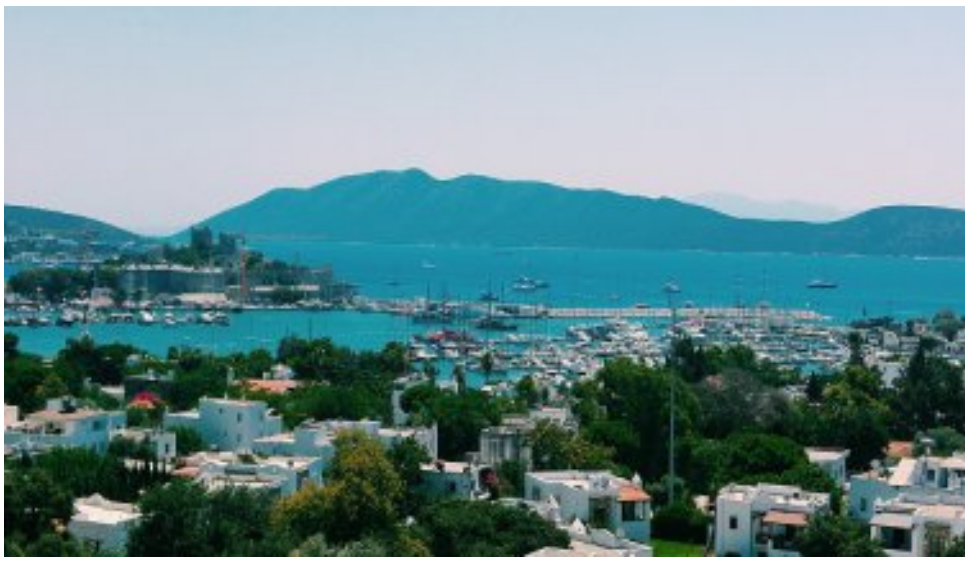
The Ege Eye

Issue 212

APRIL 2022

"News for the Turkish coast since 2005"

Bodrum welcomes The Ege Eye



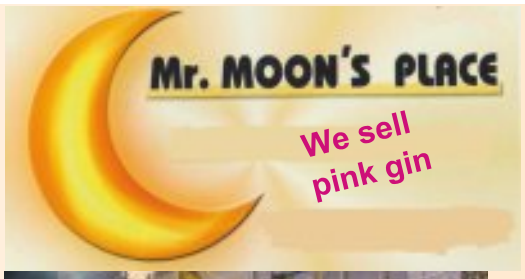
You will notice that this month's edition of The Ege Eye is larger than usual. Many of our readers holiday in Bodrum and I thought we could do an article of where visitors can go along with other information about Bodrum. We also have many tourists who come to Kusadasi for their holiday so I decided to see how easy it was to spend the day in Bodrum from Kusadasi. I met up with Chris Drum Berkaya from The Bodrum Echo and Alma Fortmann a visiting Erasmus Journalism student from Germany. It was also nice to meet with Martin Redman from Doc Martins Surgery for expats in Turkiye and Timur Altıok from the Bodrum Municipality, International relations department

As we are going to dedicate 3 pages about Bodrum every month, Alma has very kindly written our first article. Chris is also going to write an article about Bodrum every month (if she is not too busy).

As usual I am always early. I was told that the coach left Kusadasi Otogar at 7:30am or 7:45am. I arrived in plenty of time (7:10am) and when no coach turned up, I thought this is a great start to the day. It turns out that he meant as the coach comes from Istanbul, you have to allow for any delays.

You do not need to purchase a ticket, just show either your passport or residence card and they will give you your seat number at the desk. The cost was 120 lira return and it was a direct journey from Kusadasi to Bodrum. On the return it stopped for a couple of minutes at Milas and Soke. The journey took about 2 hours and 15 minutes and the scenery along the way was amazing, especially Lake Bafa.

You can read Alma's article on page 7 followed by some places to visit and photos I took on the day.
Bodrum is a beautiful town and is well worth a visit. Not only it is a great shopping town, it has many historical sites which you can read about in next month's edition. So, if you are coming to Kusadasi, it is well worth a day trip to Bodrum.



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Kusadasi meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous
At the moment these meetings will be held in a member's home

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If you need the services of a pharmacy at short notice, at least two are open 24 hours a day in Kusadasi at any one time.
Every pharmacy has a sign in their window showing the locations of the ones that are on late duty that day.

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Many of these departments will now come under 112

editor@theegeeye.com (0256) 6123207

This month rather than picking up your copy of The Ege Eye at these venues we can send a copy directly to you. You can send a request by email to lucy@theegeeye.com and a copy will be sent to you.

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April and first week of May sees three public holidays in Turkey

On April 23rd Turkey celebrates National Sovereignty and Children's Day. The holiday is a gift from Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkish Republic, to children as he emphasized that children are the “nation's future.” It is the only holiday which is devoted to children of the world.

The day also has a special meaning in history as it marks the anniversary of the Turkish parliament's foundation. On April 23, 1920, the Turkish parliament was inaugurated in Ankara during the National War of Liberation, as the first step towards the creation of the Turkish Republic.

With the opening of the parliament, Ankara became the centre of the Turkish War of Independence and was declared as the capital of the new Turkish Republic on Oct. 13, 1923.

This year the public holiday falls on a Saturday and as the previous two years were largely subdued due to the coronavirus, it will be definitely celebrated in style this year. As it is a public holiday, banks, schools and public institutions are normally closed. However, it falls on a Saturday and it is not yet known if another day will be earmarked for the holiday.

The first of May is also a public holiday, and the beginning of May marks the start of Bayram.

Remember, the roads will be busy at these times and cash machines tend to be emptied quickly. I will update on our social media platforms any information on business closures and where to best enjoy the celebrations.

Simit-seller in suit attracts customers

A pensioner has won hearts in the northwestern province of Bursa for his peculiar sense of dressing in a suit while wandering the streets and selling simit, often called “Turkish bagel.”

“Customers love seeing a simit-seller in suits. I sell 500 pieces a day 64-year-old Ahmet Berksun told İhlas News Agency on March 6.

When asked how he decided to be a “monger with a tie,” he said, “Due to an old habit.

Working as a government employee, he got dressed in suits for decades.

“When I got retired and decide to sell simit, I did not change my clothing style,” he said. “Many people get shocked when they see me. Most say, ‘This is the first time I see a simit-seller in suits.’ I make no compromise when it comes to dressing.”

His respect for the business has attracted many, with some customers even ordering simit via phone.

