



BRITISH COUNCIL, HSBC HOST CHILDREN AT KIDS READ EVENT

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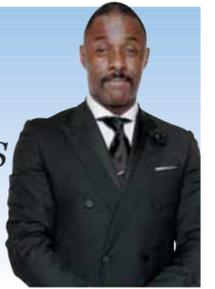
RUSSIANS BEAT CZECHS 4-1 IN EURO 2012 MATCH

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IDRIS ELBA UNBOUND AT THE HELM IN PROMETHEUS

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# Qatar Tribune

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First with the news and what's behind it

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QR 2

## Coastal Promenade – Art in the time of social change

**C**OASTAL Promenade, an exhibition of photographs by **Camille Zakharia**, ended on Saturday at Katara. The award-winning visual artist was born in Lebanon and has lived in a list of countries including the United States, Canada, Greece, Turkey and Bahrain. **Qatar Tribune's Ramy Salama** caught up with Zakharia on a recent visit to Qatar, to talk to him about the exhibition, and his career thus far. Excerpts:

**Q: Tell us a little about 'Coastal Promenade'**

**A:** Coastal Promenade was a commission for the Bahrain Ministry of Culture, and they wanted something that accurately described the coastline at a time of change. I went on a tour of the coastline, and 'Coastal Promenade' is a result of that tour. I was interested in depicting the pulse of the seashore at that time and I tried to give a genuine and honest portrayal of the coastline.

The space is very interesting, and I'm proud of exhibiting at Katara. I talked with the management at Katara, about the possibility of a workshop here later in the year. I hope it will materialise.

**Is this your first time in Qatar?**

This is actually the third project I've done here. The first one was in 2006, I showed the Elusive Homelands exhibition at Virginia Commonwealth University Qatar, which was a fantastic exhibition space.



Camille Zakharia, and (right) one of his photographs.

My second exhibition here, in 2010, was organised by the British Council and entitled 'My father's house'. It was held at the Souq Waqif



art centre, and I did a workshop in conjunction with the exhibition.

**Describe your personal**

**and creative journey**

I left Lebanon in 1985, and I've lived in a few places since my departure. At present, I'm living in Bahrain.

Some highlights of my career include a show at the Victoria and Albert Museum in the UK. I was also short-listed for the prestigious Jameel prize in 2009. I exhibited at the Venice Biennale for Architecture in 2010, and the 'Coastal Promenade' photographic essay for the exhibition won the golden lion award for the Bahrain

Pavillion, which I was very proud to be a part of.

I exhibited at the Canadian Museum of Civilization for a major show entitled 'The Lands Within Me' back in 2002, which featured works by 26 Canadian artists of Arab origin. I showed my work as well at the Musee du quai Branly in Paris, last summer. I was one of the artists selected for 'Photoquai 2011', a biennial exhibition of photography from around the world. I have also exhibited at different smaller art spaces and galleries.

<b>DOW JONES</b>	12,476	<b>QE</b>	8,316
	+15 PTS		-26 PTS
<b>SENSEX</b>	16,718	<b>CURRENCY</b>	
	+69 PTS	Indian Rupee	QR 15.24
		Philippine Peso	QR 11.88
<b>WEATHER</b>	HOT AND HAZY		
	HIGH: 43°C   LOW: 31°C		

### QUEEN OF CLAY COURT

## Sharapova completes Grand Slam in Paris

AP  
PARIS

THE 188-centimeter Maria Sharapova won the French Open on Saturday, defeating her tiny Italian opponent, Sara Errani, 6-3, 6-2 in the final at Roland Garros to complete the career Grand Slam.

"I believe in my game," Sharapova said. "I think that's one of the reasons I'm sitting here with my fourth one and winning Roland Garros, because I always believed I could be a better player."

Second-seeded Sharapova, who was guaranteed of moving to No. 1 in the rankings regardless of the result, jumped to a quick 4-0 lead against the 21st-seeded Errani, who was in her first Grand Slam final.

But Errani battled back on a cool, blustery day in Paris, turning what had the makings of a blowout into an 89-minute endurance contest, filled with long rallies that forced Sharapova to find another gear. Eventually, Sharapova's bigger serve and bigger groundstrokes wore down Errani, who is 163 centimeters tall.

"She won many points with her serve or in the first two or three shots," Errani said. "It was difficult. I couldn't play long points like I wanted to play."

When Errani netted a short backhand on the third match point, Sharapova dropped gingerly to the clay to start the celebra-



Maria Sharapova of Russia celebrates her win against Sara Errani of Italy in the final of the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros stadium, in Paris, on Saturday. (AP)

tion, then reached back and looked heavenward – a long, hard road back to the top finally capped with the only major title that had eluded her.

Sharapova won the trophy at Roland Garros about three years after dropping as low as 126th in the rankings after shoulder surgery that threatened her career. She rededicated herself to the game and made a special effort to improve on red clay, the surface on which she moved to 16-0 this year.

She did it knowing it wasn't really necessary. She's a millionaire many times over, her endorsement cachet full – as comfortable on the red carpet as she now is on the red clay.

"I've had so many outs and I could've said I don't need this," she said. "I could've said, 'I've got the money, I've got the fame, I've got the career victories and Grand Slams.' But when your love for the game is bigger than those things, that's when you continue to get up."

She added this year's French Open title to championships at Wimbledon in 2004, the US Open in 2006 and the Australian Open in 2008 to become only the 10th woman to win all four major tournaments, joining players such as Chris Evert, Martina Navratilova, Serena Williams and Billie Jean King.

SEE ALSO PAGE 32 ▶

## 40 killed in Syria; Russia for peace conference

DPA  
BEIRUT

RUSSIA expressed concerns on Saturday about ongoing violence in Syria, but reiterated it will not approve a military intervention. Meanwhile, violence continued to grip most cities in the country, claiming the lives of more than 40, activists said.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said the fighting must stop in Syria and that he wants an international peace conference with Iran involved. The meeting aims at ending differences and finding a way to implement a peace plan by UN-Arab League envoy Kofi Annan, he said.

"We see no alternative to the (Annan) plan," says Lavrov in Moscow, adding that his country would only back a plan removing President Bashar al Assad from office if that was the will of the Syrian people.

"We will not sanction the use of force at the United Nations Security Council," Lavrov said during a briefing on Russia's proposal for an international conference on Syria.

Russia, Syria's main ally in the region, has already, alongside China, blocked two resolutions condemning al-Assad for his crackdown on pro-democracy protests that have been ongoing since March 2011.

SEE ALSO PAGES 2 & 13 ▶

### Newsline

#### QA begins flights to Baghdad

QATAR Airways has expanded passenger services to Iraq with the launch of its second destination in the country – to the capital Baghdad. It now operates four-flights-a-week non-stop on the Baghdad route. Cargo traffic bound for Iraq will see a boost when Qatar Airways launches a dedicated weekly freighter service to Erbil, effective from July 5. (PG 17)

#### Yemen clashes leave 11 dead

AI QAEDA militants have killed two soldiers in Yemen's Abyan province, prompting troops to shell jihadist positions and kill nine extremists, military and local sources said on Saturday. Troops responded to a late Friday assault by shelling Al Qaeda positions on Jaar outskirts killing "several militants," an official said. A source in Jaar confirmed the shelling saying "we have buried nine Al Qaeda militants in the town's cemetery," adding that five other jihadists were also wounded. (PG 16)

#### Six killed in Libyan town

AT least six people were killed on Saturday in clashes between former militiamen and tribal fighters in a remote Libyan town, local and regional media reported. A leader of the Tabu tribe in the south-eastern town of Kufra accused the former militiamen, now part of the Libyan army, of shelling his tribe's district, reported the Dubai-based broadcaster Al-Arabiya. (DPA)

#### Pakistan rebuffs Panetta

PAKISTAN on Saturday branded US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta's remarks on insurgent safe havens in the country as "misplaced and unhelpful". Panetta warned Pakistan on Thursday that the US was running out of patience over Islamabad's refusal to do more to eliminate hiding places for insurgents, who attack US troops fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan. (PG 10)

## Global outlook to be gloomier than OECD forecast: QNB

TRIBUNE NEWS NETWORK  
DOHA

THE latest forecasts from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) see global growth easing to 3.4 percent in 2012. This is down by one percentage point on its forecast a year ago, and similar to the IMF's April forecast, said a QNB press release on Saturday. According to the release, QNB

Group noted that risks of a euro-zone breakup and gloomy new global economic data point to an even worse outcome than the OECD forecasts.

The OECD, a grouping of 34 of the most developed countries—including the US, Japan and most of the EU—released its latest twice-yearly economic outlook on May 22.

The OECD forecast outlines a three-track global economy. It

**The OECD sees a mild recession in the eurozone, weak growth in most other OECD countries, led by the US**

sees a mild recession in the eurozone (contracting by 0.1 percent in 2012), weak growth around the 2 percent mark in most other OECD countries, led by the US, and about double that perform-

ance on average in emerging economies.

A key reason for the differing performance between the eurozone and the US is that, while both are undergoing fiscal austerity, there has been substantial private sector deleveraging in the US since 2008, enabling a pickup in private consumption, whereas in Europe there has been stagnation on both fronts. This is because the legal and cultural structures in the

US are designed to enable more rapid corrections, draining the poison of the financial and housing crisis, however painfully, and then moving on, the report said.

The outlook assumes a scenario in which the eurozone and the global economy broadly muddle along without a serious crisis. In particular, it assumes that there are no "destabilising

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16 ▶▶

# Politics tainting trial of Iraqi V-P, say critics

## Syrian army kills 26 civilians

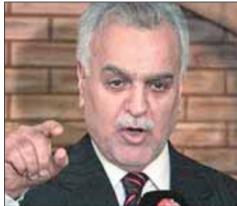
AP  
BAGHDAD

IRAQ'S first major trial dealing with the country's savage Sunni-Shiite sectarian killings is tainted by politics, critics say an ominous sign for those hoping for justice for tens of thousands of victims of street executions, bombings and kidnappings.

The defendant, Vice-President Tariq al Hashemi, says charges that he ran Sunni death squads are part of a political vendetta by Prime Minister Nouri al Maliki, a Shiite. Al Hashemi's nine-member legal team walked out in protest in the second court session late last month, citing judicial bias. And the prosecution's case relies heavily on the testimony of co-defendants, that the defence claimed was coerced, pointing to one who died in custody.

More broadly, regardless of the merits of the case against al Hashemi "the highest-ranking Sunni in Iraq's leadership, the Shiite-dominated government, has shown no sign of trying to prosecute those behind Shiite militias behind slayings of Sunnis. Several of those militias were linked to Shiite political parties that are now crucial backers of al Maliki's government.

Government spokesman Ali al Dabbagh denied any bias in charging al Hashemi or that he was singled out, saying the case was strictly a legal matter. "Courts look into the crime itself, not the sectarian background" of the suspect, he said.



Vice-President Tariq al Hashemi

However, al Maliki himself has acknowledged that politics played a role in the timing of the charges against al Hashemi. The prime minister has said he was aware of incriminating evidence against the vice president three years ago, but didn't press the case then "for the sake of the political process."

Prosecutors charged al Maliki's often irksome rival only in December, a day after US troops left Iraq, effectively ending the direct influence in Baghdad of the US, which had pressured Sunnis and Shiites to get along.

Al-Hashemi fled before he could be arrested, first to Kurdish-run northern Iraq where he was out of Baghdad's reach, then abroad. Iraq remains paralyzed by the sectarian power struggles even if violence has dropped off since the worst bloodshed of 2006 and 2007.

Some say that even if there was a political will to go after the major perpetrators, regardless of sect, Iraq doesn't have the tools for such an enormous task, particularly an independent judiciary not intimidated by politicians or the threat of violence.

AFP  
DAMASCUS

THE Syrian army killed at least 26 civilians on Saturday, a watchdog said, as a global outcry mounted over yet another massacre in the country, but with Russia stressing that it will block any UN use of force against its ally.

Amid repeated hints in recent weeks about possible military intervention by foreign powers, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov of veto-wielding power Russia said "we will not sanction the use of force at the UN Security Council."

He spoke as worldwide anger grew over the crackdown by Syrian President Bashar al Assad's regime on a revolt in which more than 13,500 people, mostly civilians, have been killed since March 2011.

Nine women and three children were among 17 people killed in a pre-dawn bombardment of a residential neighbourhood in the southern city of Daraa, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. Dozens more were wounded, some of them seriously, in the city which was the birthplace of the uprising against Assad's rule, the British-based watchdog said.

In nearby Jordan, hundreds of Syrian refugees demonstrated in the border town of Ramtha to protest against the deaths in Daraa, Jordan's official Petra news agency reported. They marched to the Omari mosque in Ramtha which is home to around 20,000 refugees, most from Daraa province, Petra said.

Meanwhile, UN observers



Demonstrators protest against Syria's President Bashar al Assad after Friday prayers, in Dael, near Deraa, on Friday. (REUTERS)

who visited the village of Al-Kubeir, where at least 55 people were killed earlier this week, said they saw blood on the walls and "a

**In nearby Jordan, hundreds of Syrian refugees demonstrated in the border town of Ramtha to protest against the deaths in Daraa, Jordan's official Petra news agency reported.**

strong stench of burnt flesh."

The Al Kubeir incident prompted Western governments to launch a push for tough new sanctions against Damascus. Russia, along

with China, has already vetoed two Security Council resolutions against Assad.

Meanwhile, in central Syria, government forces on Saturday pounded several rebel neighbourhoods of Homs city with artillery and mortars, killing six civilians, the Observatory said.

It said the army killed at least 26 civilians nationwide, including 17 in the flashpoint southern city of Daraa, while three soldiers died in clashes in northern Syria.

Diplomats in New York said Britain, France and the United States would quickly draw up a Security Council resolution proposing sanctions against Syria following a grim report from the mon-

itors on their visit to Al Kubeir following Wednesday's assault.

"We will move fast to press for a resolution," one UN diplomat said. More than 20 unarmed UN observers were allowed into Al Kubeir on Friday, a day after monitors were shot at and prevented from entering the village.

"Inside some of the houses, blood was visible across the walls and floors. Fire was still burning outside houses and there was a strong stench of burnt flesh," UN spokesman Martin Nesirky said in New York. At least 55 people were killed, according to the Syrian Observatory. UN officials were unable to confirm the toll, but made clear they

believe government forces were behind the attack on the mainly Sunni Muslim village surrounded by an Alawite population loyal to Assad. Damascus denied responsibility and blamed foreign-backed 'terrorists,' as it has done repeatedly in the past.

"Armoured vehicle tracks were visible in the vicinity. Some homes were damaged by rockets from armoured vehicles, grenades and a range of calibre weapons," Nesirky said.

UN chief Ban Ki-moon told the Security Council that as per preliminary evidence, troops had surrounded Al Kubeir and militia entered the village and killed civilians with "barbarity."

## Lebanese pilgrims' kidnappers define conditions for release

AFP  
DUBAI

REBELS holding Lebanese Shiite pilgrims abducted last month in Syria said they will free them when a "civil state" sees the day in Syria but also left the door open to negotiations for their release, Al Jazeera television reported on Saturday.

"The guests will be handed over to the civil Syrian state after their case is reviewed by the new democratic parliament," the abductors said in a statement that accompanied a video aired on the Qatar-based channel.

But the kidnappers, who identified themselves in the statement as "all of Syria's rebels," left open the possibility of negotiating the release of the Lebanese men they are holding.

"But given current circumstances,

handing them over to neighbouring countries could be discussed," they said in the statement.

On June 1 Al-Jazeera quoted a previously unknown armed group, the "Syrian Revolutionaries - Aleppo Province", as saying they were holding the Lebanese pilgrims who went missing inside Syria on May 22.

In both videos aired by Al-Jazeera the abductors have demanded an apology from Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah.

