

AFR Cryptic (Saturday 21/3/2026) Solution

¹ S	H	² O	W	³ D	O	⁴ W	N		⁵ A	⁶ B	A	⁷ T	E	⁸ D
C		C		R		E		⁹ L		A		I		I
¹⁰ O	K	A	P	I		¹¹ S	H	I	L	L	I	N	G	S
U		R		E		T		S		L		F		P
¹² T	H	I	R	D	P	A	R	T	Y		¹³ H	O	M	E
S		N		A		U		E		¹⁴ L		I		R
	¹⁵ C	A	R	P	U	S		¹⁶ N	E	E	D	L	E	S
¹⁷ A				P		T		T		F				E
¹⁸ C	O	¹⁹ U	P	L	E	R		²⁰ O	N	T	I	²¹ M	E	
C		K		E		A		R		W		O		²² R
²³ E	A	R	L		²⁴ A	L	L	E	G	I	A	N	C	E
P		A		²⁵ C		I		A		N		S		D
²⁶ T	R	I	B	U	N	A	L	S		²⁷ G	O	O	D	O
E		N		R		N		O		E		O		N
²⁸ D	I	E	T	E	R		²⁹ E	N	T	R	A	N	C	E

Across	Clue	Explanation
1 SHOWDOWN	First to see who'd arranged personal confrontation (8)	(S)ee + anagram of WHOD + OWN
5 ABATED	A temperature in a hospital unit decreased (6)	(A + T) inside (A + BED)
10 OKAPI	Yes, a pig with no tail is a strange-looking animal (5)	OK + A + PI(g)
11 SHILLINGS	Capital Hill protected by different signs (9)	HILL inside anagram of SIGNS
12 THIRD PARTY	Hotel, caught in dirty trap, falsified insurance form (5,5)	H inside anagram of DIRTY TRAP
13 HOME	Mass held in digger's birthplace (4)	M inside HOE
15 CARPUS	Fish served by American joint (6)	CARP + US
16 NEEDLES	Sewers could be unnecessary shortly (7)	NEEDLES(s)
18 COUPLER	A type of car fitted with left and right linkage gear (7)	COUPE outside L + R
20 ON TIME	Throw out number withdrawn according to schedule (2,4)	(EMIT + NO) reversed
23 EARL	Auditor left one of high standing (4)	EAR + L
24 ALLEGIANCE	Support one in possession of a weapon with loyalty (10)	(LEG + I) inside (A + LANCE)
26 TRIBUNALS	Right held in Istanbul perplexed law courts (9)	R inside anagram of ISTANBUL
27 GOOD-O	Party after sticky matter expressed agreement (4-1)	DO after GOO
28 DIETER	One brought in to discourage weight watcher (6)	I inside DETER
29 ENTRANCE	Rebuilt centre incorporating an access point (8)	Anagram of CENTRE outside AN