“They call me. I take simits from the bakery and deliver them to my customers.” Source: Hurriyet Daily News

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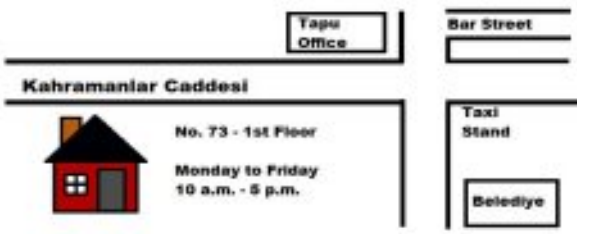

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How to shave like a Turkish barber

Lisa Morrow CNN

Taken from Lisa Morrow's website https://www.insideoutinistanbul.com/writing/

Two well established barbers give their advice on how best to shave from home.

Like everywhere in the world, during lockdowns men in Turkey were unable to visit their barbers, and it was forbidden for barbers to go to their clients' homes. Even Tekin had to stay put for a while. As a result, Aram and Tekin both fielded numerous calls from men wanting guidance on how to look after themselves at home.

Tekin in particular recommends men ask for advice from their own barber, rather than looking for a general solution because everyone's skin type and beard structure (shape) is different. Knowing your individual skin sensitivities is important. While Tekin and Aram prefer to see their clients for a proper shave, there are a few fundamentals of any good shave -- whether in a shop or at home.

Type of razor? A sharp one.

The make and model of razor a man uses are less important than how skilled he is with it. When it comes to avoiding nicks and cuts, practice makes perfect, especially when using a straight razor.

The best way to learn, Aram says, is to "first practice and try many times without putting a blade into the razor. In training, barbers are taught to hold the skin with their fingers and stretch it slightly so we can shave the more difficult parts of the face more easily. This is particularly important to do."

Aram uses a single blade razor with a handle and changes the blade after every client. Aside from the hygiene aspect, it guarantees a clean shave.

Back when he was an apprentice, he'd douse the razor with cologne and light it, but these days all the equipment is thoroughly sterilized in a professional UV cabinet. Nonetheless, after shaving a customer, he still pours white spirit onto the razor, ignites it and then lets it burn. Only when it's clean does he insert the new blade. Men shaving at home would do well to do the same.

Water temperature? Hot.

"They shouldn't shave with cold water. To have a better shave, they should do it after a shower if it is possible," Tekin said. Aram concurred on the question of hot water. "Using hot water is very important in case there are any microbes on the blade, and it makes the shave more comfortable and softer," he said.

He also had a lot to say about type of soap that should be used. Using ordinary soap to create foam to shave "can cause allergies, can cause harm to your skin, rashes ... fungal infections." To get as close to a Turkish shave as possible, he recommends using foaming soap in a packet, such as Arko, a Turkish brand. "Put [the] soap on the brush and into hot water, boiling water .... This is the most hygienic way." **Continued on page 5**

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Turkey will not send any refugees back: Turkish president

Ankara will not send any refugees taking shelter in Turkey back to their countries, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said on March 15.

Turkey will continue to keep its door open to people who are suffering, Erdoğan said, speaking at the sixth International Kindness Awards ceremony of the Diyanet Foundation.

“Today, they come from Ukraine; we do not know where they will come from tomorrow. This country will always continue to be the shelter of the oppressed, don’t worry about it,” he stated.

Since Russia launched its war on Ukraine on Feb. 24, more than 2.5 million people have fled to other countries, with some 2 million more displaced within the country.

Continued from page 4: The bristles of the shaving brush should be a little soft, not hard. Men need to dip the brush into very hot water first, apply the soap to the brush and only then lather their faces. If they apply soap directly onto their face first, then dip the brush into hot water and use it to lather the soap on their face, they risk burning their skin.

Done using the correct sequence, after about five seconds, the heat from the bristles causes the soap to foam and in the process cools the brush slightly, making for a safe, smooth lather.

A final piece of advice

Both men know their customers are capable of shaving themselves at home, but as Aram points out, only a barber can "boost their morale" by lending a sympathetic ear.

"I say 'get better soon' for illnesses... it gets better, this is life, it continues. When they get up, they are happy, loved. When I am energized and motivated myself, I transfer it onto them."
It seems nothing can replace going to the barber, at least in Turkey, where their skills go well beyond mere shaving.

For more great articles from Lisa copy and paste the link which will take you to her website. https://www.insideoutinistanbul.com/writing/

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Bodrum, Welcoming Visitors for 3,000 Years

By Alma Fortmann, visiting Erasmus journalism student (Ger)

Contrary to popular belief believe,Bodrum is much more than just a nice tourist spot with vibrant bazars and a great nightlife.

Once upon a time, Bodrum was known as Halicarnassus Halicarnassos- one of the six members in the Dorian Confederation of Hexapolis, along with Knidos and the islands Kos and Rhodes, birthplace of Herodotus – also known as the 'Ffather of Hhistory', not even to mention the rich history of the antiquity. What really put Bodrum, or Halicarnassous, on the map of forthe ancient visitors was King Mausolus, who ruled here from 377 BC. At that time, the region had fallen under Persian rule and as their 'satrap, King Mausolus turned Bodrum into the commercial and administrative center of his undisputed realm. He built the first Mausoleum (for himself and his wife), one of the seven wonders of the ancient world and he built an Amphitheatre, which is today one of the oldest in Anatolia. King Mausolus is said believedto have passed away in 354 BC and so he missed one of the most famous first visitors to Bodrum,

Alexander the Great, who reached Halicarnassus in 334 BC. Of course, Alexander did not come as a tourist looking to enjoy the local hospitality and the turquoise waters. Instead, he sacked Halicarnassus along with other parts of the Persian ruled cities.

Historic accounts state that much of the city was destroyed but that order had been given to keep bloodshed to a minimum.

Yet,, even today remnants of thatis time can still be visited in Bodrum:

Visit the Mausoleum, builtd between 350 and 368 BC, even though only remnants of the once 20 storey-highsized structure are left. Other than the Mausoleum, the antique theatre, built to accommodate 13,000 spectators, is largely intact and is today used for music and theatre performances during the summer months. Nestled into the hills behind Bodrum, it allows a view of Bodrum harbour and the island of Kos – a wonderful backdrop to any performance.

Fast forward to the time around 1404 AD, the Knights of St John selected Bodrum as a stronghold against the advancing Ottoman Sultanate. Building on the remnants of a fortification stemming from the Doric times (1110 BC), the construction of the Castle, later named the Castle of St Peter, was completed in the late 15th century, only to be taken over by the Ottoman Empire in 1523.

The castle is in the center of Bodrum harbour and it is impossible to miss it. Really, it should not be missed and deserves a visit. Beautifully restored, the castle houses the award-winning Bodrum Museum of Underwater Archaeology and is in the moat, holds the stage of for cultural events, such as the annual Bodrum International Ballet Festival.

Bodrum did not spend the time between Alexander the Great's visit and the construction of the stronghold of the Knights of St John in total obscurity, even though it lost much of its fame. It is known that Bodrum came under the control of Ptolemy II of Egypt

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in the 3rd century BC, who had many of his warships built here.

