exchange at rituals that draw extended families together. It

is symbolic of women’s wealth, along with specially scented oil. Food gifts are symbols of welcome and good will.

Villages on Wallis near the lagoon eat fish. If no man



in the family is available, women comb the lagoon for crustaceans. Pigs and chickens are raised mainly for celebratory occasions.

Pork and turtle are feast foods, with chicken also being reserved for special occasions. Alcohol is an expected part of public feasting on Wallis, and kava is drunk by Futunan men.

Tushar Prakash Paturkar, Sales, Xomox Sanmar, Vadodara (Team Zeus).

Did You Know?

- *Wallis is an incredibly expensive place. It can afford to be because nobody really works yet everyone has money.*
- *The population is approximately 15,000, and the literacy rate is estimated at 50 percent.*



Yemen

Capital: **Sanaá**
 Currency: **Yemeni Rial**
 Language: **Arabic**



Y

Yemen is derived from the legendary ancestor Yaman, from the Arabic root ymn (the right) since Yemen is located to the right of the Meccan sanctuary of Kaaba. Some scholars compare the Arabic word yumna (“happy”) with the Roman name for the southwest Arabia, Arabia Felix (“Happy Arabia”).

Yemen is one of the oldest centres of civilisation in the Near East. Its relatively fertile land and adequate rainfall in a moist climate helped sustain a stable population. Between the 12th century BC and the 6th century AD, it was dominated by six successive civilisations which rivaled each other and controlled the lucrative spice trade.

The culture of Yemen has an ancient history, influenced by Islam. Yemen has acquired a very distinctive culture from its neighbours; historically and culturally, the people of Yemen have closer ties with the Horn of Africa than they do with the rest of Arabia and the Middle East.

The generous offering of food to guests is one of the customs in Yemeni culture, and a guest not accepting the offering is considered as an insult. In Yemen, many kitchens have a taboo, which is a round clay oven. Breads are an integral part of Yemeni cuisine, most of which are prepared from local grains. A spice mixture known as hawajj is employed in many Yemeni dishes. Hawajj includes aniseeds, fennel seeds, ginger, and cardamom.

Dr Darshika Nayan Shah, W/o Nayan M Shah, Sales, Flouserve Sanmar, Vadodara.

Football is the most popular sport in Yemen. The Yemen Football Association is a member of FIFA and AFC. They compete in the national and international leagues.

Yemen’s biggest sports event was hosting the 2010 Gulf Cup of Nations in Aden and Abyan in the southern part of the country.

Yemen provides many opportunities for outdoor sports, such as biking, rock climbing, trekking, hiking, mountain jumping. The coastal areas of Yemen provide many opportunities for water sports, such as surfing, body boarding, sailing, swimming, and scuba diving.