His Shiite militant group, which is the leading force in the current ruling coalition in Beirut, has close relations with the regime of Syrian President Bashar al Assad and its Iranian ally.

In the latest video, the abductors reiterated that their "11 Lebanese

guests are well and in good health."

The tape also shows the men apparently in good health, sitting on low-rising couches and each one identifies himself saying he is "well."

One of the pilgrims is heard giving the date as being "June 5 or 6."

On June 5, their wives and daughters identified two of the kidnappers after seeing them in a television report about the mainstream rebel Free Syrian Army on state television.

The rebel army has denied any involvement in the kidnapping which took in northern Syria as the pilgrims were returning home to Lebanon by bus after a pilgrimage to Shiite holy sites in Iran.

The kidnappers had released the women and elderly men and kept 11 men in their custody.

## ElBaradei condemns assault on Egyptian women protesters

DPA  
CAIRO

EGYPTIAN dissident and Nobel Laureate Mohamed ElBaradei condemned on Saturday an alleged assault on female protesters in Cairo's Tahrir Square, the epicentre of the 2011 revolt against then-president Hosny Mubarak.

"To Egypt's women: I apologise to you in the name of every Egyptian aware of what religion, values and ethics mean," ElBaradei wrote on Twitter. Women demonstrating against sexual harassment were assaulted by unknown people in Tahrir Square on Friday, local media reported. Incidents of assaults on female protesters in the square have recently increased, say activists.

They say the attackers are seeking to discourage women from taking part in the frequent rallies there. Security



Ex-IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei

forces rarely appear in the square, for fear of clash with the anti-government demonstrators. Seventeen local rights groups called this week for the creation of what they called "safe corridors" for female protesters, to protect them from assault.

Meanwhile, in a separate development, Egypt's head of parliament

says that no political group will be able to force its opinion on a 100-member panel that will be selected on Tuesday to write the country's new constitution.

Saad el Katatni, who is also a member of parliament's most powerful party, the Muslim Brotherhood, said on Saturday.

He was trying to reassure liberals who walked out during the first attempt at creating the panel. The Islamist-dominated parliament had initially heavily packed the panel with Brotherhood members and ultraconservative lawmakers.

But a breakthrough came this week when the country's ruling military generals and 22 political parties agreed that Islamists will only take half of the panel's seats and that the rest would go to legal experts and representatives of unions, ministries and the Coptic Church.

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## Serbia minister to replace Qatar's Nasser as UNGA head

AP  
NEW YORK

SERBIA's foreign minister was elected president of the UN General Assembly's next session on Friday, a sign of his country's rehabilitation on the world stage after the Balkan wars of the 1990s.

Vuk Jeremic, the first Serb to hold a top UN post, defeated Lithuania's UN Ambassador Dalius Cekuolis by a vote of 99-85 on the first ballot after an intense behind-the-scenes campaign. There was one abstention and several absentees in the 193-member world body.

"A painful era has now come to an end," Jeremic said. "Today our nation can proudly stand before the world again."

The one-year presidency of the General Assembly rotates among regions, and this was the first contested election since 1991. Usually, a region puts forward a single candidate, but this year Eastern Europe had two contenders.

It was not immediately clear whether Jeremic, 36, would be the youngest president of the General Assembly when he takes over from Nasser Abdulaziz al Nasser of Qatar on September 18 at the start of the 67th session. Assembly spokeswoman Nihal Saad said there has been no research done but it is believed he will be the youngest.

Unlike the more powerful 15-member Security Council, whose decisions are legally binding, the General Assembly's resolutions carry no legal force, but it is the world's primary forum for debate. It adopts new treaties, controls the UN budget and decides how much each nation should contribute.

Jeremic told diplomats he viewed his election primarily as a tribute to the people of Serbia.

"We are a small developing country that belongs to no military alliance or political union," Jeremic said. "It is therefore truly honoring to have received the confidence of so many nations from all over the world to preside over the main deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations."

Looking back at the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, he said the "ferocious internal strife, the ensuing devastation and fratricide left deep wounds in their wake."

Jeremic said Serbia, once the largest of Yugoslavia's republics which became a UN member in 2000, has in the past few years offered "a hand of friendship and reconciliation" to its neighbours.

Jeremic, who has been foreign minister for the past five years, has been a frequent visitor to the United Nations, appearing before the UN Security Council on numerous occasions when it has taken up Kosovo.

# Spain likely to seek bank bailout this weekend

AP  
MADRID

SPAIN could ask for a rescue of its troubled banks this weekend when European finance ministers hold an emergency conference call on Saturday to discuss its hurting lending sector, a move that would turn the nation into the fourth from the 17-nation eurozone to seek outside help since the continent's financial crisis erupted two years ago.

The ministers will discuss a potential bailout for Spain as pressure mounted on the country to prop up the banks hurt by toxic assets after a property boom went bust.

A report from the International Monetary fund estimated Spanish banks need a recapitalisation injection of at least €40 billion (\$50 billion) following a stress test it performed on the country's financial sector. That report came out early Saturday, three days ahead of schedule, underscoring the urgency of the situation.

Spain as of early Saturday afternoon had not asked for help, "but we want to prepare if the call comes," said Guy Schuller, a spokesman for Luxembourg Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker, who chairs the meetings of eurozone finance ministers. Spanish officials neither confirmed nor denied a request for a bailout was imminent.

A phone call among senior officials on Saturday morning meant to prepare the finance



A man looks for food in a garbage bin at Madrid's main food market, on Saturday. (AFP)

ministers' call ended without a formal request from Spain, an EU official said. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to release the information.

Spain's Development Minister, Ana Pastor, did not tell reporters on Saturday whether the country would ask for a bailout but said: "What we're working on at the moment is the recapitalisation of the financial entities that need it, nothing else."

Spanish officials have taken pains to underscore that even if Spain were to seek a rescue,

it should not be compared to those of Greece, Ireland and Portugal, which needed help to prop up public finances and in exchange were forced into economic supervision by the eurozone and the IMF.

"The Spanish government has to do what is necessary to support, strengthen and stabilise our financial system," said Maria Dolores Cospedal, leader of Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy's Popular Party.

News of the call came just one day after Spanish Deputy Prime Minister Soraya Saenz de Santamaria said the gov-

ernment would wait for the results of three reports, including the IMF one and two from independent auditors due no later than June 21, before acting.

But pressure was mounting on Spain to take action.

In an interview published Saturday, the head of Germany's central bank, Jens Weidmann, called on Spain to tap Europe's bailout fund, the EFSF, to prop up its banks.

"If Spain is overwhelmed by the financing need, it should use the instruments created for that case," he was quoted as telling Germany's Welt am

Sonntag paper. "The motto cannot be to avoid using the rescue fund at all costs."

Juncker has also said the situation is coming to a head.

"The solution will have to be found quickly," he told German public radio station Deutschlandradio.

Spain was hit Thursday with a downgrade of its credit rating to just two notches above junk by credit rating agency Fitch, which estimated Spanish banks may need as much as €100 billion (\$124.7 billion). Then on Friday, Moody's Investor Services warned it could downgrade Spain and other countries in the eurozone.

Moody's said Spain's banking problem is largely confined to that country and not likely to spill over to other eurozone nations, with the exception of Italy - where the European Central Bank has already stepped in to buy government bonds as a way to help lower the country's borrowing costs.

Spain has been criticised for being too slow to set out a roadmap to resolve its problem. European business leaders and analysts have stressed that Spain must find a solution quickly so that it is not caught up in any market turmoil sparked by the Greek elections on June 17. There are concerns that anti-bailout left-wing party Syriza could become the largest party in the Greek parliament, putting the country's membership in the eurozone at risk.

## Displaying disconnect and confusion

DPA  
KASSEL (GERMANY)

"WHAT is it?" might be the motto of this year's Documenta, the 100-day exhibition in Kassel, Germany which gathers in a single curator's personal take on the best of today's cutting-edge contemporary art.

A shimmering black-and-white photograph shows a crowd outside a ruined royal palace near the Afghan capital Kabul in deep snow.

It takes a while to realise

that the 17-metre-wide image is an Afghan carpet as you have never seen one before.

The tapestry by Goshka Macuga, hung in a sky-lighted rotunda at the Fridericianum Museum, typifies some of the trends at Documenta: lots of fabric art, frequent allusions to Kabul and realisations that things are not always what they seem at first glance.

That, it seems, is what the show's artistic director, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, was aiming for when she chose nearly 300 global artists and intellectuals to exhibit work at the prestigious show, which is only held every five years.

She was "aiming for dislocation and the creation of different and partial perspectives," she told hundreds of reporters at a news conference in advance of Saturday's



Documenta Artistic Director Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev

grand opening. The show runs until September 16.

When a reporter posed a question by diplomatically beginning: "I'm confused about ...," Christov-Bakargiev snappishly interrupted, "I think confusion is a very healthy position to be in."

The arts media, which often carps and gripes, has mostly given Christov-Bakargiev high marks since media previews began on Wednesday for creating a coherent show that is in touch with what artists do in the digital age: cope with a whirl of confusing impressions.

Beijing artist Yan Lei, on his second outing to Documenta, filled a 10 by 10 metre room with 360 images which caught his wandering attention while surfing the internet for a year.

During the show, one colour image per day will be deleted by spraying it with car paint.

In the room, which resembles a poster shop, Yan Lei, said he had been creating it since March 2011 when he was invited back to Kassel. He described the work, entitled Limited Art Project, as a performance.

Another installation, by Ida Applebroog, is also set to gradually deplete itself. The room contains more than 40 transport pallets of papers printed with scrawled messages. Signs announce, "Free. Take one."

It takes a while for the disoriented visitor to realize that these are not desirable free gifts: the papers contain remarks no one likes to hear. A sample posted on the wall: "Teddy, sit up. I want a divorce."

Art selected for Documenta appears contemporary, but that does not mean all the artists are living.

A room of tapestries by the late Hannah Ryggen, a communist in Norway, were partly woven under Nazi occupation during the Second World War. She depicted soldiers, headless bodies and other horrors.



Serbian foreign minister Vuk Jeremic

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Date & Time of Registration and Issue	From 10 June 2012 to 14 June 2012 8.00 am to 2.00 pm
Place of Registration and Issue	Dolphin Tower, West Bay, Doha 6th Floor, office # 620.

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- Provide a copy of appropriate Commercial Registration.
- Provide an original letter clearly authorizing the representative to register and collect the document on behalf of the Tenderer and produce an identity card for verification.

COMPANIES WHO HAVE PAID THE NON-REFUNDABLE REGISTRATION FEE BUT FAILED TO FORMALLY REGISTER AT THE DATE AND TIME STATED ABOVE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED AS ACCEPTABLE TENDERER.

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No.	Tender Ref. No.	Description	Bank Guarantee (Qrs.)	Fee Non Refundable (Qrs.)	Bid Closing Date & Time
1	AJNP/Tender/004/2012	RENTING OF GUEST HOUSE FOR AJN	90,000/-	1,000/-	24/06/2012 (13.00 Hrs.)

- Tender documents can be collected from Support Services Building, Purchasing & Contracts Department, TV R/A Area, beside Al Yarmuk Petrol Station by submitting an authorization letter showing the tender number and ID number of collecting person under the company letterhead.
- Tender documents are to be collected from 10/06/2012 to 13/06/2012, between 7:00 AM to 1:00 PM.
- The **technical offer** must be submitted with a bank guarantee issued by a Qatari Bank or by a bank operating in Qatar and should be valid for a period of 120 days from bid closing date.
- The offer must be valid for a period of 90 days from the Bid Closing Date.
- The Technical and Financial offers shall be submitted in two separate sealed envelopes. Both envelopes must be enclosed in a third sealed envelope which shall bear the tender number, subject and closing date. The envelope must be submitted to the Office of Secretary of General Tender Committees and recorded in the submission form to be inserted into the Tender Box.
- The last date for accepting the Tender offers shall be 1:00 PM of the bid closing date and any offer submitted after this date will not be accepted.
- For more information, please call 44897131

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# Prince Philip leaves hospital after five days

AFP  
LONDON

BRITAIN'S Prince Philip, the husband of Queen Elizabeth II, left hospital on Saturday after five days of treatment for a bladder infection that sparked concerns for the 90-year-old's health. The prince shook hands with staff and smiled broadly as he walked out of King Edward VII Hospital in central London just in time to celebrate his 91st birthday on Sunday.

Asked if he was feeling better, the prince replied: "Well, I wouldn't be coming out if I wasn't." Britain's longest-serving consort was taken to the hospital on Monday with a bladder infection in the midst of huge celebrations for the queen's diamond jubilee, less than six months after treatment for a blocked coronary artery.

Wearing a sports jacket and pink patterned tie, Prince Philip walked slowly from the hospital Saturday to be whisked away in a Land Rover.

He appeared fragile as he entered the vehicle, grimacing before recovering to smile and wave at well-wishers.

The prince was to travel to

Windsor Castle near London, the BBC reported, and will mark his birthday privately. The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery will fire a 41-gun salute in London's Hyde Park Monday for the occasion.

But it was not yet known if the prince would be able to carry out his hectic schedule of royal engagements in the coming week, a spokesman said.

Using the prince's formal title, the spokesman for Buckingham Palace said: "The Duke of Edinburgh was released from hospital this morning. "He continues to make a good recovery and will continue his convalescence at home, and will be spending it privately."

His illness forced him to miss the final two days of celebrations for 86-year-old Queen Elizabeth's 60 years on the throne, including a spectacular pop concert outside Buckingham Palace on Monday.

Crowds at the concert cheered and shouted "Philip! Philip!" after heir to the throne Prince Charles suggested, "If we shout loud enough, he might just hear us in hospital."

He also missed an appearance on the balcony of

Buckingham Palace on Monday, at which more crowds of revellers cheered the queen and fellow royals as the monarchy enjoys its highest popularity in decades.

**Asked if he was feeling better, the prince replied: "Well, I wouldn't be coming out if I wasn't."**

Prince Philip had been at the Queen's side for a huge jubilee river pageant last Sunday, travelling with her on a sumptuous red and gold royal barge down the Thames in London accompanied by a flotilla of 1,000 boats.

The couple's granddaughter Princess Eugenie, 22, told Britain's Sky news in an interview broadcast Saturday, "They are the most incredibly supportive couple to each other." On the jubilee, she added: "Grandpa was unfortunately taken ill and for Granny to come and do that alone was probably quite testing."

"And I think he is her rock, really, and she is his."

Philip suffered chest pains in the Christmas break and underwent a medical procedure for his blocked coronary

artery. His health has generally been good but he said before his 90th birthday he would scale down his engagements.

If well enough, Philip is to give a garden party with the queen at Sandringham House in Norfolk, eastern England, on Tuesday and both are scheduled to attend a jubilee picnic in nearby Lincolnshire on Wednesday.

More events follow in the week for the royal couple and Philip is also to chair a conference for senior regimental colonels and hold a dinner at Buckingham Palace on Friday.

Prince Philip has been a constant by his wife's side throughout her 60 years as queen, having given up a promising naval career to be a full-time consort when she acceded to the throne in 1952. He once admitted the curtailment of his career was "disappointing", but said that "being married to the queen, it seemed to me that my first duty was to serve her in the best way I could".

He shares her sense of duty and tradition but not always her diplomatic skills. He is known for off-the-cuff japes that have famously strayed into the politically incorrect.

Prince Philippos of Greece



Prince Philip comes out of the King Edward VII hospital, in London, on Saturday. (EPA)

and Denmark was born on a kitchen table on Corfu on June 10, 1921, the only son of prince Andrew of Greece and princess Alice of Battenberg.

He was formally introduced

to princess Elizabeth in 1939, but it was not until July 1947 that their engagement was announced. They married on November 20 at Westminster Abbey, with Philip giving up

his Greek and Danish titles. Besides their four children, Charles, Anne, Andrew and Edward, the royal couple have eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

## Six get jail for running online school of fraud

AFP  
LONDON

SIX men have been handed jail sentences in Britain for running a website that earned millions of pounds by selling fake documents and coaching fraudsters in how to conduct successful scams.

