

Commentary to News Quiz

1. North Macedonia (1). We have visited this issue several times in the News Quiz Commentary. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) has been the country's temporary name since Greece protested about the country calling itself simply Macedonia. Hopefully the new name, which has been agreed by both the government in Skopje and the government in Athens, will put to rest this long-running dispute. First, though, the people of Macedonia will vote in a referendum on 30th September. Interestingly, the question in the referendum does not actually mention the name North Macedonia. Instead it asks: "Are you for EU and NATO membership by accepting the agreement between the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Greece?" Greece, which is a member of both EU and NATO, has blocked FYROM's applications to both organisations until the name issue has been settled. Read this report from the *Voice of America*.

<https://www.voanews.com/a/macedonia-sets-referendum-date-on-renaming-country/4506384.html>

2. The Caspian Sea (2). Almost everyone knows that a lake is a large body of water entirely surrounded by land, while a sea is a body of water that is not surrounded by land. But there are several lakes that we nevertheless call "seas". The Dead Sea, for example, between Israel, Jordan and Palestine, is a lake – the lowest-lying lake in the world. It probably got called a sea because its water is salty. The Caspian Sea is the largest lake in the world, and it is also salty. Perhaps saltiness is also necessary for a lake to be called a sea. (Lake Baikal, in Russian Siberia, is the world's largest freshwater lake and no one has ever tried to call it a sea.) But that is not the issue that has just been settled in an international conference between the five Caspian Sea states. Lakes come under a different international legal jurisdiction than seas. Now they have agreed, the five states (Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan) will each be able to exploit their portion of the Caspian Sea more intensively. Large reserves of oil and natural gas are believed to lie beneath the floor of the sea. Read this article from *Bloomberg News*.
<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-08-12/caspian-sea-breakthrough-treaty-set-to-boost-oil-pipeline-plans>

3. Venezuela (X). The people of Venezuelan are facing severe political and economic problems. The value of the Venezuelan currency, the bolivar, is sinking dramatically. In August the government revalued the bolivar. This doesn't make a lot of real difference, but psychologically perhaps it feels better to pay only 25 bolivar for one cup of coffee than to pay 2.5 million. In US dollars, 25 new bolivar is about US\$.50. The Venezuelan government have been avoiding publishing statistics, so two years ago *Bloomberg News* took the step of creating the "Bloomberg Cafe Con Leche Index" to measure inflation in the country. They keep their index updated as you can see by visiting this page.
<https://www.bloomberg.com/features/2016-venezuela-cafe-con-leche-index/>

4. Lake Titicaca (X). Lake Victoria is the largest lake in Africa. Lake Baikal is in Asia. Lake Titicaca is the largest lake in South America and also the highest. It was sacred to the Inca people who once ruled much of the western side of South America. The Inca believed the son of the sun god, Manco Capac, was born out of the lake. Manco Capac was the mythical founder of the city of Cusco, once the capital of the Inca Empire. Recent archaeological investigations discovered thousands of items, including priceless artefacts, on the floor of the lake. The government of Bolivia, helped by Belgium and UNESCO, now plans to spend US\$10 million/€8.6 million on building the underwater museum. Read more in this article from the website of *Physics*.

<https://phys.org/news/2018-07-bolivia-museum-bottom-sacred-lake.html>

5. India (2). IKEA has been planning to enter the Indian market since 2013. This first store in Hyderabad should have opened last year, the opening was delayed. Future plans are to open stores in several other Indian cities including Delhi and Mumbai. Read this article from *The New India Express*. (Note the article is in English but uses Indian expressions for numbers – lakh = 100,000 and crore = 10 million.)
<http://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/hyderabad/2018/aug/09/swedish-home-furnishing-giant-ikea-opens-first-india-store-at-hyderabad-1855441.html>

6. Jupiter (1). Even in Roman days Jupiter was the name of the planet, which is one of the five planets that can be seen with the naked eye. Since the development of the telescope humans have looked at Jupiter and seen some of its moons. With more sophisticated telescopes, more moons have been discovered. Now the total is 79. Among the 12 newly discovered moons is one that orbits in the opposite direction to all the others. One day this may mean a moon-smashing crash will give astronomers something even more spectacular to see. Read more about the latest 12 discoveries in this article from *Science Daily*.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/07/180717101256.htm>

