

AFR Cryptic (Saturday 3/10/2026) Solution

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

Across	Clue	Explanation
1 CACTUS	Members of unsympathetic ACTU subdivision desert plant (6)	unsympathetiC ACTU Subdivision
5 RACISTS	Cold is contracted by strike-breakers and prejudiced people (7)	(C + IS) inside RATS
9 DISCOURTENANCE	Cold treatment continues awkwardly in social event (14)	Anagram of CONTINUES inside DANCE
11 RANKLE	Irritate joint after start of run (6)	ANKLE after R
12 DEPONENT	Testifier opened, oddly, not without heart (8)	Anagram of OPENED + N(o)T
14 DOER	Editor, losing it, upset mover and shaker (4)	Anagram of EDITOR minus IT
15 MANCHESTER	Different merchants handling English household linen (10)	Anagram of MERCHANTS outside E
18 PATRONISER	Condescending person gently hit upstanding individual carrying on (10)	PAT + (RISER outside ON)
19 MIND	Listen to extracted material in audience (4)	Sounds like MINED
22 LITTORAL	Large trail to redeveloped strip of coastal land (8)	L + anagram of TRAIL TO
24 SQUEAK	Converted Quakers with no right to whine (6)	Anagram of QUAKERS minus R
26 GALVANISED IRON	Vehicle is covered by a lodger in moulded tin (10,4)	(VAN + IS) inside anagram of A LODGER IN
27 COPILOT	AI agent and officer linked to one group (7)	COP + I + LOT
28 RATIFY	Sign please, with no initial (6)	(g)RATIFY

Down	Clue	Explanation
2 ALIGNMENT	Latin men arranged holding grand evening (9)	Anagram of LATIN MEN outside G
3 TACKLE	Deal with creek detailed in report (6)	CK inside TALE
4 SHUT	Front of secure shelter is closed (4)	(S)ecure + HUT
5 RETRENCHED	Traffic stopper, outside new centre (hospital), should be dismissed (10)	RED outside (anagram of CENTRE + H)
6 CONDONED	Prisoner, finished with fraud finally, is forgiven (8)	CON + DONE + frau(D)
7 SINGE	Slightly burn grass with butt of cigarette? (5)	SING + cigarett(E)
8 SHELTER	Female left territory's asylum (7)	SHE + L + TER
10 ARID	Dry and bitter but not cold (4)	ACRID minus C
13 CAPITALIST	Tycoon set a limit on a schedule at the end of it (10)	CAP + [(A + LIST) after IT]
16 TAILED OFF	Man of means, internally troubled, gradually declined (6,3)	AILED inside TOFF
17 MONORAIL	Blast following re-building of moon transporter (8)	RAIL after anagram of MOON
18 PELAGIC	Oceanic wind picked up in picture (7)	GALE reversed inside PIC
20 DUKE	Nobleman is outstanding around king (4)	DUE outside K
21 SQUIRT	Short person, a woman's escort, not finishing on time (6)	SQUIR(e) + T
23 TULIP	Bulbous flower one left in place upside-down (5)	[(I +L) inside PUT] reversed
25 FEAR	Contents of safe - a real concern (4)	saFE A Real