Two masterminds ran the site from villas in Alicante in Spain while associates in Britain created fake documents including bank statements, paylips, driving licences and bills, police said after Friday's judgement.

The site's 11,000 clients could buy a full credit profile — often with an identity stolen from an unsuspecting member of the public — including a postal address, for £5,500.

Some of the site's "students in crime" spent more than £20,000 on false documents from a "well-practised production line", police said, but resulting frauds in some cases netted over £1 million.

Police said the men behind the website, called Confidential Access, would regularly demand a cut of the proceeds once a successful fraud was launched — and threaten to ruin the fake credit profile if the customer refused.

Customers could also buy web coaching and access to online forums with handy tips and advice, with the most exclusive forum, for VIP criminals only, known as "The Black Marketplace".

Users of the site could also advance through different "trust levels" according to their engagement with the site and how much money they had spent. They were graded using nautical terms which rose from "Skylark" through "Shore Patrol" to "Ship's Surgeon", police said.

The site was billed initially as selling novelty documents for people to impress their friends, but police were unconvinced by this explanation.

They seized the group's servers in Hong Kong and cracked the encryption codes only to find that Confidential Access had started up again using servers in the Netherlands, which in turn were seized. "This was a sophisticated operation which has netted millions of pounds over the years," Detective Inspector Tim Dowdeswell of Scotland Yard said in a statement.

## THE KING'S TROOP

The King's Troop during the Colonel's Review rehearsal in preparation for Trooping The Colour on June 16 to mark Queen Elizabeth II official birthday, at the Mall, in London, on Saturday. (AP)



## London bus drivers threaten strike

AFP  
LONDON

THOUSANDS of London bus crews have voted to strike unless they are paid extra for working over the Olympics, the spokesman of Unite union said on Saturday, raising the prospect of a walkout during the Games.

Unite had previously warned that "strike action could take place up to and during the Olympic Games", which last from July 27 to August 12.

More than 8,000 workers on the famous red buses took part in the vote and backed industrial action by more than nine to one. Unite represents about 20,000 bus workers in the capital in total.

The union, Britain's biggest, wants a bonus of £500 (\$774, 618 euros) per head for Games duty from 21 private bus companies, after staff on the London Underground won payments of £850 each for the expected heavier workload.

It must now decide

whether to name strike dates following the vote. Unite says at least 800,000 extra passengers are predicted to use London's buses during the Olympics.

"Our members are only asking for an extra £17 a day, which will just about buy you a pint of beer and a portion of fish and chips at the Olympics," said regional officer Peter Kavanagh.

"Our members want the Games to be a success but their patience has run out."

Transport for London, the public body that oversees the complex transport network for the capital's population of more than seven million, said pay was a matter for the private companies involved.

Leon Daniels, head of surface transport, said 70 percent of London bus drivers had not joined the Unite vote for strike action, adding that this was probably because "70 percent of London's local bus services are not affected by the Olympic Games".

He labelled the strike plan "unnecessary" and accused Unite of seeking to exploit



One of the double-decker buses bought specially for Olympics, in London, on Saturday. (AP)

the Games. During the Olympics, London's public transport network must deal

with an extra three million daily journeys, as 10,500 athletes, 9,000 officials,

20,000 journalists and millions of spectators descend on 13 sporting sites.

## 19th century vampire-slaying kit to be auctioned

AFP  
LONDON

WORRIED about attacks from the undead? The answer could be at hand with a 19th-century vampire-slaying kit, "almost complete and in good condition", about to be put up for auction in Britain.

The kit contains a mallet and stakes — presumably for hammering into the bloodsucker's heart — plus pistol, steel bullet mould, Rosary beads, an 1857 Anglican prayer book and a crucifix, Tennants Auctioneers said in a statement.

Housed in a mahogany box, the kit also contains glass bottles containing holy water, holy earth, and garlic paste for warding off vampires, the BBC reported. The kit will go under the hammer in North Yorkshire on June 22, close to where Bram Stoker wrote his classic vampire novel *Dracula*, published in 1897. It has already attracted international interest. The box was left to a local woman in her uncle's will, the BBC said. "It's probably a novelty thing. It's playing to people's superstitions," Oonagh Drage, of the auctioneers, told the broadcaster.

The kit also contains a handwritten extract from the Bible, quoting Luke 19:27, the BBC said. The quotation reads: "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me."

Incidentally, a British primary school is virtually a league of nations as the students speak an astonishing 31 different languages, including Bengali, Sylheti, Tamil, Punjabi, Urdu and Gujarati besides English.

The 414 students at the English Martyrs' Catholic School in Birmingham speak an incredible 31 languages between them, the *Daily Mail* reported. In order to deal with the range of languages spoken, teachers are trained to teach English as an additional language. The school uses a 'buddy' system where new students are paired with one who has the same mother tongue and can help them to start. Other languages spoken are Afrikaans, Arabic, Czech, Dutch, Gaelic, Hindko, Jamaican Patois, Kachi, Lingala, Mirpuri, Nepalese, Pashto, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Somali, Spanish, Sudanese, Swiss French and Yoruba.



President Benigno Aquino III (left) and US President Barack Obama at the White House, in Washington, on Friday. (EPA)

## Obama backs Manila on sea freedom

AFP  
WASHINGTON

THE UNITED STATES and the Philippines on Friday called for freedom of navigation in the tense South China Sea as the White House offered a robust show of support for President Benigno Aquino III.

President Barack Obama welcomed Aquino to the White House in the latest high-profile gesture to put a focus on US ties to Asia, where a number of countries are embroiled in territorial conflicts with a rising China.

Addressing reporters next to Aquino in the Oval Office, Obama said the two leaders spoke about "trying to make sure that we have a strong set of international norms and rules governing maritime disputes in the region."

In a joint statement released afterward, the two leaders "underscored the importance of the principles of ensuring freedom of navigation, respect for international law and unimpeded lawful commerce."

Aquino and Obama called for diplomacy to resolve territorial disputes "without coercion or the use of force."

**My meeting with President Obama has deepened and strengthened a very long relationship we have, especially as we face the challenges that are before both our countries in the current situation.**

BENIGNO AQUINO III

China claims virtually all of the South China Sea up to Southeast Asian nations' shores and tensions have soared in recent years with both the Philippines and Vietnam.

The Philippines and China recently pulled back vessels after a standoff over the Scarborough Shoal, which lies near the main Philippine island of Luzon.

Aquino's visit to the United States was closely watched in China, where some policymakers suspect — despite official US denials — that the United States is seeking to encircle the growing Asian power.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, toasting Aquino ear-

lier Friday at a luncheon in his honour, credited Aquino with defusing tensions over the rock formation.

The United States and the Philippines signed agreements to step up cooperation on science and technology and to boost the number of Peace Corps volunteers in the former US colony.

But Aquino's visit was largely symbolic, with many US policymakers believing that the son of democracy heroine Corazon Aquino has revitalised an often overlooked relationship by tackling hard issues.

Aquino recently won a major battle in his campaign against corruption with the sacking of the country's top judge. Aquino has also agreed to let more US troops rotate — but not be based — in the Philippines despite the historical baggage.

"I've always found President Aquino to be a thoughtful and very helpful partner," Obama said.

"And I think that as a consequence of the meeting today in which we discussed not only military and economic issues, but also region-

**I've always found President Aquino to be a thoughtful and very helpful partner. I'm very confident that we're going to see continued friendship and strong cooperation between our two countries.**

BARACK OBAMA

al issues — for example, trying to make sure that we have a strong set of international norms and rules governing maritime disputes in the region — that I'm very confident that we're going to see continued friendship and strong cooperation between our two countries," he said.

Aquino said his meeting with President Obama has "deepened and strengthened a very long relationship we have, especially as we face the challenges that are before both our countries in the current situation."

Clinton and Obama both voiced support for efforts by the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations to

reach a code of conduct with China on managing disputes in the South China Sea, through which half of the world's trade flows.

ASEAN and China agreed in 2002 to negotiate a code of conduct. But there has been little progress, with a rising China preferring to negotiate with each country individually instead of dealing with the unified bloc.

In the statement, Obama also pledged US support for Aquino's efforts to upgrade the notoriously antiquated Philippine military and build a 'minimum credible defence posture.'

The United States has stepped up military aid, including last year delivering a decommissioned coast guard cutter — which the Philippines rechristened the Gregario del Pilar and replaced a World War II-era vessel as its navy's biggest ship.

The Obama administration has focused on building relations in Asia. In the next week alone, the United States will separately welcome the foreign ministers of Cambodia, India, South Korea and Thailand.

## Inside Philippines/E Asia

### Communist rebels raid Philippine mining companies' offices

MANILA The Philippine military says communist rebels have raided two mining companies in the country's south, disarming guards and burning equipment.

Army Lieutenant Colonel Lyndon Paniza said on Saturday that New People's Army guerrillas swooped late Friday on the Philex Mining Co compound in Compostela Valley province. They torched two backhoes, two trucks and a drilling machine.

Paniza says hours later guerrillas raided the Milagro Mining compound in nearby Maragusan township, disarming the guards and burning three electric generators. No one was hurt in both attacks.

Last year the rebels stormed three mining companies. (AP)

### Teenage girl hurt in elephant attack in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR A teenager was injured in an attack by a herd of elephants in southern Malaysia, a news report said on Saturday.

The victim was being treated for broken bones, the *Star* newspaper said. The 19-year-old victim and her two sisters were picking vegetables on their farm near a forest when about 30 elephants charged at them. The victim tripped, while her two sisters were able to run. "When I tried to get up one of the elephants swung its trunk at me and hit my back. I fell on my face and broke my shoulder."

Suhairi Hashim, director of the Johor National Park Corporation, said visitors and people living in the vicinity were urged to take precaution because the elephants had been displaying aggressive behaviour in recent days. (DPA)



### Philippine arm of AirAsia begins flights to Malaysia

MANILA Budget carrier AirAsia's Philippine unit on Saturday began its international operations with the first of its daily flights to Malaysia, the company said.

The airline's Airbus A320 plane departed on its inaugural foreign flight from Clark airport, a sprawling former US airbase almost two hours drive from Manila, for Kuala Lumpur's low-cost terminal.

The airline, which is 60 percent owned by Filipino investors and 40 percent by Malaysia's AirAsia International Ltd, aims to tap the growing tourism market between the two countries, its chief executive Marianne Hontiveros said.

"We want to draw tourists from Malaysia to our amazing beaches and natural wonders. If we are able to draw even a fraction from Malaysia's 24.5 million tourists, this will impact on our arrival record," she said in a statement.

AirAsia Philippines also plans to begin flights to Hong Kong in July.

The airline, based in Clark, began flying in March to Philippine tourist destinations. (AFP)

## LOY KRATHONG FESTIVAL

Thai women float beautifully decorated krathongs (lotus-shaped vessels) as part of an event to mark the day of the Thai festival Loy Krathong at the Yeosu Expo, in South Korea, on Saturday. Loy Krathong is celebrated to honour and pay homage to the goddess of the water Phra Mae Khongkha. (EPA)



AGENCIES  
BANGKOK

## Thai PM attends Parliament amid high security

HIGH-LEVEL security was arranged for Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra so she could attend a parliamentary session on Friday. This is the first time she has been to the Parliament since the yellow-shirts started protesting in

front of the complex.

During her 45 minutes in Parliament, Yingluck was watched over by 10 soldiers from the Naresuan special company in addition to her regular bodyguards. Soldiers also provided extra security for House Speaker Somsak Kiatsuranont.

Yingluck's arrival was met

with cheers and applause from a group of red shirts rallying outside the Parliament building in support of the charter amendment bill.

However, the premier refused to comment on whether or not she backs the third reading of the bill, saying it was entirely up to the House Speaker.

## 58 prisoners await death row in Indonesia

AGENCIES  
DENPASAR

FIFTY EIGHT people convicted and sentenced to death in drugs cases are awaiting execution in Indonesian prisons, an official has revealed.

National Narcotics Agency chief Gories Mere said many of those on death row were engaged in last-ditch legal wrangling in a desperate attempt to avoid being killed.

"The executions have not yet been carried out, because the prisoners still seek ways to prevent the implementation by applying for pardons or judicial reviews through the Supreme Court," Mere said in Denpasar, where he was attending the Bali Arts Festival. Mere declined to reveal the nationalities of the 58 death-row inmates.

Several foreigners at Bali's Kerobokan Prison are among those on death row, including two Australians from the so-called Bali Nine group of drug smugglers, Myuran Sukumaran and Andrew Chan.

Both men have lost final appeals to the Supreme Court in Jakarta. Chan filed a plea for presidential clemency in



Former Indonesian justice minister Yusril Ihza Mahendra (right) and other Indonesian politicians during a protest to cancel the clemency of Schapelle Corby, in Jakarta, on Thursday. (EPA)

May and Sukumaran is expected to do the same later this year. If those pleas are rejected, they will have no further route to avoid execution.

Sukumaran and Chan were sentenced to death for their leading roles in an attempt in 2005 to smuggle 8.3 kilos of heroin, bound to their bodies, from Bali to Australia.

The men are hoping that President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono will show them mercy after last month granting clemency to fellow drug-running Australian Schapelle Corby when he cut her 20-

year term by five years.

Executions are carried out by firing squad in Indonesia, usually at a remote location such as a deserted beach or forest, in the early hours of the morning.

Meanwhile, Mere said that around 250 Indonesians have been jailed abroad — in China, Malaysia and European countries — for their involvement in drugs.

He said there had been an increase in the number of cases in Indonesia involving illegal drugs, especially meth smuggling and related crimes.

# US failed to consult Kabul on airstrike, says Karzai

AP  
KABUL

AFGHANISTAN'S President Hamid Karzai said on Saturday that the United States failed to consult Afghan forces when calling in an airstrike that killed 18 civilians, and warned that in the future his government will consider such actions as violating the country's pact with Washington.

Karzai's condemnation of the US operation as the country rushes to pull out its combat forces were reminders that the international exit from Afghanistan is going to be far from orderly. As more agree-

ments are signed promising Afghan sovereignty and more NATO troops are assigned the role of trainers or advisers, the international mission in the country is becoming increasingly muddled.

Presidential spokesman Aimal Faizi said that President Hamid Karzai met with investigators earlier in the day and concluded that US troops had called in Wednesday's strike without coordinating with Afghan units.

The incident occurred during a nighttime raid on militants taking cover in a village. These raids are a major irritant in Afghan President

Hamid Karzai's relationship with the international military coalition. Karzai says the raids put civilians at risk of injury or death. Military officials say such operations are key to capturing and killing Taliban leaders.

The US and Afghanistan signed an agreement in April that put the Afghan government in charge of most such 'special operations' move designed to resolve some of the longstanding tensions.

But when villagers in Logar province displayed the bodies of 18 civilians killed in a US airstrike on Wednesday, Karzai quickly called on the interna-



Hamid Karzai

tional coalition to explain itself. Faizi said that the investigators told the president that

**Karzai's condemnation of the US operation as the country rushes to pull out its combat forces were reminders that the international exit from Afghanistan is going to be far from orderly.**

Afghan forces had surrounded the house in question but that the US troops decided not to wait for them to try to flush

out the militants and called in aircraft instead. They only discovered later that there had also been women, children and old men inside.

"This airstrike was a one-sided decision, and not coordinated with Afghan security forces," Faizi said. He said that Karzai and his advisers decided after hearing the investigators' report that they would consider such actions in the future as a breach of the special operations pact.

"The continuation of uncoordinated operations and civilian casualties are against the recent decisions made between Afghanistan and the United

States," Faizi said. He said the Afghan government felt that the United States was betraying the promises it made in the night raids pact and a larger strategic partnership agreement signed afterwards.