7. A teaspoon (1). A metric teaspoon (*tesked*) holds 5 ml which is also 5 g of salt. A metric tablespoon (*matsked*) holds three times as much. A metric cup holds 2.5 dl. Although, in Swedish kitchens we are used to exact metric measures, in fact teaspoons, tablespoons and cups are not always very reliable measuring devices. If you think about it, even in Sweden most kitchens will have – apart from the metric measures – a variety of different sized and shaped spoons and cups. These will hold different measures. Before the metric system came into use there were local conventions about what each measure ought to hold. This is still true in places where the metric system is not used, or is new. On the Internet you can often find recipes from the USA, which may give measures in cups and spoons – but the US measures aren't the same as metric measures. They may not even be the same as cup and spoon measures in British or Australian recipes. A regular US cup, for example, holds about 236.6 ml while a British cup holds about 284.1 ml. An Australian cup ought to hold 2.5 ml. A US teaspoon holds c. 4.9 ml. See these two Wikipedia entries.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_customary_units#Units_of_capacity_and_volume
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cooking_weights_and_measures#Metric_measures

8. An opera singer (1). Swedes Worldwide, the society for expatriate Swedes (*Föreningen svenskar i världen*), choose the International Swede of the Year (*Årets svensk i världen*). You can see a list of earlier award winners on this Wikipedia page (which, unfortunately, does not seem to have been updated since 2015).

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Swede_of_the_Year

In 2018 Nina Stemme also won the prestigious (and

very valuable) Birgit Nilsson Prize. See this article from *Limelight*.

<https://www.limelightmagazine.com.au/news/nina-stemme-receives-the-1-million-birgit-nilsson-prize/>

9. Dele Alli (1). Tottenham player Dele Alli's salute was first seen when he celebrated scoring his first goal of the season on the opening day of the Premier League. The gesture went viral. Here is the *Mirror's* article explaining how you can "take the Dele Challenge".

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/sport/football/news/dele-challenge-how-complete-three-13099936>

10. The Asian Games (1). The Asian Games, like the Olympics, is a multisport event held every four years. Unlike the Olympics it limits participation to countries in Asia only. It includes some sports the Olympics does not, for example sepaktakraw, which is "like an aerial soccer or hands-free volleyball", according to *Fox News*.

<http://www.foxnews.com/world/2018/08/25/thai-digging-in-to-keep-asian-game-at-asian-games.amp.html>

11. Camila Cabello (2). Camila Cabello first became well-known as a member of the all girl group Fifth Harmony on the American talent show *The X Factor*. She left Fifth Harmony at the end of 2016 and released her first solo single, "Crying in the Club" last year. "Havana" is taken from her first album, *Camila*, released this year. Visit Camila's homepage.

<https://www.camilacabello.com/>

12. Tom Cruise (2). *Mission: Impossible* was an American television series which originally ran from 1966 to 1973. It was revived for two seasons in 1988. In 1996 Tom Cruise relaunched *Mission: Impossible* as an action-adventure series. Cruise not only plays the principal character Ethan Hunt, he is also credited as a co-producer of the series. The first three films in the series were made by Cruise's own film production company Cruise/Wagner Productions. Visit the Internet Movie Database page for *Mission: Impossible – Fallout* and follow the links to see a trailer.

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt4912910/>

- 1** Macedonia broke away from Yugoslavia in 1991. Macedonia is also the name of an area of Greece. The confusion means that the country may be taking a new name. Which?
- 2** Is this large, inland body of salty water a lake, or is it a sea? Now the 5 countries that border it have agreed that it is legally a sea. Which inland body of water are we talking about?
- 3** In July a cup of coffee in Caracas would cost you 2.5 million bolivar. Then the government cut 5 zeroes from its currency, the bolivar. A cup of coffee now costs just 25 bolivar. In which country?
- 4** An underwater museum is to be built at the bottom of the largest lake in South America. This holy lake is 3800 meters above sea level on the border between Peru and Bolivia. What is it called?
- 5** IKEA has opened its first store in this country which is often called "the world's largest democracy". The store is in Hyderabad, the country's fourth-largest city. Which is the country in question?
- 6** Astronomers have discovered 12 new moons around the largest planet in our solar system. The planet has the same name as "the king of the gods" in Roman mythology. Which planet?
- 7** According to a recent study, salt in food is not nearly as dangerous as we thought. However Sweden's National Food Agency (*Livsmedelverket*) still recommends that an adult should not eat more than 6 g of salt a day. About how much is that?
- 8** The International Swede of the Year is a prize that has been awarded since 1988. Among past winners are Max Martin, Zlatan Ibrahimović and Astrid Lindgren. This year's winner is Nina Stemme. What is she?
- 9** A football goal-scorer's salute has taken the Internet by storm. Everybody wants to do the hand gesture and it has become the latest "challenge", but it's not that easy. Who is the footballer?
- 10** Everyone knows that the Olympics are the world's biggest sporting event. The world's second biggest sporting event is perhaps not as well-known, but it's taking place right now. What is it called?
- 11** A Cuban-American singer was named Artist of the Year at last week's MTV Video Music Awards. Her song, "Havana" is topping the charts around the world. Who is she?
- 12** *Mission: Impossible – Fallout* has just been released. In the film the leading role of agent Ethan Hunt is played for the sixth time by this actor. Who?