And this brings us to another interesting strand of history that has left its traces and is part of Bodrum's fame today – the Blue Cruise on one of the famous Gulets - along Turkeys spectacular southwest coast.The early history of this sailing boat remains largely unknown, apart from the fact that building these boats in Turkey is a tradition unique to Bodrum. Built and used mainly for fishing and sponge diving in the last century, it is thanks to CevatŞakirKabaağaçlı, a Cretan Turk, writer of novels, short-stories and essays, as well as being a keen ethnographer and travelogue, who started to accompany the fishermen of Bodrum on their tours along the coast, that the Blue Cruise was born. Today you can select one of the more than 5,000 crewed sailing boats, ranging from 15-50 meters in length, to have the most relaxing holidays possible. This is the closest you can get to enjoying a bit of luxury and fantastic service right in the middle of nature.

So, is Bodrum worth a visit? Immersed in ancient history with evidence in plain sight, with traditions turned into modern-day joys, with cultural events to experience, and all that in addition to great hotels, restaurants and bazars, you would feel hard pressed finding a good reason NOT to visit Bodrum. As a matter of fact, you will probably need several visits to start grasping the full Bodrum experience.

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La Pasion
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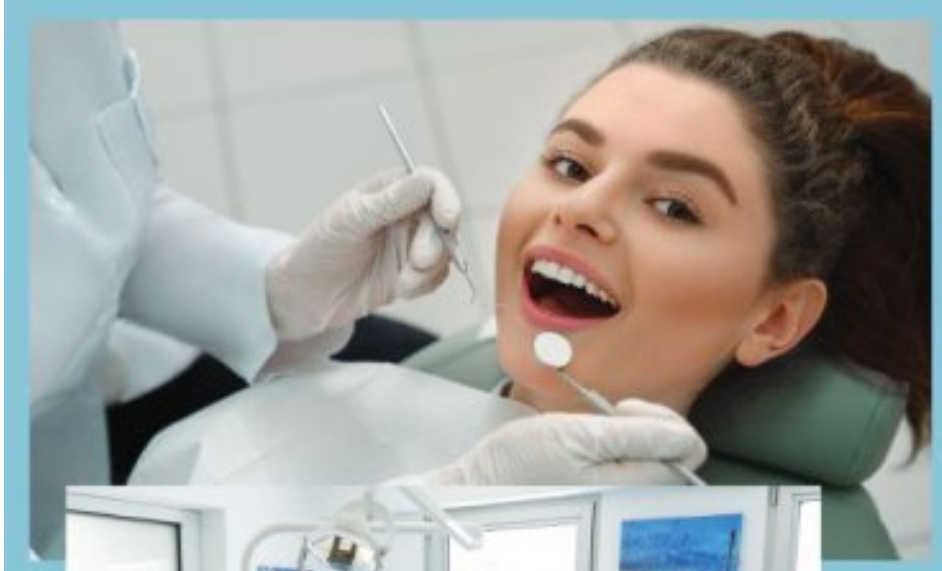
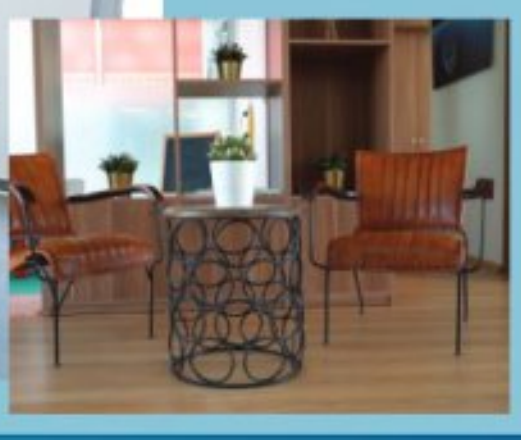
Beautifully located in the courtyard of a traditional stone house, with tables set among fig trees and potted plants, la Pasión offers a mouth-watering menu of tapas, paellas and traditional Spanish dishes, created by Chef Neco.