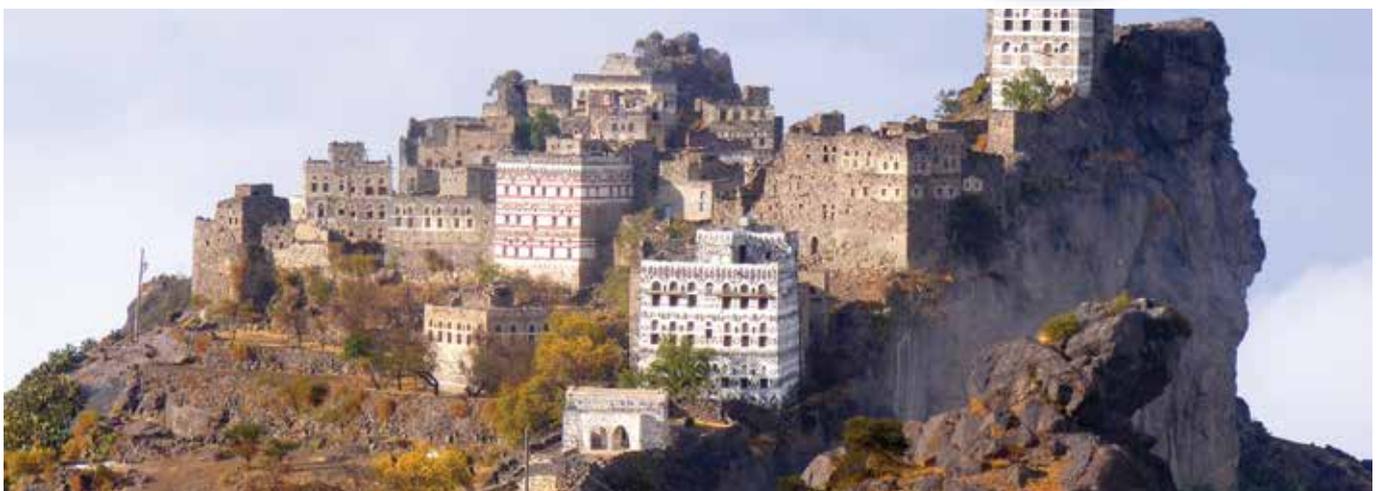
Camel jumping is a traditional sport that is becoming increasingly popular among the Zaraniq tribe on the west coast of Yemen. Camels are placed side to side and victory goes to the competitor who leaps, from a running start, over the most camels. The jumpers train year round for competitions.



Ajay Balakrishna Shanbhag, Sales, Flouserve Sanmar, Surat (Team Zeus).

Did You Know?

- *You do not have to tip in Yemen, the practice is unknown.*
- *Yemenis take much pride in their wedding traditions. An average wedding feast lasts 21 days.*
- *More children are born in Yemen than in any other middle eastern country yearly.*



Zambia

Capital: **Lusaka**
 Currency: **Zambian Kwacha**
 Language: **English / Bembe(a)**



Until 1964, Zambia was known as Northern Rhodesia. The country's name Zambia was taken from the name of the Zambezi River. Zambia, in southern Africa, is a landlocked country of rugged terrain and diverse wildlife, with many parks and safari areas. Because Zambia is landlocked, you need to travel 600 miles before you can see any real ocean.

Zambia's relatively small population of over 13 million live



in an area twice the size of neighbouring Zimbabwe. Therefore much of Zambia is sparsely populated. Although Zambia lies within the tropics, much of it has a pleasant climate because of the altitude. Temperatures are

highest in the valleys and by the shores.

On its border with Zimbabwe is famed Victoria Falls – indigenously called Mosi-oa-Tunya, or “Smoke that Thunders”. On top of Victoria Falls is the Devil's Pool in the form of overdraft ramps located right on the edge of the waterfall. This river snaking up to several countries at once, smother Devil's Pool with clear water and fast-flowing. The natural pool is one of the most sought after tourist spot in the world, because the view from the top of the Victoria Fall indeed provides an unforgettable sensation for tourists.

The Zambian staple meal of Nshima, which is cooked out of corn meal or mealie-meal, is eaten in virtually all homes twice per day.

Traditionally, people would marry within their tribe and the man and his negotiator start negotiations for a lobola (dowry) with a prospective bride's family.

Football is the main passion and Zambians were euphoric when their team won the 2012 Africa Cup of Nations. The win was significant and moving because of a tragedy which occurred in 1993. In 1993, Zambia lost 18 national football players in an airplane crash. The squad was headed to a World Cup qualifier in Senegal and was expected to do well. The captain, Kalusha Bwalya, was not on the ill-fated flight and held the Africa Cup trophy high with the winning 2012 team.

Traditional arts and crafts, such as wood carving, basket-weaving and pottery, are valued. But these crafts are under threat because of migration away from rural areas and the arrival of modern manufactured goods.



Did You Know?

- *Lake Kariba is so huge that in certain parts of it, unknowing visitors think they are looking at the ocean.*
- *Because of the Victoria Falls' spray, the forest beside it receives “rain” 24 hours a day, seven days a week!*



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