"The expectation of the Afghan government and the Afghan people was that a new page would open between Afghanistan and the United States," Faizi said.

The US commander in Afghanistan apologised for the civilian deaths on Friday and a NATO investigation ruled that the coalition forces were responsible for the unintended deaths of civilians.

## Afghan govt sacks five officials over prison break

AFP  
KABUL

THE AFGHAN government on Saturday sacked five officials for 'negligence' after 32 prisoners, including members of the Taliban, escaped when gunmen attacked the jail.

While 18 of the prisoners have now been captured, 14 are still on the run including four members of the Taliban and 10 criminals, ministry of interior spokesman Sediq Sediqqi told AFP.

The police chief in the northern province of Sari Pul province where jail was located, the prison director, and three other prison employees have been fired and will be interrogated in Kabul, the spokesman said.

**The attack started after a large explosion blew a hole in the wall of the prison in Sari Pul. Taliban gunmen attacked the jail, sparking clashes that left three inmates dead and 28 wounded, officials said.**

"The initial investigation shows that the police chief and the director of the prison of Sari Pul have been negligent in their duties, and thus fired and summoned to Kabul," the interior ministry said in a statement.

The attack started after a large explosion blew a hole in the wall of the prison in Sari Pul, the capital of the northern province of the same name, shortly after darkness fell on Thursday.

"The explosive was taken inside the prison. We don't know how," Sediqqi said.

Taliban gunmen then attacked the jail, sparking clashes that left three inmates dead and 28 wounded, officials said. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack, saying 170 prisoners, including their district governors and commanders, escaped.

In a spectacular jailbreak in April last year, almost 500 mostly Taliban inmates made it out of a prison in southern Kandahar province.

## SUMMER SQUEEZE

It's a tight squeeze for swimmers at a public swimming pool, in Kathmandu, Nepal, on Saturday. Due to a record high temperature, public swimming pools are packed to capacity in Kathmandu. The country recorded 44 degrees Celsius in eastern Nepal and 34 degrees in the capital of Kathmandu. (EPA)



## Four French NATO soldiers killed in Afghanistan

DPA  
KABUL

FOUR French NATO soldiers were killed in an insurgent suicide attack in eastern Afghanistan on Saturday, the French and Afghan governments confirmed.

Five injured soldiers were also taken to a military hospital in Kabul, the Defence Ministry in Paris said.

Three of them were in critical condition. A spokesman for the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force had announced the deaths earlier, without disclosing their nationality.

The insurgent attack occurred during a troop deployment early on Saturday in the eastern province of Kapisa, where the French forces are supporting the Afghan army.

Qais Qaderi, the spokesman for Kapisa's governor, said the attacker was dressed as a woman.

"They were on foot patrol to find out the location of a roadside bomb hidden under a bridge in Kharaj Dara village, when a suicide bomber in a burqa detonated his explosive-packed vest among the soldiers," Qaderi said.

The Taliban claimed responsibility, saying its fighters had killed 12 French soldiers.

"The mujahedin attacked French infantry in Nejrab district of Kapisa province, in which 12 French soldiers and four Afghan police were killed," said Zabiullah Mujahid, a spokesman for the Taliban.

In France meanwhile, President Francois Hollande gave his condolences to the families of the victims, who were the first French soldiers to die on duty since he took office last month.

Hollande, who visited Afghanistan on May 25, has pledged to withdraw French combat troops from Afghanistan at the end of the year, ahead of NATO's agreed 2014 deadline.

France has 3,400 troops stationed in Afghanistan, of whom around 2,000 are to leave by the end of 2012.

# Myanmar steps up security as sectarian violence claims 7 lives

REUTERS  
SITWE

MYANMAR sent troops and naval vessels to the western state of Rakhine on Saturday after seven people died in the worst fighting in years between minority Muslim Rohingya and Buddhists.

A senior government official said hundreds of Rohingya had rioted on Friday in Buddhist communities and an overnight curfew had been imposed in Maungdaw Township.

It was not clear what had sparked the unrest but the western region has been tense for days after reports of the gang rape and murder of a Buddhist woman blamed on Muslims and the reprisal killing last Sunday of 10 Muslims.

Reuters reporters and local residents saw up to four planes carrying soldiers land at Sittwe



Demonstrators pray at the Shwedagon pagoda during a protest, in Yangon, on Saturday. (EPA)

airport on Saturday.

State TV said naval vessels had arrived in the area and were patrolling the river and sea off Maungdaw.

Senior government officials

including Defence Minister General Hla Min had been dispatched to oversee operations and help with relief work. MRTV said seven people had died and 17 had been wounded

in the unrest on Friday, and around 500 buildings had been destroyed in Maungdaw.

Hmu Zaw, the director of the President's Office, said on Facebook hundreds of

Rohingya had attacked dozens of Buddhist villages in Maungdaw Township.

Police had tried to provide protection, firing warning shots, he said, without noting any casualties.

State media also said warning shots had been fired. One source contacted by phone from Maungdaw said there had been trouble overnight despite the curfew, with Rohingya trying to attack Buddhist homes.

"It's just like a living hell. I wonder how long we will have to live like this?" said Mya Khin, a housewife.

On Saturday, Maungdaw and nearby villages were reported to be calm but the Arakan National Watch, a local independent Buddhist group, said there had been further violence and deaths overnight in villages near the border with Bangladesh.

# Everest Sherpas swap danger for luxury watchmaking

AFP  
KATHMANDU

Ang Namgel Sherpa (left) and Lakpa Thundu Sherpa at the Kobold watch workshop, in Kathmandu, recently. (AFP)

IN a modern, airy workshop located in a fashionable Kathmandu shopping hub frequented by Nepal's rich and famous, two skilled craftsmen assemble some of the world's most exclusive luxury watches.

For Namgel and Thundu Sherpa, the sedate, intricate world of precision watchmaking is about as far removed as possible from their previous

lives as Himalayan guides working in deeply hostile, often life-threatening conditions.

Their unlikely career change followed a stint as guides for British adventurer Sir Ranulph Fiennes and Michael Kobold, founder of the US-based Kobold watch company who scaled Everest with his wife Anita in 2010.

"Namgel saved my life twice," Kobold told AFP. Keen to translate his gratitude into practical help, Kobold decided

to act on an idea first suggested by Fiennes of providing Namgel and Thundu with a safer career.

In 2008, Fiennes had observed the two sherpas watching Kobold, who had brought his tools and parts, assemble a watch at Everest Base Camp.

"Their inquisitive nature and excitement over a mechanical watch were very much on display," Fiennes said. "This is when the thought occurred to

me that maybe Mike could teach them how to make watches."

Kobold took Namgel and Thundu to the United States, housed them for a year with his family in Pittsburgh and trained them at a cost of more than \$300,000 to make a 'Made in Nepal' version of his high-end timepieces.

A limited edition of just 25 of the new Nepal range will contain elements collected from the Everest summit and retail

at \$16,500.

The Sherpas had to learn enough information for a two-year course in just 10 months.

"Learning to make watches in the US was very difficult at first because with a mechanical watch like this everything has to be perfect," said Namgel.

"But our job as sherpas was very hard. We had to carry a lot of things and we didn't use oxygen until 8,000 metres. So compared to that, watchmaking for us is not so difficult."

## Qatar Tribune

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## Westside

## Mosquito Coast

Remove standing water, clean birdbaths to avoid mosquito-born diseases

**W**ARM winter and wet spring. Fading memories of the last frost, whenever that was. The sun rising early and setting late, throwing shadows over steaming pavement puddles, murky birdbaths, brimming gutters and stagnant storm drains.

And then: mosquitoes, squadrons of them, rising in formation in the swampy dusk, replicating one of those long shots from the end of "Star Wars," where they are the X-wing fighters and the doomed Death Star is you.

The summer is going to be a bad one for mosquitoes in the Northeast. Scientists at the Northeast Regional Climate Centre, at Cornell University, have been methodically tracking climate conditions, including the warmest March on record, that seem made for mosquitoes. They say the bugs, having avoided freezing to death last winter, have been able to get an early start on breeding. This is why



places in our unscientific survey are already being swallowed by a miasma that makes strolling, bicycling or gardening feel like digging the Culebra Cut on the Panama Canal. It's why counties are keeping an eye on mosquito populations, wary of an outbreak of West Nile disease or other malady.

New York City and other places have, so far, avoided the impulse to spray their way out of the problem. The House of Representatives in Connecticut passed a bill last month banning the discharge of the insecticide methoprene into waterways; lobstermen there believe that aerial spraying in 1999 to guard against West Nile caused the collapse of the lobster population in Long Island Sound. For now, the best approach is precautionary: Remove standing water, clean birdbaths, drain ponds. Cripple the dive-bombers by destroying their hangars and runways.

## Eastside

## Clouds That Cheer

Timely arrival of the monsoon has brought cheers for the economy

**T**HE interest in the monsoon can sometimes be obsessive and is a measure of the extent to which these rains rule the tempo of life in this country. The twists and turns that a rainy season inevitably takes are carefully scrutinised for portents of its outcome. This year, amidst a gloomy economic outlook, with a rupee that has sharply depreciated and prices heading the other way, such concerns are all the greater. Using a statistical model, the India Meteorological Department had predicted in mid-May that the monsoon would set in over Kerala on June 1 with an error bar of four days. So, when the monsoon appeared to be lagging, questions inevitably came to be asked. To the relief of all, the meteorological agency was able to declare on June 5 that the monsoon had at last arrived. The rain-bearing clouds will go on to cover the whole coun-

(NTT/The Hindu)

try in the coming weeks, ending the reign of oppressive summer temperatures. The monsoon generally reaches Kerala around June 1.

The monsoon has come, its progression northwards to cover the rest of the country could well occur in spurts, sometimes moving forward swiftly and at other times dawdling infuriatingly. In every monsoon, rains are not evenly spread either spatially or in time. Some places receive too much rain and get flooded while other parts of the country get too little. Active phases can be interspersed with periods when the rains weaken. Breaks in the monsoon, when large swathes of the country receive little or no rain for prolonged periods, are always worrying. What happens in the Pacific Ocean could have a considerable impact on how this year's monsoon fares.

## Paralysis In Athens

Elections will decide Greece's fate in the euro zone and its future

RANDALL FULLER | NYT NEWS SERVICE

**W**ITH an excruciating choice between austerity measures and a departure from the euro, the birthplace of democracy is paralysed with indecision.

Athens – "What are we waiting for, assembled in the forum?" asked the Greek poet Constantine Cavafy in 1904. "Why do the Senators sit and pass no laws?"

Less than two weeks before Greece holds another round of national elections, Cavafy's famous poem *Waiting for the Barbarians* has renewed force and urgency in Athens.

The elections, scheduled for June 17, will decide Greece's fate in the euro zone and perhaps even its long-term future as a viable state. But with an excruciating choice to be made between draconian austerity measures and a departure from Europe's shared currency, the birthplace of democracy is paralysed with indecision and poised to descend into chaos and economic catastrophe.

Evidence of a state tottering on the edge of complete dysfunction is apparent everywhere in Athens. Traffic signals work sporadically; a sign giving the shortened hours of one of the world's great museums, the National Archeological Museum, is haphazardly taped to the door; police officers in riot gear patrol the perimeters of the universities, where a growing population of anarchists, disaffected young people and drug addicts congregate in communal hopelessness.

"Greeks have worry beads up to here," one Athenian told me in the shadow of the Acropolis, measuring to the top of her head. "We don't know what's going to happen tomorrow."

The most visible sign of these dire, uncertain times is the proliferation of graffiti over almost every vertical space in the city. Athens has long cherished a tradition of political commentary and street art, but the recent financial crisis has spurred the young to express their discontent with nihilistic intensity.

"Wake Up!" is a ubiquitous tag in the city. "Welcome to the Civilisation of Fear" reads another. One airbrushed scene portrays an Athens bus – not long ago a symbol of Greece's commitment to improving its civic infrastructure while reducing pollution – about to run off the road or crash into an oncoming vehicle.

If the young bear the harshest burden of the economic crisis – 48 percent of Greeks below age 24 are unemployed – they do so with a mix of denial, frantic exuberance and a debilitating sense of the absurd. A flash mob recently appeared in Syntagma Square, not to protest the lack of jobs or the political gridlock but to dance to 'N Sync's "Bye Bye Bye." Nearby, another graffiti slogan seemed to capture the mood: "Dancing All the Time, Feeling All the Rage."

Throughout Athens I asked people of all ages what it was like to live in



Greece at the moment. "Hell," one woman told me. "Terrible, terrible," said a waiter at a tavern on the Plaka.

A Greek friend sighed and admitted that he would leave the country immediately if he could: "There is no good

"Greeks have worry beads up to here," one Athenian told me in the shadow of the Acropolis, measuring to the top of her head. "We don't know what's going to happen tomorrow."

solution to the current crisis. Austerity will damage us for years to come, and so will the return of the drachma. Either way it will get much worse before it gets better."

On a warm, lovely Saturday night two weeks before the election, the immensely appealing Greek pop star Leon was finishing a sound check at an outdoor space in the trendy Gazi neighbourhood. Strumming a ukulele,

Leon sang what could easily stand as an anthem for this perilous moment in Athens and the rest of Greece:

Tell me what to do when everything is changing,

Tell me what to do when you can't step on the same river twice.

If Cavafy's poem blamed national inaction and a too-easy fatalism on a long and tortuous history of invasion from without, Leon seemed intent on exploring ways to survive this period of gloom and impasse from within. "The master of the ship, the leader of your mind ... you don't need them anymore," he sang.

Then the tune, a folkish number titled "Someday (Somewhere, Maybe Somebody)," blossomed into an infectious chorus. Leon's band, an eight-piece group of men and women playing electric guitars and the more traditional accordion, leaned in and sang together.

In this place where tragedy was invented, the song was joyful and sadly cathartic. The chorus had no words, but it nevertheless contained an invitation to join in the achingly beautiful melody. I still can't get it out of my head.

*The author is a professor of English at the University of Tulsa.*

## The Age Of Unsatisfying Wars

Obama should welcome an Iraq-like end to the war in Afghanistan

JOHN A. NAGL | NYT NEWS SERVICE

With al-Qaida dismantled, a government that is good enough to run the country is likely to be sufficient to achieve core American national security objectives as well.

But when there is a long, slow struggle, with no immediately visible foe, your choice will seem hard indeed."

The choices of that West Point class, and of those that would follow it into a counterinsurgency campaign in Southeast Asia, were more difficult than their young president could imagine. Although the Army made real progress in understanding and implementing counterinsurgency principles under General Creighton W Abrams Jr, the lesson of Vietnam was not to fight irregular wars in Asia.

The Army learned that lesson all too well, forgetting what it had learned in the jungle and focusing on a conven-

tional war with the Soviet Union. The Army and Marines quickly destroyed Saddam Hussein's military in 2003, only to find themselves facing an enemy they should have expected: insurgents, some inspired by radical Islam, but many more by simple nationalism.

Hard lessons in counterinsurgency had to be relearned before Secretary of Defense Robert M Gates and General David H Petraeus implemented a strategy that combined fighting with negotiations. The 2007 surge, employing new counterinsurgency tactics, and the mindless brutality of the insurgent group al-Qaida in Iraq persuaded the Sunni tribes to "flip" and start fighting the radicals rather than Americans.

The surge changed the war in Iraq dramatically, even as Barack Obama, then a candidate for president, was promising to swing resources away from Iraq and into the "good war" in Afghanistan. Obama fulfilled his campaign promise and then some, tripling American forces in Afghanistan during his first year while also doubling down on drone strikes in Pakistan.

Again, the strategy, aided by the

killing of Osama bin Laden by a Navy SEAL team, worked to a degree. With al-Qaida effectively dismantled, a government that is good enough to run the country is likely to be sufficient to achieve core American national security objectives as well.