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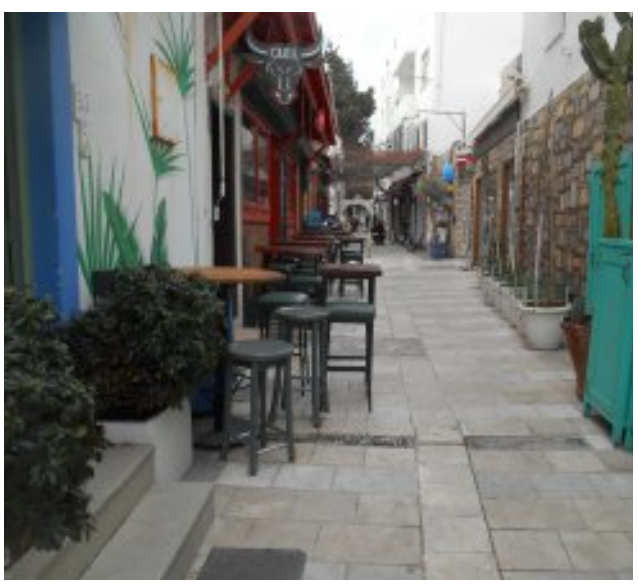
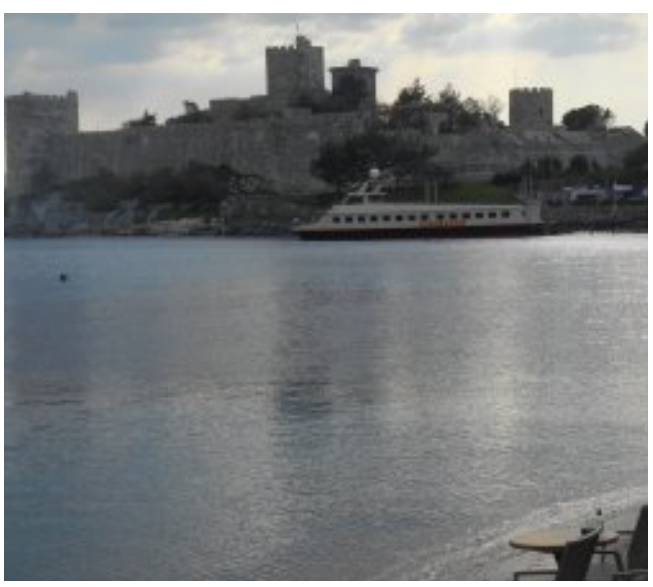
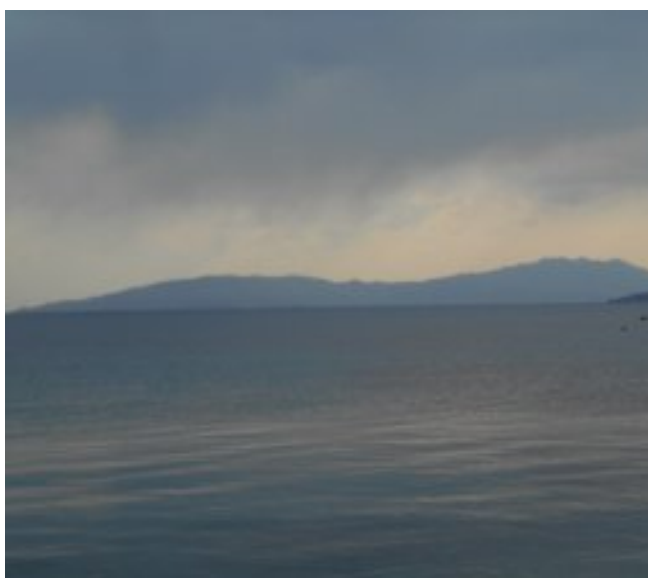
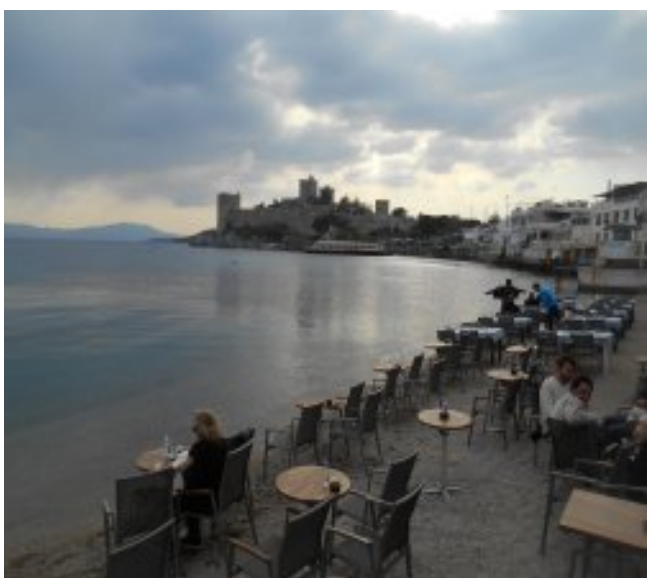
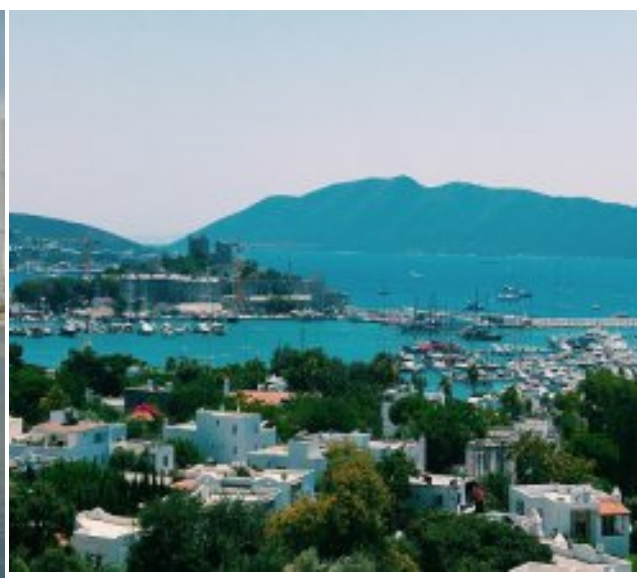
Some images from my day out in Bodrum



Yaren the stork returns to Turkey for the 11th year

Every year I look forward to hearing that Yaren, a stork has returned to Turkey safely as she has been returning for the past 11 years.

This story is of a unique friendship between fisherman, 69-year-old Adem Yılmaz and the stork who perched on his boat 11 years ago and returns every year.

Eskikaraağaç, also know as the “village of storks” in the northwestern province of Bursa is where Adem Yılmaz fishes, and since day one, he has fed the stork on a daily basis from his boat.

Yaren, the stork spends 6 months a year in Turkey and arrived this year on March 7th and those moments were captured by Alper Tüydeş, a well-known nature photographer.

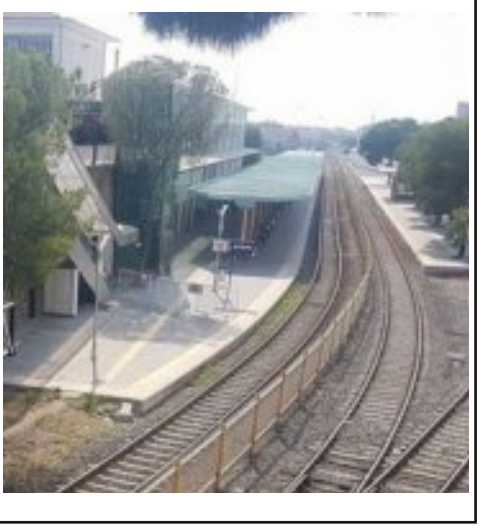
“Finally, Yaren reunited with Uncle Adem [Yılmaz] in its 11th year. He had reached the village yesterday at the end of his migration journey that he had set out days ago,” Tüydeş said, noting that the stork got its place on Yılmaz’s boat in no time flat.

“Now, they will be fishing together all summer. Happy 11th anniversary of the reunion; they shall live long,” he noted.

Everyone is watching to see if Yaren’s baby will return. The baby stork which was named Number Five was fitted with a tracking transmitter and has been seen in Sudan. The stork had visited three countries in two days. It was seen in Sundan, then Chad before turning up in the Central African Republic and returned to Sudan again.

According to Tüydeş, Number Five is hanging out with another herd and has no intention of coming to Turkey yet.

Turkey’s first railway returns to its old days



Aydin Train Station, located on Turkey’s first railway line, has almost returned to its old days. With the increase in bus ticket prices citizens have taken to the trains.

In 1866 Aydin railway station on Turkey’s first railway line was completed under Sultan Abdulaziz and today the station has “returned to the past”.

At certain times of the day there is almost no room on the passenger trains that operate Aydin-Denizli and Aydin-Izmir.

You can see the high concentration of commuters arriving at the station ahead of the departure time of the trains. The fact that the ticket price of a bus from Aydin to Izmir was 70 TL led many citizens to take the train. The train ticket prices were 18 TL and 21 TL.

Turkish man turns home into ‘Star Wars Museum’

Over the last three decades Cihat Uygun, from the northwestern province of Edirine has turned his property into a museum dedicated to Star Wars memorabilia.

The 46-year-old e-commerce entrepreneur spends all his money on Star Wars products by accumulating many artifacts, toys and products affiliated to the world-renowned motion-picture series.

Cihat was only 15 when he developed a love of Star Wars and has now reached a collection of approximately 500 products.

“Star Wars was a legend during my young days and still is among today’s young generation. I am keeping my love for Star Wars alive by not killing the child inside me,” he said.

When asked about the most exceptional product he owned, he quickly replied, “I have a spaceship!”