1. North Macedonia
- X. New Macedonia
2. Macedonia Skopje

1. Lake Baikal
- X. The Dead Sea
2. The Caspian Sea

1. Zimbabwe
- X. Venezuela
2. Turkey

1. Lake Victoria
- X. Lake Titicaca
2. Lake Baikal

1. China
- X. Russia
2. India

1. Jupiter
- X. Venus
2. Mars

1. A teaspoon
- X. A tablespoon
2. A cup

1. An opera singer
- X. An EU Commissioner
2. A golfer

1. Dele Alli
- X. Kylian Mbappé
2. Neymar

1. The Asian Games
- X. The Commonwealth Games
2. The Paralympics

1. Ariana Grande
- X. Rita Oras
2. Camila Cabello

1. Jamie Dornan
- X. Johnny Depp
2. Tom Cruise

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- 1 The countries of the world agree that the world's average temperature should not grow more than 2°C this century. How much has the average temperature grown in the last 100 years?
- 2 Two American tourists recently said they saw the mythical monster of a Scottish lake. Now scientists from New Zealand are going to take DNA samples from the lake to try to find out the truth about the monster. What is this famous lake called?
- 3 Almost all of Europe has had a very warm summer. The warm air did not reach Iceland though. This island nation had its worst summer weather for a hundred years. What is Iceland's capital called?
- 4 Ten-year-old Varg Englund from Kungsör has climbed Africa's highest mountain. The mountain is in the north of Tanzania and is nearly 6000 meters high. What is the name of Africa's highest mountain?
- 5 On 9th September Sweden will hold an election. In the election, voters choose which people will sit in the Swedish Parliament (*Riksdagen*) for the coming 4 years. There are 349 Members of Parliament (*Riksdagsledamöter*). How many political parties are represented in the Swedish Parliament today?
- 6 One of the air force's JAS planes has crashed. The plane crashed when it flew into a flock of birds. The pilot escaped by parachute and was unhurt. The accident happened near Ronneby. Where is Ronneby?
- 7 It isn't just Sweden that has had a dry summer. The drought in parts of Australia has been the worst in 50 years. Grassland has died and the country's national animal is competing with sheep and cattle for what remains. The Australian government says farmers may shoot the animal to save food for their livestock. Which animal are they shooting?
- 8 Calvin Harris, Steve Aoki and David Guetta are three names on *Forbes* magazine's new list of the people who earn most in their profession. Harris's annual income alone is more US\$48 million. What do these three do? They are all ...
- 9 According to *Forbes*, Serena Williams is the world's most well-paid sportswoman. Last year she earned US\$18.1 million. She and 7 others among the world's top 10 sportswomen play in the same sport. Which sport?
- 10 The 14th season of Swedish *Idol* has started on TV4. Anders, Kishti, Nikki and Alex – the *Idol* jury – will cross Sweden to find the country's future stars. Who won the finale of *Idol 2017*?

1. 0.4°C
- X. 1°C
2. 1.8°C

1. The Dead Sea
- X. Lake Titicaca
2. Loch Ness

1. Reykjavik
- X. Torshamn
2. Tromsø

1. Denali
- X. Elbrus
2. Kilimanjaro

1. Four
- X. Eight
2. Twelve

1. Blekinge
- X. Dalarna
2. Gotland

1. Pandas
- X. Kangaroos
2. Lamas

1. ... DJs.
- X. ... golfers.
2. ... company directors.

1. Swimming
- X. Golf
2. Tennis

1. Chris Kläfford
- X. Liam Cacatian Thomassen
2. Martin Almgren

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