Like any successful counterinsurgency, Afghanistan is likely to end somewhat unsatisfyingly for Americans, with a corrupt but gradually improving government in Kabul, advisers helping Afghan security forces fight a weakening but still dangerous Taliban, and a schizophrenic Pakistan alternately helping Afghan and Taliban fighters.

It may also, in the odd logic of counterinsurgency, be more likely to succeed if we leave the project somewhat unfinished. TE Lawrence, no slouch as an insurgent himself, advised: "Do not try to do too much with your own hands. It is their war, and you are to help them, not to win it for them."

*The author is a research professor at the US Naval Academy and a retired Army officer*

Health is  
Wealth

STEVEN REINBERG | NYT NEWS SERVICE

Many Kids on  
Medicaid Don't  
See Dentist

ONLY about one-third of US children on Medicaid receives dental care in a single year, and how often these kids see a dentist depends on where they live, a new study finds.

In 2007, the prevalence of visits to the dentist ranged from 12 percent in Nevada to 49 percent in Vermont, but didn't reach 50 percent in any state or the District of Columbia, the researchers found.

The researchers also compared the 2007 findings with data from five years earlier.

"This study confirms with actual paid Medicaid claims data that access to dental services for Medicaid-eligible children has increased 16 percent nationally between 2002 and 2007, even though no state has yet reached even 50 percent access," said study co-author Dr. Allen Conan Davis, an associate professor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Dentistry and former chief dental officer for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

Although progress has been made nationally, more work needs to be done to improve access to dental services for Medicaid-eligible children, he said.

However, as with all Medicaid programs, children's dental care is a partnership between states and the federal government, Davis said.

Medicaid dental programs cover regular check-ups as well as needed procedures.

The report was published online June 4 and will appear in the July print issue of *Pediatrics*.

The researchers looked at Medicaid records and found that for infants and toddlers, the rate of dental visits was low in all but three states and peaked when they started school.

Children in the Primary Care Case Management part of Medicaid tended to have the highest number of dental care visits; those covered by the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) also tended to see a dentist more often.

Dental-care programs in schools and having a regular dentist were key in improved children's dental care and the likelihood of seeing a dentist, the researchers noted.

"More people are on Medicaid and more and more states, in an attempt to balance their budgets, have eliminated dental benefits," said Dr. Lindsay Robinson, a spokeswoman for the American Dental Association.

More investment is needed in dental care to cover those who rely on Medicaid, Robinson said.

"Only about 2 percent of Medicaid dollars go to dental care, in the private system it's triple that," she said.

Not only are Medicaid dollars for dental care being cut and school programs being abandoned in an effort to save money, but reimbursements to dentists from Medicaid are so low that many dentists aren't willing to see Medicaid patients, Robinson said.

Wide – Angle Lens  
NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF | NYT NEWS SERVICE

**Mariam was pregnant when the Sudanese Army invaded her village here in the rebel-held Nuba Mountains and shot her husband dead. Enraged, she took over a mounted machine gun set up by rebels and began to rake the soldiers as they burned the village's huts.**

OBAMA AND  
SUDAN

Why US &amp; world leaders are allowing Sudan to get away with atrocities

I'D like to introduce a valiant woman here, Mariam Tia, to President Barack Obama and other world leaders, so she could explain how they're allowing Sudan's leaders to get away with mass atrocities that echo Darfur.

Once again, in Sudan there are starving children, tens of thousands of refugees, rapes and racial epithets, a spiralling death toll and passivity in the White House.

Mariam was pregnant when the Sudanese Army invaded her village here in the rebel-held Nuba Mountains and shot her husband dead. Enraged, she took over a mounted machine gun set up by rebels and began to rake the soldiers as they burned the village's huts.

Mariam said she isn't sure whether she actually shot any soldiers and that soon they began firing back, so she had to run for her life. She eventually relocated to a dank mountain cave, where – like countless other Nubans – she felt a bit safer from random bombings by government warplanes. When her due date came, two months ago, Mariam delivered her baby by herself inside the cave.

She named her baby girl Fakao, which is shorthand for: bombs are dropping. When people hear Antonov bombers releasing their payloads, they shout "Fakao! Fakao!" That's the signal to huddle behind rocks and hope for the best.

"When this child was in my stomach, I used to run from the bombers," Mariam told me as she nursed Fakao in front of her cave.

"I named her this so that I could remember the struggle we went through to give her life."

"If I ever see the enemy again," she added, "I will tie this baby to my back and pick up a gun and fight them."

World leaders could use some of that backbone. Instead, they have said little and done almost nothing as President Omar Hassan al-

Bashir has – for a year now – undertaken daily bombings in the Nuba Mountains and the neighbouring Blue Nile region, blocked food from entering, expelled aid groups and tried to bar witnesses. I entered illegally on a dirt track from South Sudan, and, I found that hundreds of thousands of people in the Nuba Mountains have run out of food and are surviving on leaves, wild roots and insects.

The collision between a 21st-century bomb and a village woman in a traditional mud hut – that pretty much captures the horror of what is unfolding now in the Nuba Mountains. The same bombings and starvation also seem to be occurring next door in the Blue Nile region.

As I travel about here, I find the contrasts heartbreaking. One is the gulf of technology between government forces and their civilian victims: I interview impoverished families huddling in caves and eating leaves and bugs, and our conversations are interrupted by Sudanese MIG or Antonov bombers overhead. Sudan mostly drops anti-personnel bombs full of shrapnel, but it occasionally drops cluster bombs.

One woman, Hasia al-Ahmar, told me that her mother had starved to death and then the government dropped a bomb that landed directly on the family's grass-roof mud hut, with her sister inside.

"We could just pick up little pieces of her and put them in a plastic bag," she said. "And then we buried the bag."

The collision between a 21st-cen-

tury bomb and a village woman in a traditional mud hut – that pretty much captures the horror of what is unfolding now in the Nuba Mountains. The same bombings and starvation also seem to be occurring next door in the Blue Nile region, forcing tens of thousands to flee to South Sudan.

Another contrast is between the timidity and fecklessness of world leaders, and the courage and grit of the Nuba people themselves. Take Hamat Dorbet, a 39-year-old evangelical Presbyterian pastor.

In an anti-Christian campaign a dozen years ago in this Muslim-dominated country, the authorities began arresting Hamat for ringing his church bell and preaching to his congregation. They would arrest him each Sunday, according to his account and that of neighbours, and then beat and torture him for a few days.

Each Sunday, after a few days of recovery, Hamat would struggle back to the church, ring the bell and begin another service. Then police officers would come and drag him out for more torture. Once they shot him, and he almost died. A month after that, when he could move again, he roused himself out of bed one Sunday morning, limped to the church and boldly rang the bell to deliver another service.

A peace accord shortly afterward stopped the persecution and, perhaps, saved his life. But these days, Hamat is again struggling to stay alive. Like most of his church members, he has nothing to eat but leaves, roots and insects, and he is fading. And, of course, this is a government-designed famine: In Sudan, "to starve" is a transitive verb.

Hamat is not asking for help, and he's not feeling sorry for himself. I'd like to explain to him why the world lets this happen without even speaking out strongly, and I just don't know what to say. President Obama?

Bloggers'  
Borough

MICHAEL &amp; NATHANIEL | HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW

Nasdaq Sets Aside  
\$40 Million For  
Facebook Claims

THE Nasdaq OMX Group is taking its first step to quell investor anger over the flawed debut of Facebook shares last month – pledging \$40 million to cover broker losses – but some customers and competitors quickly raised objections.

The stock market operator said Wednesday that it would set aside \$13.7 million in cash and pay out the rest in trading rebates to settle disputes by investors arising from technical malfunctions in Facebook's initial public offering May 18, the biggest technology IPO ever.

Nasdaq has maintained that the decline in the price of Facebook's stock since the first day was because of factors other than the glitches on the exchange.

Facebook's shares rose 3.6 percent to \$26.81 Wednesday, an overall strong day for stocks around the globe, but they are still down 29 percent from the \$38 offering price.

Retail investors bore the brunt of the losses from the fumbled IPO, but they will not be able to appeal directly to Nasdaq. Instead the exchange is making the money available to the market-making firms that traded on behalf of investors.

Some of the Nasdaq money could flow through to investors who lost money on the first day of trading, including when the exchange ignored their requests to cancel purchase orders. But some analysts say they doubt that the compensation will do much to restore confidence among ordinary investors, who had already been turning away from stock markets before the IPO.

Nasdaq's proposal to compensate firms by reducing future trading costs quickly faced opposition from other exchanges, who said the rebates gave Nasdaq an unfair advantage.

Even if approved by regulators, the plan still falls far short of the more than \$100 million that industry experts have said market-making firms lost when errors in Nasdaq's systems led to delays in setting an opening price for Facebook. About 30 million shares were executed improperly after trading that was supposed to start at 11 a.m. was delayed by a half-hour.

Nasdaq's chief executive, Robert Greifeld, has admitted that the ordeal has left his company "humbly embarrassed." In Wednesday's announcement, the exchange said that it had hired IBM to review its technical systems.

Others have been criticized for the Facebook fiasco, among them the lead underwriter, Morgan Stanley, for setting too high an offer price. But Nasdaq has been a popular target for investors and firms involved in the IPO. The common thread of their complaints has been that the Nasdaq technical stumbles spooked investors and created a climate of fear that sent the Facebook share price down.

Nasdaq has already explained what lay behind the problem. As Nasdaq's systems were setting Facebook's opening price, a wave of order modifications forced the exchange's computers into a loop of constant recalculations.

The net effect was investors left guessing as to whether they held any Facebook shares at all. For days afterward, traders claimed that they still did not know how many Facebook shares they held, while others argued that the technical problems left them holding stock that quickly plummeted in value on Friday and days afterward.

Nasdaq's proposal Wednesday has several qualifications. Member firms must prove they were directly harmed by malfunctions that erupted before trading started at 11:30 a.m. on the first day of trading, when the stock opened at \$42.

And the program applies only to certain kinds of trades, including sale orders priced at \$42 or less that did not execute or were carried out at lower prices, and purchases that were priced at \$42 but were not immediately confirmed.

Brokerage firms that handled the problematic trades declined to comment or said they were reviewing Nasdaq's proposal.

The swiftest response came from other stock exchanges.

NYSE Euronext complained that the proposal would incentivize trading firms to flock to the beleaguered exchange to claim their rebates. The plan would "allow Nasdaq to reap a benefit from market share gains they would not have otherwise received," NYSE said in a statement.

A spokesman for DirectEdge, another major stock exchange operator, said that the company had "several significant concerns with the Nasdaq remedy and plan to aggressively voice them throughout the process."

The Securities and Exchange Commission will ultimately decide whether to approve the compensation program.

Have  
your say

Is there an issue you feel strongly about, or an article you want to comment on? QT will carry your voice to the public and to places where it matters. Write to us at

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## Syrian Cultural Week

THIS is with reference to the article 'Syrian Cultural Week a big hit' published in *Qatar Tribune* on June 7.

The Syrian Cultural Week in Doha has been a big success. A large number of people have already attended the festivities. The cultural week has been organized in solidarity with the people of Syria who have been enduring hardships for over 14 months.

Under the title 'Home that blossoms in freedom', the cultural event has been organized at Katara with variety of events and concerts in which artists from countries such as Egypt, have participated.

It has been a fabulous initiative to support the Syrians who need international help and support to put up with the brutal regime of Assad. Hope more events like this will be organized in support of the war-torn country.

SAMANTHA JONES  
DOHA

## Green Campaign

THIS refers to the story 'Lusail launches 'Green Campaign' published in *Qatar Tribune* on June 6.

As the world celebrated the annual World Environment Day, Lusail's Health, Safety, Security and Environment Directorate launched 'Green Campaigns' to educate its staff and other developers in Qatar about green economy.

This is a good step which helps us to understand how we can save our environment by saving trees, energy, water and hence protecting the earth.

Environmental protection will not only benefit us all but will also benefit our future generation.

We need to improve human well-being and social equity, while reducing environmental risks and ecological disasters.

Through 'Green Economy' we will pay attention to low carbon, resource efficiency and social integration.

MARIA GRACIA  
DOHA"Congratulations to the 80  
students who have  
graduated from Qatar  
Academy"

ROSA LOPEZ

DOHA



"My interest is in the future cuz i'm going to spend the rest of my life there."

AMANDA BYNES

# Govt rejects Panetta's remarks on safe havens

AFP  
ISLAMABAD

PAKISTAN on Saturday branded US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta's remarks on insurgent safe havens in the country as "misplaced and unhelpful".

Panetta warned Pakistan on Thursday that the US was running out of patience over Islamabad's refusal to do more to eliminate hiding places for insurgents, who attack US troops fighting a 10-year war against the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Panetta made the comments after talks with Afghan Defence Minister Abdul Rahim Wardak during an Asian tour that took him to Pakistan's arch-rival India, but not Islamabad in a sign of dire US-Pakistan relations.

"Pakistan strongly rejects the assertions made recently by US Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta regarding 'safe havens' in Pakistan," foreign ministry spokesman Moazzam Ahmad Khan said in a statement.

"We feel that the Secretary of Defense is oversimplifying some of the very complex issues we are all dealing with in our efforts against extrem-

ism and terrorism."

Panetta singled out the Haqqani network, a Taliban and Al Qaeda-linked faction that has bases in Pakistan's lawless tribal district of North Waziristan and which has been blamed for some of the deadliest attacks of the 10-year war in Afghanistan.

On Thursday, Panetta said US patience was running thin with Pakistan due to the presence of safe areas for militants who carried out cross-border raids on Western troops and terrorist activities in Afghanistan.

"It is very important for Pakistan to take steps. It is an increasing concern, the issue of safe haven, and we are reaching the limits of our patience," Panetta said during a trip to Afghanistan.

The US has asked Pakistan many times to deploy its army against Al Qaeda-linked militants operating from North Waziristan, one of seven tribal districts, but Pakistan has refused to comply.

"Pakistan has repeatedly said that it will not allow its territory to be used against any country, nor will it allow any safe havens on its territory," the spokesman said.



President Asif Ali Zardari (left) with US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta (centre) and American ambassador to Pakistan Anne Patterson, in Islamabad, recently. (AP)

He stressed that Pakistan was fighting terrorism and extremism in its own national interest and "nobody should doubt our resolve and determination in this regard".

"Our sacrifices remain

unparalleled and our resolve unshakable," he said.

"We strongly believe that such statements are misplaced and unhelpful in bringing about peace and stability in the region."

The latest war of words coincides with the visit of US Assistant Defence Secretary Peter Lavoy, who arrived in Pakistan on Friday to seek an end to the blockade of a

NATO supply line, implemented more than six months ago when NATO attacked a Pakistani border post, killing 24 servicemen. Islamabad's closure of the Afghan border to NATO fol-

lowing the November 2011 air strikes that killed 24 soldiers plunged relations with US to an all-time low after Pakistan was humiliated by a US raid that killed Osama bin Laden last May.

## US official in Islamabad for border blockade talks

AFP  
ISLAMABAD

US ASSISTANT defence secretary Peter Lavoy has arrived in Islamabad in a fresh attempt to bring an end to a six-month blockade on NATO supplies crossing into Afghanistan, officials said on Saturday.

Lavoy's visit comes days after US Defence Secretary Leon Panetta warned Pakistan that the United States was running out of patience over Islamabad's refusal to do more to eliminate safe havens for insurgents.

"The US assistant defence secretary arrived here Friday to meet with a broad spectrum of people," acting US embassy spokesman Robert Raines told AFP.

"He will be discussing bilateral issues with the officials," he said without elaborating on the agenda for the two-day visit.

A Pakistani government official told AFP ahead of the trip that "talks will focus on re-opening the NATO supply route, ways to promote border coordination and settle the issue of the Coalition Support Fund (CSF)".