Uygun has around 1 million followers on his social media accounts, where he shares his devotion to Star Wars.

Single use masks are harming the environment

Recent studies show that every minute of the day we throw away 3 million face masks and that we use an astounding 129 billion face masks globally every month.

As countries open up after pandemic lockdowns, the world is relying on the use of billions of face masks a month to help stop the spread of coronavirus.

But experience has shown that mask mandates can lead to an explosion of a new form of plastic litter that can last generations. As disposable face masks can take hundreds of years to break down they also threaten to entangle wildlife, litter our beaches, block sewers, and pollute the food chain.

For example, you're out for your daily walk. You see a face mask on the ground. Few want to touch what has shielded someone's potentially virus-laden breath. So there it lies until it blows away—and that elemental problem is rapidly changing the landscape around the world, from grocery store parking lots to beaches on uninhabited islands.

The thing to remember is that everything you drop by the roadside is likely to end up in a waterway where wildlife get entangled.

The best way to dispose of single-use masks is in your regular rubbish:

It's really important that these end up in the right place, which is not in the recycling bin, it's in your general waste bin.

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Hamsi: Turkiye's national fish

Lyn Ward

Surrounded by the sea on three sides, Turkiye has been blessed with an abundance of fish. Although fish is not considered a main source of food for Turks, the people living near the seas, especially those in the Black Sea region, are very creative in their kitchens when it comes to the sea dweller.

Turkiye's national fish

Hamsi, or Anatolian anchovies, could be considered Turkiye's national fish. Abundant in the Black Sea, especially during the winter, it is more than a simple sea creature for the people of the Black Sea region. Locals have become very attached to all things hamsi related and, as a result, the fish has become a significant part of life in the region.

Poems and songs have been written about hamsi. Bards from the north even travelled around Anatolia singing songs about the glorious fish. In fact, an entire cuisine has been devoted to hamsi in northern Turkiye, and the locals use it in almost every dish.

The silver, delicious beauty in all of its 12-to-15-centimetre glory is the tiny king of Turkish dinner tables. During the winter months, when the Black Sea is crawling with hamsi, this shiny little fish is quite a bargain.

There is a saying among native Black Sea people, "Foreigners eat hamsi without bones, but the people of the Black Sea eat it whole". Indeed, most people eat hamsi without removing its bones, pan-fried whole.

Fried hamsi

Frying is the easiest way to prepare hamsi. Wash the hamsi and cover them with either regular flour or cornflour. Place them in a large well-oiled pan and fry for a couple of minutes on each side.

Hamsi with rice

Turks have always respected their past, and this is also the case when it comes to hamsi. This incredible fish was once the king of the Ottoman imperial kitchen, as well. Sultans preferred to eat it with a special kind of "pilav", a dish made with rice. Although it is not as easy as the fried hamsi, Turks still cherish this tradition in their homes.

You will find more recipes on Fethiye Times website at …. https://www.fethiyetimes.com/eat

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Technologies role during the coronavirus pandemic

Coronavirus has transformed many aspects of our lives. It closed schools, businesses and forced millions to stay at home. Along with this we had to limit social contact and in turn it altered they way we worked, learned, celebrated, mourned, and carried out daily tasks.

Technology has been a lifeline during the pandemic. For many the internet and video calls were the only way to stay connected with their families. Schools used the internet for lessons and many businesses used the internet for virtual meetings.

The advent of technology has prompted significant changes in many aspects of our lives and improved the exchange of information, the presentation of data, and the management of medical resources. The information and technology sector has managed to keep pandemic data up to date. For instance, using social media to promote public health campaigns is very effective.

We were buying almost everything online and having it delivered to our door, including groceries.

The importance of technology in our lives has never been more apparent. Although many technologies and platforms existed pre-pandemic, their importance to our daily iving increased exponentially during the pandemic. This is likely to continue in many areas post-pandemic.

The new normal will reshape technology priorities for corporations and governments, including greater investment in telehealth and contactless digital alternatives to touch interfaces. Drones and robots ensured minimum human interaction but also are beneficial to access contagious COVID-19 patients. Making use of the Bluetooth and GPS technology, is another efficient way to monitor individual's health and their day-to-day stress levels in isolation.

Technology has made substantial and revolutionary contributions to the field of medical care, which has eventually helped in extending the life span of people throughout the world. The rise in the use of digital technologies means that we are now witnessing a rise in online fraud, scams, intrusions, and security breaches. There is a lot of research being carried out on managing security and assessing the causes of breaches.

Unfortunately, the pandemic has brought the world to a situation where those not connected to the internet are facing total exclusion.

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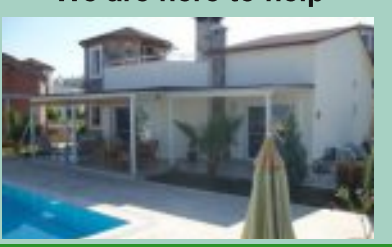

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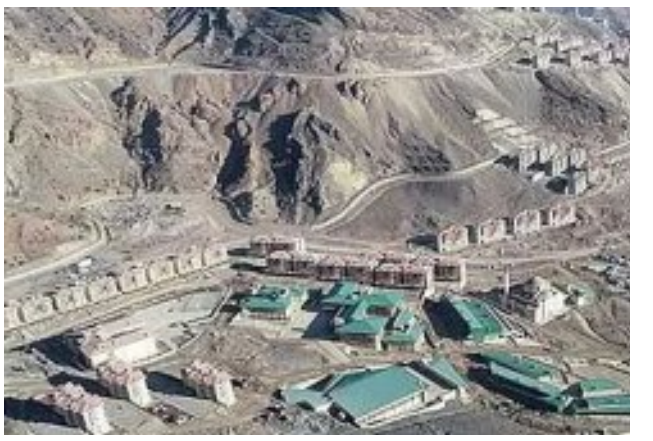
Turkish town uprooted for the 7th time in its history



Most of us have changed address during our lives, in fact, I have had 28 postal addresses in my life. But, can you imagine a whole town moving, not once, but 7 times.

One such town in Turkey's northeastern province of Artvin's Yusufeli district are preparing to relocate for the 7th time in its 152-year history.

The Black Sea town has a population of nearly 20,000 and the reason for its relocation is due to a massive dam and hydroelectric power plant being built nearby.

Other reasons for the town's relocations were due to wars, natural disasters, and demarcation as it is situated on a deep valley next to the border.

It will take at least five months to move around 2,654 families and in the new settlements, public buildings and schools have already been made for service.

New settlements have been established at the foot of the mountains for those living in the seven villages that would be flooded, and a total of 520 village houses will be built.

Registered graves and fruit trees were transferred to the new settlement area, and fertile agricultural soil was also moved.

Face masks still needed, says health minister

While a mandate for wearing face masks outdoors has been scrapped, it is still necessary to wear those protective devices on certain occasions, Health Minister Fahrettin Koca has stressed.

In March, Koca announced that some anti-virus measures were relaxed as the number of daily COVID-19 cases was on the decline.

As part of those new rules, people are no longer required to wear face masks in open spaces, such as while on streets, and indoors provided that air circulation is adequate and social distancing is maintained.

However, people still need to wear protective face masks while on planes, in buses, theatres and cinemas, as well as health facilities and inside schools.

"Face masks? They are not necessary at all times, but must be worn if there are risks," Koca tweeted.

Albeit the government lifted the mask rule, many people say they will continue to wear face masks because the pandemic is not yet over.

"We are not completely removing masks from our lives. We will still be carrying them to wear when necessary," Koca said after he announced the new regulations. Source: Hurriyet Daily News (abridged)

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Turkish scientists produce lunar soil on earth

Turkish scientists have been successful in the production of lunar soil which can be used in scientific research. The country is now one of 10 countries to produce the soil on earth after the U.S., Germany, Australia, China, India, Italy, Japan, Canada and South Korea.

Cengiz Toklu, head of the science team said that “we have achieved similar soil samples like the ones on the moon”.

The US has brought around 400 kilos of lunar soil to earth along with the unmanned Chinese rovers who have collected 1.7 kilos.

The professor said that “the [chemical] characteristics of the soil samples on the moon differ from the locations they were collected. A sample from a high altitude differs from the ones taken from a hole [a crater], while the other countries worked on specific soil samples, we created a formula covering all soil samples,” he added.

The professor highlighted that they named the “best sample they have achieved” similar to the ones collected during the Apollo mission as “TBG-1.”

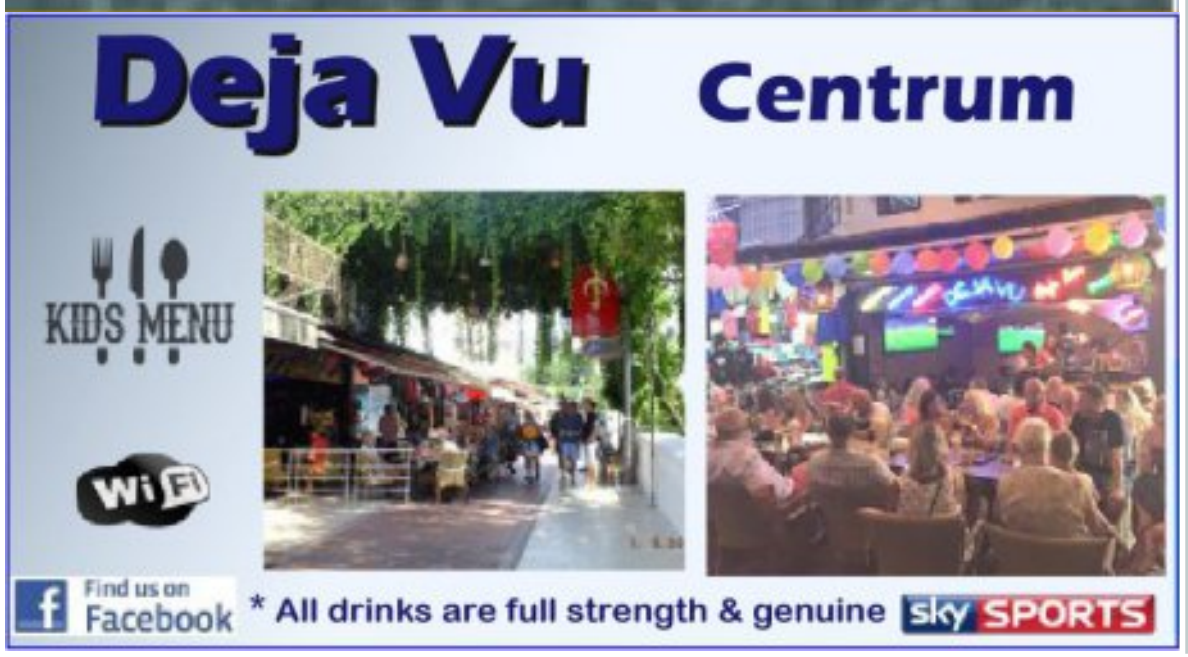
“T” stands for Turkey and “B” for Beykent, the name of the Turkish university supporting the research.

Toklu expressed the steps they have taken amid the research one by one. “We had the chemical analysis of the original lunar soil samples,” he said, adding, “Then we started collecting samples from unspoiled areas at various volcanic sites across Turkey.”

Lastly, they started lab experiments with the mixture of collected samples and despite the high costs of space works, they achieved this with a low budget.

The researchers are now considering the next step they will take and how they will utilise the soil they have produced.

Turkey, which established its own space agency in 2018, announced its national space program in February 2021. The country aims to make a rough landing on the moon in 2023 and send an unmanned rover on the moon and an astronaut to the International Space Station by 2030.



Economic News

E-commerce in Turkey continues to grow

E-commerce refers to the the buying and selling of goods and services, or the transmitting of funds or data, over an electronic network, primarily the internet.

Since the pandemic altered the way people shopped and more people refrained from shopping at stores and malls, e-commerce investments have reached 10 billion liras in the past two years.

Sendeo CEO Özgün Şahin said that “the [e-commerce] sector had expanded by around 50 percent in 2020. In 2021, it peaked again. A growth of 75 percent was recorded in the first half of 2021 compared to the same period in the previous year”.

Around half of the consumers and sellers who were canalized to e-commerce during the pandemic-related restrictions tended to continue online trading even after those restrictions were lifted. “That is a significant number,” said Şahin.

As many companies appealed to tech-based solutions to ramp up online sales, some 50,000 vehicles and 200,000 delivery workers hit the roads in Turkey every day, estimates show.

Sendeo, which has 500 delivery workers and 780 employees in total, is planning to increase those numbers to 2,000 and 2,500, respectively.

“We aim to have 11 transfer hubs, 45 distribution centres and 2,400 delivery points as of the end of the year,” Şahin said, adding that the fleet of the company has reached 500 vehicles.

The volume of e-commerce in Turkey is expected to have exceeded 400 billion liras ($28.9 billion) last year, according to analysts. It is said that one in three people in Turkey uses e-commerce and this growth is expected to continue.
Engin Aksoy, the CEO of GSM operator Vodafone Turkey, said that businesses have brought their digital investments forward six years to quickly adapt to the new normal.

Some 63 of Turkish e-shoppers prefer to use mobile apps for transactions and this ratio is close to the world average of 66 percent, according to the Trade Ministry.

Turkish authorities have granted secure pass certificates to 35 e-commerce platforms so far. Prominent e-commerce platforms operating in Turkey are Hepsiburada, N11, Gittigidiyor and Trendyol. Amazon Turkey also recently entered the Turkish market.