Pakistan-US relations hit a new low six months ago when US air strikes killed 24 Pakistani soldiers along the Afghan border. Islamabad responded by imposing a blockade on NATO supplies crossing overland into Afghanistan.

Analysts believe there is little chance of a breakthrough during Lavoy's trip.

"He will try and persuade Pakistan to re-open the route but it seems Pakistan wants to play tough at this stage," analyst Hasan Askari said.

"I am not very hopeful that the US and Pakistan will agree to re-open the route in the near future despite the fact that Washington wants a middle way solution to the issue."

Askari said Panetta's strong remarks, which came after talks with Afghan Defence Minister Abdul Rahim Wardak on Thursday, were designed to put pressure on Pakistan.

Panetta singled out the Haqqani network, a Taliban and Al-Qaeda-linked faction that has bases in Pakistan's lawless tribal district of North Waziristan and which has been blamed for some of the deadliest attacks of the 10-year war in Afghanistan.

## PREPARING FOR COOLING EFFECT

A man repairs an air cooler at a shop, in Peshawar, on Saturday. Temperatures rose to up to 45 degrees Celsius in parts of Pakistan as mainly hot and dry weather is forecast in many areas across the country. (EPA)



## Punjab, Sindh to get more Indus water

AGENCIES  
ISLAMABAD

THE Indus River System Authority (Irsa) decided on Friday to give more water to two provinces after a temperature increase in northern parts of the country improved river flows, bringing down the water shortage from 40 per cent last month to 10 per cent.

The water share of Punjab was increased to 110,000 cusec from 91,000 cusec and Sindh's share was enhanced to 125,000 cusec from 103,000 cusec a day earlier.

The water releases from Chashma barrage were increased to 155,000 cusec from 127,000 cusec while discharges from Tarbela dam were increased to 96,000 cusec from 83,000 cusec. The releases from Tarbela would be further enhanced to 115,000 cusec on Sunday, informed sources said.

**The sowing season that had been delayed for a couple of weeks at the start of the season owing to water shortage was now complete.**

Irsa has started conserving water at both the major reservoirs - Tarbela and Mangla. The improved flows and consequent increase in discharges have also led to higher electricity generation from hydropower resources, now touching 4,700MW against about 2,000MW last month.

Officials said the storage at Tarbela dam has now gone up to 1,392 feet against its dead level of 1,378 feet. For almost a month until last week, there was no storage at Tarbela, forcing authorities to adopt a run-of-the-river policy under which whatever water was available was released downstream.

The storage level at Mangla also improved to 1,102 feet on Friday against its dead level of 1,040 feet.

Sources said the sowing season that had been delayed for a couple of weeks at the start of the season owing to water shortage was now complete. The average inflows at Tarbela dam were recorded at 100,200 cusec on Friday against its outflows of 96,700 cusec. The inflows at Mangla stood at 53,420 cusec on Friday against its outflows of 44,470 cusec.

## Four cops killed in Quetta Chief justice's son files statement

AFP  
QUETTA

GUNMEN killed four policemen in a drive-by shooting on the outskirts of Pakistan's troubled southwestern city of Quetta on Saturday, police said.

The shooting comes two days after 15 people were killed by a bomb explosion outside the gates of the Sunni Muslim seminary in the city.

"Unidentified gunmen shot dead four policemen, who were on a routine patrol in the Saryab road area," local police official Abdul Rahim said.

"We picked up the bodies from the site and shifted them to hospital."

The number of attackers was not known, he said.

Another local senior police official, Muhammad Sikandar Tareen, confirmed the incident and casualties.

Police and security forces are frequently attacked in the insurgency-plagued Baluchistan province, of which Quetta is the capital.

There was no claim of responsibility for the latest incident, but the oil and gas

rich Baluchistan, which borders Iran and Afghanistan, suffers from Islamist militancy, sectarian violence between Sunni and Shiite Muslims and a separatist insurgency.

Hundreds of civilians have

been killed since Baluch rebels rose up in 2004 against the federal Pakistani government, demanding political autonomy and a greater share of profits from the resources in the region.



Policemen and rescue workers move the body of a policeman to a hospital, in Quetta, on Saturday. (REUTERS)

AGENCIES  
ISLAMABAD

ARSALAN Iftikhar, son of Chief Justice Iftikhar Mohammad Chaudhry, submitted his statement over the suo motu notice on allegations against him in the Supreme Court on Saturday, DawnNews reported.

The suo motu notice had been taken on Tuesday on allegations that Arsalan had been doled out Rs 300 to 400 million by property tycoon Malik Riaz.

In his five-page-long written statement submitted on Saturday, Arsalan has denied having any association with Riaz, Riaz's daughter and son-in-law.

The statement said that Arsalan had never met with the aforementioned individuals in any business-related capacity. It moreover said that statements attributed to Riaz were contradictory.

In his statement, Arsalan moreover said that for his con-

tradictory statements and for attempting to bring the institution of judiciary into disrepute, legal action should be taken against Riaz and that he should be punished accordingly.

**The statement said that Arsalan had never met with the aforementioned individuals in any business-related capacity.**

It further said that statements given by television anchors were mainly based on hearsay and that until Riaz himself recorded a statement in court, no allegations would hold meaning.

He requested the court to reject the anchor persons' statements on the issue and said the statements were based on memory and therefore held no legal significance.

He further said that he had travelled to London in the years 2009, 2010 and 2011 using his own finances.



Arms dealer Abhishek Verma (centre) after being produced in Patiala House Court by the Central Bureau of Investigation, in New Delhi, on Saturday. (PTI)

## Swiss-based arms firm faces probe over \$530,000 bribe

REUTERS  
NEW DELHI

INDIAN businessman Abhishek Verma was charged on Saturday with attempting to bribe government officials in connection with allegations that Swiss-based Rheinmetall Air Defence AG paid him \$530,000 to use his influence to stop the company from being blacklisted.

Verma and his wife were arrested on Friday after the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) launched raids on 10 properties in and around New Delhi, including the home of a former Rheinmetall representative in India. The CBI said in a statement that it was investigating

both Verma and the company.

Verma and his wife, Anca Neacsu, were charged in a New Delhi court under the Prevention of Corruption Act and face up to five years in prison if convicted. The magistrate ordered the couple to remain in custody for seven days for further questioning.

Earlier this year Rheinmetall Air Defence, part of Rheinmetall AG, a German automotive parts and defence group, was placed on a blacklist of arms firms banned from doing business in India following corruption allegations that it strongly denied.

India's Defence Ministry has put in place strict guidelines for arms deals in an

effort to crack down on bribery and corruption at a time when Asia's third-largest economy is on a weapons-buying spree to modernise its military. India is the world's largest arms buyer.

**Verma and his wife were arrested on Friday after the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) launched raids on 10 properties in and around New Delhi.**

Documents provided to the CBI by C. Edmonds Allen, an American and a former business associate of Verma, show a \$530,000 credit transfer

from Rheinmetall to a New York bank account belonging to a U.S.-based company, Ganton Limited, which the CBI alleges was owned by Verma.

The documents, which have been made public, include a purchase order for "consultancy services" from Rheinmetall for the same amount.

A representative of Rheinmetall in New Delhi told Reuters she would seek an official company response to the CBI investigation but that it would be difficult to get because it was the weekend. There was no immediate response from Rheinmetall officials in Switzerland or Germany.

The company said in March it was willing to cooperate fully with the Indian authorities and would "do everything in its power" to refute the corruption allegations. It complained that India had yet to give it details about the alleged wrongdoing that led to it being blacklisted.

The CBI said in a statement that Verma had contacted Rheinmetall after the agency accused it of "adopting corrupt and illegal means" to obtain a contract to supply the Indian military with a 35 mm revolver gun air defence system. He had assured them that he could influence government officials to stall the blacklisting process, it said.

## PMO turns down probe into coal mine graft; Team Anna upset

DPA & IANS  
NEW DELHI

INDIAN Premier Manmohan Singh's office on Saturday denied allegations of irregularities in coal mine allocations and rejected the demand by anti-corruption activists for a probe into the matter.

Anti-graft campaigners led by Anna Hazare recently demanded that Singh and 14 of his cabinet ministers should face investigations after a draft report by the government auditor said India had lost 210 billion dollars in coal asset sales.

Reacting to the PMO's stance, a top Hazare aide said: "The letter seems to say that there is no corruption and all ministers are clean. People will not buy this. 'There is corruption in the government and local resources are being sold at throwaway prices,' he remarked.

But the auditor had said the leaked draft was "exceedingly misleading." V Narayansamy, a minister in the prime minister's office, in a letter to Hazare, said the allegations seemed to be based on the leaked draft and other media reports and no evidence had been provided to substantiate the allegations.

Narayansamy said the coal mines were allocated in a transparent manner, keeping public interest in mind.

"Keeping in mind that sufficient legal and constitutional mechanisms are available to examine the issues raised by you, your demand (for a special investigation team) cannot be accepted," Narayansamy said in the letter released on Saturday.

The draft report, leaked in March, said the government extended "undue benefits" by allocating 155 coal fields to 100 private and government firms between 2004 and 2010.

However the auditor said the "details brought out were observations which are under discussion at a very preliminary stage."

Hazare had spearheaded protests last year demanding the creation of an anti-graft ombudsman position to crack down on corrupt government officials.

Singh's government is mired in several corruption scandals and the anti-corruption movement has drawn widespread support.

"The content of that letter is trying to prove that there is no corruption in the country and all the ministers and officers are working honestly, and we are unnecessarily creating a ruckus on the issue of cor-

ruption," Team Anna member Manish Sisodia told reporters in New Delhi.

Slamming the government, he said that on one hand, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) was investigating the case and on the other hand the government has already declared that there was no irregularity in the allocations and all the rules were followed.

"So, in a way, the government already knows what the outcome of the CBI investigation would be and it has made it public," he added.

**The draft report, leaked in March, said the government extended "undue benefits" by allocating 155 coal fields to 100 private and government firms between 2004 and 2010.**

Fellow activist and Team Anna member Kiran Bedi tweeted: "PMO's Prise (sic) to Annajee on allegations made on PM+14 Ministers is absolutely wishywashy! On Camera admission by Fr (former) Coal Sect (Secretary) supports CAG! (Comptroller and Auditor General)".

The PMO refused to accept Team Anna's demand for an independent probe, saying the manner in which "loose" allegations have been levelled was not acceptable.

Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office V. Narayanasamy wrote a letter to Anna Hazare Friday that allegations against the prime minister were based on a leaked draft of the CAG report and reports in the media.

The letter, which was released Saturday, was in response to Team Anna's letter of May 26 in which it charged Manmohan Singh and 14 cabinet ministers of "massive corruption" and asked for independent probe. Manmohan Singh was in charge of the coal portfolio from November 2006 to May 2009.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Ambika Soni too slammed Team Anna for making allegations without supporting evidence.

"You make a charge against no less a person than the prime minister, don't substantiate your charge with any kind of supportive evidence, and then expect things to start moving just because you make a charge," she said in New Delhi on Saturday.

## Bihar seeks central help to fight 'odd' disease

IANS  
PATNA

BIHAR on Saturday sought help from the central government to tackle a mysterious disease that has killed 81 children in Muzaffarpur, Gaya and Patna districts during the past fortnight, officials said.

"We expect central government help and support to check and control the mysterious disease," Health Minister Ashwini Choubey said.

Seven more children died in Muzaffarpur in the last 24 hours, taking the toll to 37 in the district. Ten children have died in Gaya.

Besides, 34 children have died in the Patna Medical College and Hospital (PMCH) in the past 15 days.

Dr. Sujata Choudhary, head of the department of paediatric in the PMCH, said 80 children suffering from the disease were admitted to the hospital, of which 34 died.

Health officials here said that over four dozen children suffering from "a mysterious disease" had been admitted to hospitals in the other two districts.

Choubey visited hospitals in Muzaffarpur Friday night and Gaya on Saturday to take stock of the situation.

He denied reports that the children were dying of suspected encephalitis and said the department was yet to determine the exact cause of deaths.

## Hackers oppose Net censorship

AFP  
NEW DELHI

INDIAN demonstrators supporting the global hacking movement Anonymous took to the streets on Saturday to protest against what they consider growing government censorship of the Internet.

Rallies in New Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore and Kolkata followed a court order in March demanding 15 domestic Internet providers block access to file-sharing websites such as Pirate Bay.

The order has resulted in access being denied to a host of websites that carry pirated films and music among other legal content, including isohunt.com and pastebin.com.

On Wednesday, hackers

attacked the website of state-run telecom provider MTNL, pasting the logo of the Anonymous group — the mask of 17th century British revolutionary Guy Fawkes — on mtln.net.in.

Supporters also accused the government of trying to create a "Great Indian Firewall" to establish control on the web.

"The government is bringing censorship through the back door and we will oppose it," said Alok Dixit, one of about 50 hackers and activists who shouted slogans at the rally in central New Delhi.

Around 100 protesters gathered near Mumbai's main rail station, while a similar number also attended a rally in the information technology hub of Bangalore and a smaller group assembled in a Kolkata shopping mall.

Many wore Guy Fawkes' masks and vowed to hack into the websites of other large Indian corporations and the government sites.

Concerns about Internet freedom in India stem from an update to the country's Information Technology Act that was given by the IT and communications ministry in April last year.

The new rules regulating Internet companies — providers, websites and search engines — instruct them that they must remove "disparaging" or "blasphemous" content within 36 hours if they receive a complaint by an "affected person".

Groups such as the Center for Internet and Society, a Bangalore-based research and advocacy group, have waged a year-long campaign for amendments to the rules.

Industry groups have also objected, saying the new regulations are unclear and impossible to implement.

"A lot of education is required in this field," secretary of the Internet Service Providers Association of India S P Jairath told AFP.

The government has become embroiled in a row with social networks after Telecoms Minister Kapil Sibal held a series of meetings with IT giants Google, Yahoo! and Facebook last year to discuss the pre-screening of content.

## Dimple Yadav elected unopposed from Kannauj

PTI  
KANNAUJ



Samajwadi Party supporters celebrate the victory of party candidate Dimple Yadav from Kannauj seat, in Lucknow on Saturday. (PTI)

DIMPLE Yadav, wife of north-Indian state Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav, was on Saturday declared elected unopposed from Kannauj Lok Sabha seat after two candidates in the fray against her withdrew their nominations for the bypoll.

District election officer Selva Kumari J made an announcement to this effect here this afternoon.

35-year-old Dimple Yadav

**35-year-old Dimple Yadav would be the second woman to represent the constituency. Earlier in 1984, Sheila Dixit, who is now the Delhi Chief Minister, was elected from Kannauj.**

would be the second woman to represent the constituency. Earlier in 1984, Sheila Dixit, who is now the Delhi Chief Minister, was elected from Kannauj.

After the withdrawal of names by both the candidates Dashrath Singh Shankwar (Samyukt Samajwadi Dal) and Sanju Katiyar (independent) yesterday, the election of Dimple Yadav was a mere formality.

After Congress and BSP decided against fielding their nominees and the BJP candidate failed to file his nomination papers at the last minute, Dimple was expected to get a walkover on the seat vacated by her husband Akhilesh Yadav when he became the chief minister and was elected

to the Legislative Council. She filed her nomination papers on Tuesday.

She had suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of Congress' Raj Babbar in the by-polls for the Firozabad Lok Sabha seat in 2009.

The Congress had opted not to contest the election in Kannauj, saying it did not field its candidate even in 2009 elections and the BSP had decided to keep away from the bypoll alleging the ruling party of continuing with its tradition of nepotism by fielding Dimple.

# Chandy launches project in Smart City Kochi

SIANS  
KOCHI

KERALA on Saturday stepped up efforts to make itself prominent on the IT map of India and the world with Chief Minister Oomen Chandy launching a project in the Smart City Kochi, a Rs 5,000 crore venture which is expected to provide jobs to over 90,000 professionals.

Eight years after the Information Technology (IT) city project was first conceived, Chandy on Saturday also inaugurated a state-of-the-art 10,000 sq ft sales

pavilion within its premises besides laying the foundation stone of the first phase of a 3.5 million square feet building.

Numerous companies have shown interest in opening shops in the IT city, a knowledge based industry township.

"This pavilion is late by three months... They have assured us that first phase of the 3.5 million square feet building would be ready in 18 months," said Chandy.

Chandi laid the foundation stone for the first phase of the 3.5 million square feet building in the city. Smart City

Kochi is being built by Smart City Dubai.

In 2004, Chandy had first announced this IT project, which is expected to provide jobs to 90,000 professionals. It was allegedly stuck after the previous Left government re-wrote the major agreements that was initially planned.

Abdul Lateef Al Mullah, the Group CEO who represents the Dubai company said: "We have been receiving a lot of enquiries and partners that are interested to invest in the state of Kerala. These enquiries are not just locally or nationally but globally.

Kerala is on every company's map right now and such companies will play a very important role in the economy of Kerala."

**the Smart City Kochi, a Rs 5,000 crore venture which is expected to provide jobs to over 90,000 professionals.**

Meanwhile, Chandy on Friday denied accusations by the Left that police were using third degree methods or torture against those held for the

murder of former CPI-M leader T P Chandrasekheran.

Chandy said his government would not attempt to settle political scores in probing Chandrasekheran's murder or the disclosures made by CPI-M leader M M Mani, who in a speech last month publicly acknowledged that the party indulged in political murders.

"There will be no political vendetta settlement in any case. Everything will be done in the most transparent manner, and no innocent would be targeted. But those who have any role in any of the murder cases will not be

allowed to escape the rule of law," said Chandy.

The chief minister said this in response to a specific question by media persons if the probe in the two cases would be similar to what happens in Tamil Nadu when the rival Dravidian parties rule that state.

"So do you mean that the Chandrasekheran case and the disclosures made by Mani should not be investigated? There are no third degree methods adopted by the police as claimed by the CPI-M against those in custody," added Chandy.

Former firebrand CPI-M

leader Chandrasekheran was hacked to death by hired killers under the directions of the CPI-M on May 4 night near Kozhikode.

The CPI-M has turned jittery after disclosures by 20 of the accused now in custody that the killing was carried out under the directions of known leaders of the party.

"Yes, it's true that the actual killing was done by the grassroot workers. The probe team will certainly look into the role of the conspirators. There will be no soft corner shown to any leader, whosoever he is," said Chandy.

## Tamil Nadu would soon become surplus in power: CM

SIANS  
CHENNAI

TAMIL Nadu Chief Minister J Jayalithaa on Saturday reiterated that the state would soon become surplus in power owing to various measures taken by her government.

"I am personally overseeing the power situation in the state. I assure you that the state would regain its status of being surplus in power," said Jayalithaa while campaigning for her party's candidate V R Karthik Thondaiman for the forthcoming June 12 by-poll in Pudukottai assembly constituency, around 350 km from Chennai.

Listing out various power projects in the state, Jayalithaa said the 3,500 MW gap between power demand and supply would be bridged soon and the state would be free of power cuts.

She said the previous DMK government did not take any steps to improve the power generation capacity in the state, leading to power outages now.

According to her, the power situation has improved with windmills increasing their production and the duration of power cuts having been reduced to three hours.

Listing out the various welfare schemes initiated by her government during the last one year, Jayalithaa said her government has arrested 1,190 land grabbers in the state and restored land worth around Rs 758 crore to their rightful owners.

She urged people to vote for her party as she is working day and night to make the state number one in the country.

The by-poll in Pudukottai is necessitated after the death of CPI's legislator S P Muthukumar in a road accident in April.

## POPULAR SUPPORT

YSR Congress party legislator Vijayalakshmi at an election meeting, in Ongole Church Centre Andhra Pradesh, on Saturday. Vijayalakshmi who is spearheading the party's campaigning for the June 12 by-election to the Assembly is getting good response. (PTI).



## Notices to 3 Andhra MLAs in liquor pay-off scam

SIANS  
HYDERABAD

THE Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) in Andhra Pradesh on Saturday issued notices to three legislators in liquor pay-off case.

Ruling Congress party lawmaker M. Kavitha and main opposition Telugu Desam Party's lawmakers Venkata Veeriah and V. Ramakrishna Babu have been asked to appear before the ACB for questioning.

All the three are members of state assembly. The ACB also issued notices to some former legislators and leaders of various political parties, asking them to appear before it June 18, 19 and 20. All of them allegedly received bribes from liquor mafia.

The other leaders who were issued notices include the CPI's former legislator Puvvada Nageswara Rao, former Congress legislator and now YSR Congress Party candidate from Yemmiganur assembly constituency K. Chenna Kesava Reddy, and state cabinet minister Dharmana Prasada Rao's son and Youth Congress leader D. Ram Manohar Naidu.

It was not immediately clear if the ACB also sent notice to former state minister Mopidevi Venkataramana, who is now in jail in YSR Congress Party leader YS Jaganmohan Reddy's case of amassing illegal wealth.

Venkataramana was excise minister at the time of his arrest by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) last month.

A liquor trader in February had alleged that he paid a bribe of Rs.10 lakh to the minister.

The ACB has been probing the liquor scam since late last year. The investigations so far have revealed that the liquor traders, excise and police officials and politicians had formed liquor syndicates in districts.

The liquor traders, running the business in the names of others, selling liquor at prices higher than those fixed by the excise department and committing other irregularities, are paying bribes to politicians of all hues, officials and even journalists in some districts to continue their activity.

# Karunanidhi demands removal of cartoon from NCERT textbook

SIANS  
CHENNAI

DMK PRESIDENT M Karunanidhi on Saturday urged the central government to remove from a textbook the controversial cartoon lampooning the anti-Hindi agitation that raged in Tamil Nadu in 1965 as it hurts people's sentiments.

In a statement issued in Chennai, Karunanidhi said: "The central government should intervene and remove the cartoon, respecting the sentiments of the Tamils."

Speaking to IANS, DMK spokesperson T K S Elangovan said: "I have asked my people to get all the political science textbooks of NCERT for checking. Cartoons should not form part of any textbook."

According to Karunanidhi, the cartoon in the Class 12 political science textbook prepared by the National Council

of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has hurt the sentiments of people and has caused deep anguish.

Elangovan said cartoons are a comment by a newspaper on an event and their relevance is of a temporary nature.

"Putting them in textbooks would result in distortion of history and the students getting confused," he added.

According to Karunanidhi, the credit for the agitation against the imposition of Hindi in the state goes to the DMK.

Tamil Nadu witnessed serious anti-Hindi agitations state wide in 1965, resulting in several deaths in police firing on the protestors. The agitation spearheaded by the DMK is one of the major reasons for the DMK coming to power in the state in 1967.

Even during the 1930s - prior to Indian independence in 1947 - the erstwhile



DMK MP and former telecom minister A Raja (left) seeks blessing of DMK chief M Karunanidhi at party headquarters, in Chennai, on Friday. (PTI)

Madras Presidency witnessed anti-Hindi agitations when the then Congress government wanted introduction of Hindi in schools.

MDMK general secretary

Vaiko also demanded the immediate removal of the controversial cartoon from the NCERT textbook on the grounds that it distorts history and hurts the sentiments of

the people.

He said even C.Rajagopalachari, who first advocated teaching of Hindi in schools in the 1930s, later opposed it in 1960s.

# BJP plays 'truth games' to save face in Karnataka, Cong irked

SIANS  
BANGALORE

TRUTH, the general belief is, will always triumph. It just has in Karnataka where talk of the town in the last four years has been that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) used money, caste and other not-so-fair means to capture power in the state.

After being in denial over

the way it managed to catapult to power in the state in May 2008 for the first time, the BJP has acknowledged the truth that people have been talking about all these years.

"We used money, caste, took in all and sundry going in the lanes and bylanes to form our government (in May 2008) as we did not have majority," state BJP chief K S Eshwarappa admitted at a

**The confession of Eshwarappa, as expected, has not evoked any public anger at all, because already people knew the reality.**

party meeting on Wednesday in his hometown Shimoga, about 280 km north of Bangalore.

The confession of Eshwarappa, as expected, has not evoked any public anger at all, because already people knew the reality.

The noises from the opposition Congress and Janata Dal-Secular (JD-S) have also been muted as they too had been going around saying that BJP liberally used money, caste and offers of ministerial and other plum posts to muster

majority to grab power.

However, Eshwarappa's truth-speaking drive has, expectedly, angered Congress and JD-S legislators who 'defected' to the BJP and have become ministers.

It has also incensed several BJP legislators and ministers who are loyal to former chief minister BS Yeddyurappa as he formed the party's first government in the state in

May 2008 with the help of six Independent legislators - the party had won only 110 seats in the 225-member assembly.

Later Yeddyurappa and the BJP launched what has been termed Operation Lotus (the flower is the BJP's election symbol) to lure around 10 Congress and JD-S legislators to quit the assembly and their parties and contest by-elections on the BJP ticket.

With this operation, the BJP succeeded in getting a majority of its own and now boasts of 120 members in the 225-member assembly.

Operation Lotus was believed to have been bankrolled by the now jailed mining baron G Janardhana Reddy, whose name was particularly mentioned by Eshwarappa when he made the confession in Shimoga.

# Russia wants Iran's input in Syria talks

AFP  
MOSCOW

RUSSIA on Saturday pushed its idea of an international Syria conference including Iran as it reaffirmed its opposition to the use of force against its ally after the latest violence.

Moscow said that denying Tehran a role in helping negotiate an end to the protracted crisis would be "thoughtless."

"We want this event to be effective," Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told reporters.

"To say that Iran doesn't have a place because it is already to blame for everything and it's part of the problem and not part of the solution, this is thoughtless to say the least from the point of view of serious diplomacy."

The Iranian government is one of the most important of a dwindling number of friends for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

Susan Rice, the US ambassador to the United Nations, has called Iran a "spoiler" and said it is "part of the problem in Syria." The United States has accused Iran of arming Assad's forces.

Russia has said that a conference on Syria was needed to overcome differences over how the peace plan of UN-Arab League envoy Kofi Annan should be implemented.

Lavrov said permanent UN Security Council members Russia, the United States, France, Britain and China, Syria's neighbours including Lebanon and Jordan, as well as the EU and the Arab League should take part in the get-together.

Moscow wants to hold the conference "as soon as possible", Lavrov said, without being more specific.

"We are saying honestly and openly that our conference — should our colleagues agree to it — should become the only format that supports the efforts to implement the Security Council resolutions that approved Kofi Annan's plan."

He stressed it might be necessary to overlook ideological divisions to settle the Syria crisis and he suggested that the United States should do so over Iran.

"Americans are pragmatists. When they want, they do not pay attention to ideological problems," Lavrov said.



Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at a news conference, in Moscow, on Saturday. (AP)

"This is pragmatism. It's simply necessary in foreign policy."

"We are talking about sav-

ing people's lives."

Lavrov acknowledged that Annan's tattered peace plan for Syria had begun to "ser-

iously falter" but stressed the Kremlin saw "no alternative" to it.

Diplomats said Friday that

Britain, France and the United States would draw up a UN Security Council resolution proposing sanctions

against Syria over the worsening conflict that culminated in a fresh massacre earlier this week.

At least 55 people were killed in Wednesday's assault on the village of Al-Kubeir, according to the Syrian Observatory.

UN officials believe that Syrian government forces and allied militia were behind the attack on the mainly Sunni Muslim village surrounded by an Alawite population loyal to Assad.

But Lavrov again reaffirmed Russia's opposition to the use of force.

"We will not sanction the use of force at the United Nations Security Council," he said.

"The way the Syrian crisis will be solved will play a huge role in the way the world will be: whether it will rely on the UN Charter or whether it will be considered a place where the rule of force reigns."

The use of force, he reiterated, would send shockwaves across the entire Middle East.

"All this risks the creation of a very large arc of instability from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf," he said, warning of "an absolutely real threat of a Sunni-Shiite standoff in the region."

## Tanzania govt invites UAE to invest in gas

REUTERS  
DAR ES SALAAM

TANZANIA'S president has invited investors from the United Arab Emirates to join the rush for oil and gas in the east African nation, after recent gas discoveries along its coastline, the president's office said on Saturday.

Together with oil finds in neighbouring Kenya and Uganda, significant gas finds in southern Tanzania have raised the profile of the region in the global energy industry. "We invite investors to come work with us in oil and gas exploration and even in investing in industries that will add more value by producing gas-related products," a statement from President Jakaya Kikwete's office quoted him telling a delegation from the UAE.

The delegation, which met the president on Friday, was led by the country's assistant foreign minister for economic affairs Khaled Ghanem Al-Ghaith, the statement said.

Executives from state-controlled Abu Dhabi National Energy Co. (TAQA), investment fund Mubadala, budget carrier Flydubai and UAE telecom

firm Etisalat, which is the majority shareholder in Tanzanian mobile phone operator Zantel, were also present.

Tanzania has licensed at least 18 international companies to carry out exploration of offshore and onshore energy reserves. British gas producer BG Group and explorer Ophir Energy said in May they had found gas off the coast. Norwegian oil and gas

**Together with oil finds in Kenya and Uganda, significant gas finds in southern Tanzania have raised the profile of the region in the global energy industry.**

firm Statoil also announced in February it had found natural gas offshore. Brazil's state-controlled oil company Petrobras, Artumas Group Inc (AGI), France's Maurel & Prom, Royal Dutch Shell and Aminex also hold exploration licenses.

The World Bank expects gas revenues to generate \$2-\$3 billion a year for the aid-dependent nation.

## China plans manned space launch this month

AP  
BEIJING

CHINA will launch three astronauts this month to dock with an orbiting experimental module, and the crew might include its first female space traveller, a government news agency said on Saturday.

A rocket carrying the Shenzhou 9 spacecraft was moved to a launch pad in China's desert northwest on Saturday for the mid-June flight, the Xinhua News Agency said, citing a space program spokesman.

The three-member crew will dock with and live in the Tiangong 1 orbital module launched last year, Xinhua said. The government has not said how long the mission will last.

Xinhua cited Niu Hongguang, deputy commander in chief of the manned space program, as saying the crew "might include female astronauts."

The government said in 2010 that two female air force pilots had joined the astronaut program but has disclosed no other details.

China's space program has made steady progress since a 2003 launch that made it only the third nation to put a man in space on its own. Two more manned missions have followed, one including a



Long March-2F rocket carrying the Shenzhou-9 spacecraft at the Jiuquan launch centre, in Jiuquan, on Saturday. (AP)

space walk.

China completed its first space rendezvous in November when the unmanned Shenzhou 8 docked with the Tiangong 1 by remote control. Tiangong 1 was launched on September 29.

Over the next few days, scientists will test the Shenzhou 9 spacecraft, the Long March 2F rocket and ground systems, Xinhua said, citing the

spokesman.

During the flight, one crew member will remain aboard the Shenzhou 9 "as a precautionary measure in case of emergency" while the others enter Tiangong 1, Xinhua said.

China has scheduled two space docking missions for this year and plans to complete a manned space station around 2020 to replace Tiangong 1. At about 60 tons,

the Chinese station will be considerably smaller than the 16-nation International Space Station.

Beijing launched its independent space station program after being turned away from the International Space Station, largely due to US objections. Washington is wary of the Chinese program's military links and of sharing technology with an economic and political rival.

## Peru copter search hit by bad weather

AP  
PERU

PERU police and the air force searched for a helicopter that went missing three days earlier with 14 South Koreans, Europeans and Peruvians on board in the country's southeast, officials said.

After storms had hampered rescue missions since the Sikorsky S-58 helicopter vanished in a mountain region on Wednesday, good weather finally allowed two helicopters to leave Cusco International Airport.