Istanbul-based startup Getir, the pioneer of ultra-fast grocery delivery business, has made successful market entries in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Germany, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy and the United States.

Türk Telekom signs MoU for 5G deal with Huawei

Türk Telekom and Chinese giant Huawei have signed a memorandum of understanding (Mou) to collaborate to develop the fifth-generation technology standard for broadband cellular networks (5G) in Turkey.

Turkish Transport and Infrastructure Deputy Minister Ömer Fatih Sayan attended the signing ceremony during the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona. “Huawei has been making important contributions to Turkey’s infrastructure for 20 years. We want these contributions to continue with domestic and national production,” he said.

“Huawei has positioned one of its 19 research and development centres on the globe in Turkey and they have employed more than 750 engineers there. Ericsson has also established a research and development centre in Turkey,” he added.

Türk Telekon CEO Ümit Önal said that 5G solutions are needed particularly in areas of transportation, health, education, agriculture, entertainment, and urbanization.

Huawei Turkey CEO Jason Lee noted that Türk Telekom has been their strategic partner “from the beginning of their Turkey journey.”

As part of their 5G collaboration, the two companies initially focus on smart agricultural applications and games, according to the MoU.

Over the past few years, several technology companies have made investments in Turkey contributing to the country’s economy and creating new jobs.
Xiaomi, OPPO, Samsung, TECNO Mobile and TCL followed suit. Realme and Vivo have also made inroads.

Türk Telekom, a prominent telecommunications firm, had 14.1 million broadband customers as of the end of September 2021. The number of fibre subscribers jumped 67 percent to 8.8 million in the first nine months of last year. Mobile customers, meanwhile, stood at 23.9 million. Source: Hurriyet Daily News

Spring is in the air – Kusadasi getting ready for a new season

We're starting April with the temperatures rising after what seems like a very long and extremely cold winter. It was only a few weeks ago that Turkey again came to a standstill with airports and schools closing due to the heavy snowfalls that fell across the country.

Amidst a host of construction work, Kusadasi is shaking off its winter blues and gearing up for another summer season. You will discover when you return this year that the bar-street and Orient Bazaar areas are having a make-over.

The Belediye is slowly moving to its new premises amid plans to have a central park in the town.

What other changes can our visitors expect to find in 2022? Well, you will find that due to the pandemic and the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, that there have been a lot of price increases. It is hard to tell how this is going to affect the price of trips as fuel costs have risen considerably.

The good news for tourists is that you are getting nearly twice for your Euro/pound than you did last year.

With restrictions being much more relaxed, we are expecting many more Europeans to visit this year.

Unfortunately, many of our tourists also came from Russia and the Ukraine, so this will probably leave a shortfall from these countries.

No matter what, you will always be made welcome in Kusadasi. I hope that all of our visitors to our town have an amazing holiday and here in the office I look forward to meeting up with old friends year after year.

Turkey ranked 4th on world tourism list in 2021

Turkey has risen to the fourth rank on the world tourism list after hosting some 29.9 million tourists in 2021, leaving Italy and the United States behind, according to a report by World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

"Some 421 million people traveled the globe as tourists in 2019. Nearly 30 million tourists were in Turkey," Recep Yavuz, the head of the Tourism Work Group of the city council in the southern province of Antalya, told Demirören News Agency on March 29.

According to his evaluation of the report, France leads the list with some 40 million tourists.

Mexico is runner-up with 31.9 million tourists, while Spain sat in the third rank with 31.2 million.

With an increase, Turkey left Italy, which hosted 26.3 million tourists, in the fifth rank.

Then came the United States with 22.1 million, Greece with 14.7 million and Austria with 12.7 million tourists.

Germany is ninth on the list with 11.7 million tourists, while Croatia hit the bottom of the top 10 with 10.6 million visitors.
"Due to the pandemic, around 1 billion people could not travel," Yavuz said. "Fareast and Asian countries felt the harshest blow of the pandemic."

China, the center of the pandemic, was the fourth tourist country in 2019, with some 65 million travelers.

"China has been erased from the tourism map," Yavuz stated.

Thailand was another Asian country witnessing a nosedive. The country that hosted 40 million visitors in 2019 was down to 53rd rank in the list, with only 400,000 tourists in 2021.

Thanks to the normalization process, tourism revived in Europe in 2021 and the western Mediterranean countries finished the year with a slight loss in tourism revenues compared to 2019, when the world was unaware of the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to Yavuz, the biggest winner of 2021 after Turkey was Mexico. "Mexico was seventh in 2019 and third in 2020. The country reached number two in 2021," he said.

Yavuz highlighted that Mexicans living in the U.S. and the American tourists preferring to visit the neighboring country increased the tourist numbers of Mexico.

Yavuz underlined Spain witnessed a sharp nosedive in the number of tourists in 2021, losing some 50 million tourists compared to 2019.

Greece was another country on the losing side as the country, which had targeted 25 million tourists at the beginning of 2021, could reach only 14.7 million by the end of the year.

"With the latest data in the report, we see that Turkey's share in the global economy was around 7 percent in 2021," the expert underlined. Source: Hurriyet Daily News

Inspections tightened to fight stockpiling

Turkish officials are tightening the screws on businesses and supermarkets to prevent them from stockpiling sunflower seed oil amid what they describe as unsubstantiated speculations suggesting that the country may run out of the product because of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

Officials are also inspecting the prices of sunflower oil sold in 5-liter cans, which they say increased from between 90 Turkish Liras and 100 liras to 200 liras following the speculations.

Officials from the Trade Ministry and Finance and Treasury Ministry are teaming up with municipal police in the country's all 81 provinces to conduct such inspections.

The Trade Ministry is in charge of checking the prices, while the Finance Ministry is inspecting inventories of both suppliers and supermarkets.

Officials said there was no reason and justification for the sharp increase in prices, noting that import duties were already lowered to zero with a decision announced on March 4 and that the zero tax would remain in place until June 30.

Supermarkets and retailers have enough of those products, while producers have sufficient raw materials, which could last until mid-April, they added.

"All this meant, Turkey was not likely to face any shortage until the next harvest. Moreover, the cost of importing this product would be lower because of the reduction in the tax. But prices rose suddenly on rumors," they explained.
They said they are trying to figure out who is responsible for exorbitant prices; supermarkets, importing firms, or producers?

Officials also noted that following the rumors and speculations, people rushed to supermarkets to buy sunflower oil.

In the face of this panic buying, sunflower sales volume that would normally occur in 15 days happened in one day and prices rocketed, they added.

People typically keep enough sunflower oil at their homes all the time, said people from the industry.

The run on supermarkets was triggered by the rumors suggesting that there would shortage of sunflower oil, they explained. "As demand picked up, some supermarkets hiked prices from 100 liras to 180 liras." Source: Hurriyet Daily News

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Kusadasi's human factor: opening hearts, minds, doors to Ukrainian refugees

Klaus Jurgens

What would you do when you hear about someone who might require urgent help, had to flee her or his native country due to war or other traumatizing circumstances and eventually knocks at your door?
Figuratively speaking the entire city of Kusadasi became one big door last month when 97 innocent people were brought to safety being forced to leave everything behind – we are talking about their homeland Ukraine – and showed itself from her best side. By now many more have reached our southern Aegean shores; this contribution whilst focusing on the first group of innocent new arrivals is of course aimed at all of them and at all of us. I shall explain in a minute or two why writing about 'them' and 'us' or as we shall discover, rather not.
Granted, these pages are seldom earmarked for issues related to regional or national politics as we focus on topics related to life as an expatriate in our fine resort. But just this once let your friendly columnist try to combine both – a subject matter of not only national but global relevance and how the proud citizens of Kusadasi dealt and continue to deal with it.

Meet Olena

When our ever so busy editor Lucy Shone mentioned to me that she is in touch with the local coordinator of setting up a support network for recently arrived refugees from war-torn Ukraine I did not hesitate a minute to try and arrange for a face-to-face as such a humanitarian aid undertaking is extraordinary.

Then some days ago I had the pleasure to meet Olena Burgac who is the contact person for 97 mostly women and children who were flown out of Moldova after having been brought over the border by coaches from neighbouring Ukraine. Olena herself is half Ukrainian, half Turkish and resides amongst us for the past 16 years. She is a member of the executive committee of our Kent Konseyi and deputy chairperson of the Ukrainian Cultural Union of Kusadasi.

The way how those 97 Ukrainian citizens including over 30 children managed to come to town has been written about already and as those involved including a local tour operator and two hotels, respectively, out of respect for the good cause prefer to refrain from being mentioned by name, let us nevertheless briefly consider how extraordinary their efforts were and are.

It is not standard journalist fare to comment upon entrepreneurs who waive all normal business plan rulesin order to help people in need. All too often and what is referred to as humanitarian aid is reserved for charities and governments. Hence it fills observers at home in Kusadasi with pride to become witness that two hotels at once welcomed and accommodated those initial wave of people on a B&B – basis. Can you imagine how traumatized those 97 people must have been yet then waking up one morning in the clear knowledge of that 'we are safe and warm' might change everything? Except for the sad fact of course that back home nothing has changed up until now as their country has become a battlefield. This feeling of being safe is for sure nothing but short term as immediately the fear returns with regards to what will happen to those loved ones left behind including husbands, parents, grandparents, neighbours, and colleagues!
The same is true for our local tour operator who used all their contacts and possible influence to have that plane depart from Moldova and reach Izmir whilst before that coaches were chartered in cooperation with two Ukrainian partner tour operators. A remarkable, laudable, sensational venture which deserves all our respect.

And our superb Town Hall has to be mentioned, too, providing for all other meals and logistical support including internet connections so that first professional contacts can be re-established as some refugees work online across many borders and can now at least continue to some extent with their careers. There are many more volunteers, citizens who donate whatever can be spared, doctors visiting free of charge and, and, and… Apologies that we cannot mention everyone by name or organisation due to limited line space.

Meet Julia

In the clear knowledge of that a person who just left their homelands because a foreign aggressor country declared war most definitely has other things on her mind than being interviewed for a newspaper in Julia's case all is different. A young mum who stays in Kusadasi with her five-year-old daughter Maria, she was more than willing to speak up. Her comments revealed the great horrors she had witnessed and whenever she hears a police or ambulance car siren, she expects the next bomb to fall onto her house. She did not want to leave Ukraine but told me she did it for her daughter. She wants to return as quickly as possible to reunite with loved ones and at the same time help to rebuild her nation. She underlined that Ukrainians have nothing against ordinary Russians; but as they were attacked by Russia they have to fight and defend their country. What can a commentator add? Nothing. Her words speak for itself.

The 'them and us'

On the one hand, COVID-19 showed us that if a pandemic breaks out no one is safe, everything can change overnight. On the other hand, the war in Ukraine shows us that although we thought military interventions in Europe are a thing of the past it can happen overnight and God Forbid, everywhere. Hence there is no more distinction between 'the other' and 'us.' We are all humankind no matter which country or which corner of our shared world. With regards to the refugees from Ukraine the same has to be said. Whilst we live in safety other people must flee from terror or war. But one day maybe we need shelter someplace else. Our huge expatriate community is a perfect example of that 'them' and 'us' no longer matter anyways, that is in good times. Now as some fellow earthlings in another country face the horrors of war, we must show solidarity and welcome them. That is exactly what all citizens of Kusadasi have done and continue to do.

Now let us embark on the next step and support them even more. The longer they would stay solutions must be found for kindergartens or schools or at least temporary employment. Donations must continue to come in so that many more truckloads of urgently needed goods and food and anything and everything else reaches people in need who had to, or decided to, stay put.

And when we meet someone in need and after a square meal and a warm hotel room were provided for let us all remember what matters most: show respect, treat our new arrivals with respect and the utmost dignity. Kusadasi, Türkiye did nothing less when we came here and decided to settle. Correct – we came because we wanted to, relocating from one peaceful nation to another. But welcoming people regardless of happy expatriates or innocent people fleeing from the horrors of war is in the Turkish nature, as it is in ours, anyways. Thank you, Kusadasi! May the war end soon.

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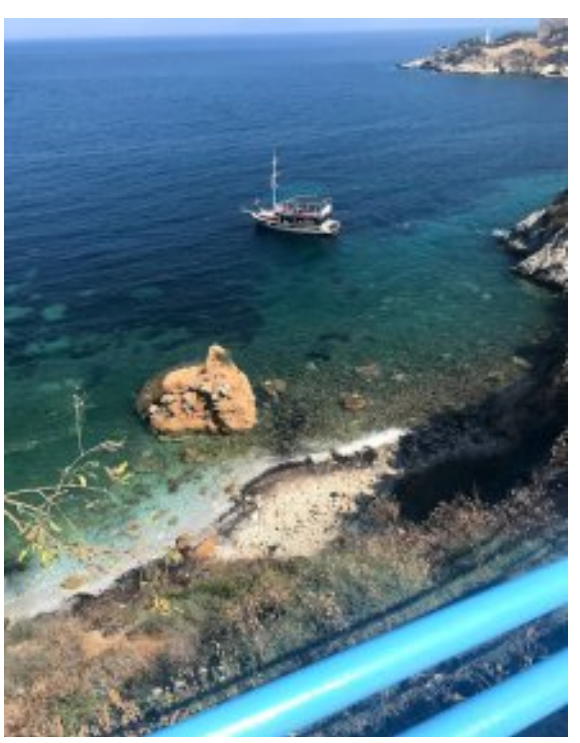
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