They headed for the remote Hualla Hualla region, the last point of contact with the aircraft, at an altitude of over 4,500 meters (14,760 feet).

Two mountain brigades were on the ground about two kilometers (1.2 miles) from where the HeliCusco chopper was believed to be located, police said.

Rain and snow had been major obstacles to the rescue workers until now.

The helicopter lost contact with its base in Hualla Hualla between the towns of Ocongate and Marcapata, near the snow-capped Apu Colque Cruz peak.

On board were eight South Koreans, a Czech, a Swede, a Dutch citizen and three Peruvians — two of them crew — according to owner HeliCusco.

## North Korea: No nuclear test planned at present

AP  
PYONGYANG

NORTH Korea says it has no current plans to conduct a nuclear test despite what it calls South Korean provocation. The statement Saturday from an unnamed Foreign Ministry spokesman comes amid worry that a third test could follow North Korea's long-range rocket launch in April.

South Korean intelligence officials have said satellite

images suggested the North was making nuclear test preparations.

But the North's statement says Seoul's recent criticism of a children's festival and other important events is meant to rattle North Korea into a nuclear test or military action so Seoul and others can increase sanctions.

Seoul called a North Korean threat on Monday against specific news agencies critical of the festival a "grave provocation."

## Japanese Brazilians seek new identity

AFP  
TOYOHASHI

economic crisis hit. For those left behind the change brings very particular challenges.

In April 2008 some 13,000 Brazilian workers and their families lived in Toyohashi, an industrial city in central Japan, 250 kilometres (155 miles) southwest of Tokyo. Only around 8,000 remain.

Many of the migrants look Japanese despite their Portuguese names and Brazilian passports, which should be a key help for integration, but at the same time many still know little of

Japanese language and culture.

With their numbers now in rapid decline the community has lost its self-sustaining critical mass, and those who choose to stay on are having to make extra efforts to bridge language and cultural divides.

Andrea Pereira moved to Japan with her husband more than 10 years ago, and their six-year-old daughter Ellen was born into a family that spoke Portuguese at home, meaning she has never had the chance to properly learn Japanese.

The Pereiras' solution was to send her to a pre-school run by a local Brazilian association in Toyohashi, where she can learn about her host culture, and how to talk to those around her.

"We hope that we can take away as much anxiety as possible," said pre-school teacher Tsuyuko Yokota, adding that the school would help the children make a "smooth and fun start" at elementary school. "Although there are Brazilian schools here that teach in our mother tongue of Portuguese, I'd prefer a Japanese school," said

Pereira, 30, a mother of three. "We prefer them to be learning what it's like to be Japanese," she said.

The families' divided identities are a legacy of a complicated history.

Thousands of Japanese went to South America at the start of the 20th century, accepting low wages and poor working conditions on coffee plantations after the abolition of slavery.

In the past 100 years, the number of Brazilians of Japanese descent has grown to around 1.4 million, according to official statistics.

# Obama woos Hispanics with TV, radio ads

AP  
KISSIMMEE

HER Latin American background is clear in her speech as Lynnette Acosta talks about how President Barack Obama's health care plan could help a diabetic neighbour.

"La familia es bien importante para el presidente Obama. ¿E? sabe que familias que son luchadores a veces lo han perdido todo porque alguien en la familia se enfermó?" Acosta says in an Obama campaign ad. The English translation: "Family is very important to President Obama. And he understands that families that are fighters sometimes have lost everything when someone gets sick."

The upbeat ad starring a Florida resident is one of several such spots the Democrat's team is running on Spanish-language stations in pivotal election states, and it contrasts sharply with the hard-hitting commercials in English that the incumbent's campaign is airing against Republican rival Mitt Romney.

With the lighter tone, Obama hopes to shore up what polls indicate is a large lead over Romney among Hispanics. They are the fastest growing minority

group in the US, usually a reliable Democratic voting bloc that's causing consternation for Republicans trying to position their party for the future. Obama is reinforcing his advantage with a sizable Spanish language TV and radio ad campaign in some of the states expected to be among the most contested in the general election. On this front, he is vastly outpacing Romney in a race that could be decided by thin margins in many states.

"It makes sense for Obama to run nice ads in Spanish that only Latinos watch. It's a way of saying, 'We're the candidate and the party that respect you,'" said Marc Campos, a Texas-based Democratic strategist who produces campaign commercials targeting Hispanics. "When they see positive, feel-good ads in their native language it reinforces the notion that this administration is working on their behalf."

An NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll released last month found Obama leading Romney among Hispanic voters by a margin of 61-27 percent. It's a gap so wide that for now at least, Obama's campaign is running positive ads designed to boost confidence

in the president among Hispanics rather than to discredit Romney.

The Obama campaign has spent \$1.7 million since mid-April on Spanish-language ads in Florida, Nevada and Colorado, according to SMG-Delta, a media firm that tracks campaign advertising. Obama carried all three states in 2008 against Republican John McCain; all are closely contested this time.

Romney's campaign, by contrast, has spent just \$33,000 on Spanish language ads in television markets in North Carolina and Ohio. Republican-leaning independent groups spending heavily for Romney in swing states have yet to run general election ads aimed at Hispanics.

Romney's campaign aired Spanish-language ads bashing then-rival Newt Gingrich in Florida before the state's primary in January. While Republicans insist they can make inroads among Hispanic voters with a sharp focus on jobs and the economy, Romney's call for tougher border control measures and endorsement of a controversial Arizona law will make it difficult for him to narrow the gap with Obama.



President Barack Obama waves during an appearance at the University of Nevada, in Las Vegas, on Friday. (AFP)

## Public-employee pensions face a rollback in California

AP  
SAN DIEGO

FOR years, companies have been chipping away at workers' pensions. Now, two California cities may help pave the way for governments to follow suit.

Voters in San Diego and San Jose, the nation's eighth- and 10th-largest cities, overwhelmingly approved ballot measures last week to roll back municipal retirement benefits, and not just for future hires but for current employees.

From coast to coast, the pensions of current public employees have long been generally considered untouchable. But now, some politicians are saying those obligations are trumped by the need to provide for the public's health and safety.

The two California cases could put that argument to the test in a legal battle that could resonate in cash-strapped state capitols and city halls across the country. Lawsuits have already been filed in both cities.

"Other states are going to have to pay attention," said Amy Monahan, a law professor at University of Minnesota.

The court battles are playing out as lawmakers across the U.S. grapple with ballooning pension obligations that increasingly threaten schools, police, health clinics and other basic services.

State and local governments may have \$3 trillion in unfunded pension liabilities, and seven states and six large cities will be unable to cover their obligations beyond 2020, Northwestern University finance professor Joshua Rauh estimated last year.

In San Jose, current employees face salary cuts of up to 16 percent to fund the city's pension plan. If

they choose, they can instead accept a lower benefit and see the current retirement age of 55 raised to 57 for police officers and firefighters, and to 62 for other employees.

The voter-approved measure in San Diego imposes a six-year freeze on the pay levels used to determine pension benefits for current employees, a move that is expected to save nearly \$1 billion over 30 years. Public employee unions have sued to block the measure, saying City Hall failed to negotiate the ballot's wording as required by state law.

Legal experts expect the cities to argue that their obligations to provide basic services such as police protection and garbage removal override promises made to employees.

In San Diego, the city's payments to its retirement fund soared from \$43 million in 1999 to \$231.2 million this year, equal to 20 percent of the operating budget. At the same time, the 1.3 million residents saw roads deteriorate and libraries cut hours. For a while, fire stations had to share engines and trucks. The city has cut its workforce 14 percent since 2005.

San Jose's pension payments jumped from \$73 million in 2001 to \$245 million this year, or 27 percent of its operating budget. Four libraries and a police station that were built over the past decade have never even opened because the city cannot afford to operate them. The city of 960,000 cut its workforce 27 percent over the past 10 years.

"It's a problem that threatens our ability to remain a city and provide services to our people," said Mayor Chuck Reed. "It's huge dollar amounts and has a huge impact on services."

## New front expected in fight over Arizona law

AP  
PHOENIX

A FORTHCOMING US Supreme Court decision on Arizona's controversial immigration law, which some experts believe could uphold the most controversial aspects of the measure, won't end legal disputes on the matter and instead is likely to ignite renewed assaults by the law's opponents.

The court is evaluating the 2010 law on only the question of whether Arizona's attempt to fix its border problems is trumped by federal law. That means that opponents could still ask the courts to block enforcement of the law on other legal grounds.

For example, the high court isn't considering the possibility that racial profiling may arise from the law, because the Obama administration's lawsuit didn't challenge it on those grounds. The administration focused instead on whether federal law supersedes the state law, an issue

known as "pre-emption."

"All the court is going to decide is the pre-emption issue," said Linton Joaquin, general counsel for the National Immigration Law Center, an advocacy group for low-income immigrants that's part of a coalition of opponents that filed a separate challenge.

"But we think this law basically requires racial profiling by mandating that officers detain and investigate people that they have reasonable suspicions of being unauthorized."

The case was argued before the high court in April, and a ruling is expected by the end of June.

Based partly on skeptical questions posed by justices during the hearing, legal experts expect that the court likely will uphold Arizona's requirement that police check the immigration status of people they stop for other reasons; that provision was put on hold by a judge in July 2010 and hasn't yet been

enforced. Less controversial parts of the law were allowed to take effect.

A decision in favor of Arizona could clear the way for other states to enforce immigration-check require-

**The court is evaluating the 2010 law on only the question of whether Arizona's attempt to fix its border problems is trumped by federal law.**

ments and create an opening for states to take a larger role in immigration enforcement after mostly staying out of it for decades and letting the federal government handle it alone.

Five other states, Alabama, Georgia, Indiana, South Carolina and Utah, have enacted similar laws.

If Arizona wins at the Supreme Court, opponents

say they likely would go back to lower courts to seek injunctions on other grounds before any provisions that win approval from the Supreme Court take effect.

They also may ask the courts to block enforcement of the law's most controversial parts by arguing that the law requires police to extend the length of time of traffic stops beyond the permitted time.

"We are preparing for the next step in case of a bad decision," said Andre Segura, an attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union, which also is fighting the law in court.

Segura said it's unlikely that a Supreme Court decision that upholds the Arizona law would go into effect immediately. Instead, the case would probably be given back to lower courts to decide when it takes effect, though it's unclear how long it would take for the courts to decide when police can start enforcing the provision.

## E coli strain sickens 14 in six states

REUTERS  
ATLANTA

ONE person has died and 13 more have fallen sick in six US states in the past two months by a mysterious outbreak of a strain of E.coli bacteria, federal health officials said on Friday.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has not yet identified a source of the bacteria, which since April 15 has sickened people in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, Louisiana and California.

A child in Louisiana died after being infected, officials said.

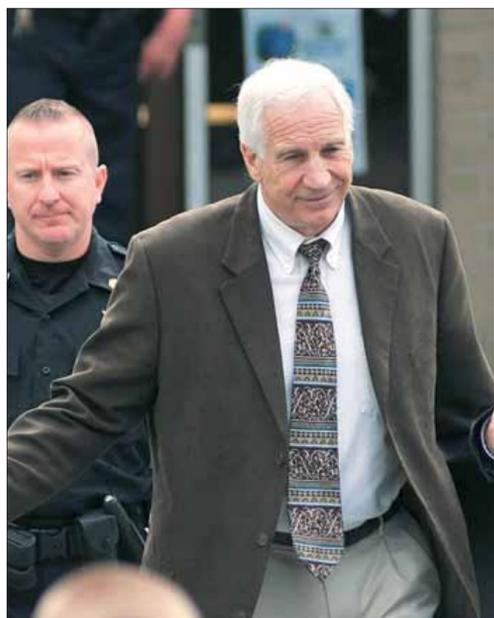
"The investigation is looking at both food and non-food sources as a part of the ongoing investigation," the CDC said in a statement on Friday.

The most recent report of illness from Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli O145, commonly abbreviated as E.Coli, was on June 4, according to the agency.

In Louisiana, where no new cases have been reported since May, health officials initially thought the infection might be linked to a petting zoo.

## Sandusky jury's ties no guarantee of sympathy

REUTERS  
PENNSYLVANIA



Former Pennsylvania State assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky.

IT might appear on the surface that former Penn State assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky has one thing going in his favour as he heads into his child sexual abuse trial on Monday — lots of jurors with ties to the college where he worked for decades.

But legal and jury experts say that familiarity is no guarantee of sympathy for Sandusky and may in fact hurt him if they come to blame him for tarnishing the university's image.

Eight of the 12 jurors picked this week have links to Pennsylvania State University. Legal analysts said those ties could mean a boost for the accused serial predator since he will defend himself before people who know the university and his role in its high-powered foot-

ball programme. The Penn State links underscore defence attorney Joe Amendola's strategy of keeping the trial in Pennsylvania's rural Centre County, the school's backyard.

Prosecutors had sought in January to have the case moved, saying it was impossible to find an impartial jury, but Judge John Cleland turned the bid down.

"It's clear to anyone that follows the case that Jerry Sandusky stands a better chance with people that know him," said Philadelphia attorney Theodore Simon, a vice-president of the National Association of Criminal defence Lawyers.

Victor Vieth, executive director of the National Child Protection Training Center, said Sandusky might be helped by jurors who saw him as a community leader and respected Penn State figure. But others could want

him punished for the damage he had done to Penn State, said Vieth, a former Minnesota prosecutor whose center trains police and professionals on child abuse issues.

"It could go either way. You have to know the individual heart of each of the jurors," he said. "If you have a lot of evidence, jurors can get past their biases."

Sandusky starts trial on Monday in Pennsylvania's Centre County Court of Common Pleas on 52 counts of sexually abusing 10 boys. The white-haired former assistant coach, the architect of Penn State defenses for decades, faces more than 500 years in prison if convicted.

Prosecutors have accused Sandusky of meeting the boys over a 15-year period through a charity he founded, the Second Mile. They have alleged some of the assaults took place at Penn State facilities.

# GOP groups outspend Democrats in TV advertising, dent Obama's lead

AP  
WASHINGTON

INDEPENDENT Republican groups are heavily outspending their cross-party counterparts on television advertising in the campaigns for the White House and control of the Senate, eating into President Barack Obama's financial advantage over Mitt Romney and prompting expressions of alarm from top congressional Democrats.

The disparity is most evident in the race for the White House, where Crossroads GPS, Restore Our Future and other organisations aligned with the Republicans spent nearly \$37 million on TV ads through the first few days of June, most of it attacking Obama. That compares with about \$11 million by groups supporting the president, with much of it from Priorities USA Action.

Senate campaigns also have been affected, notably in Ohio, where Democratic Senator Sherrod Brown's commanding lead in the polls began to erode this spring after the US Chamber of Commerce and others started a televised attack. Overall, Republican-aligned organizations have spent roughly \$30 million on ads in key races, compared with about \$11 million for groups supporting Democrats. Underscoring the concern, Representative Steve Israel of



Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney, in San Antonio, Texas, recently. (AP)

New York, who heads Democrats' efforts to regain House control, issued a thinly veiled call for his party's donors to step up. The recent recall election in Wisconsin "should serve as a wake-up call," he wrote, referring to the lopsided advantage in spending by outside groups that helped Republican Governor Scott

Walker overcome a union-backed bid to dump him from office.

Other Democratic efforts to catch up are less publicised, particularly when it comes to Priorities USA Action, the group formed to boost Obama's re-election.

David Axelrod, a top strategist for the president, is expect-

ed to meet with potential donors to the group in New York on Monday, according to officials familiar with his plans. Separately, former President Bill Clinton has agreed to help, although it isn't clear whether he will appear at a formal fundraising event.

Obama's campaign manager, Jim Messina, and White

House aide David Plouffe, who ran the 2008 campaign, met previously with possible donors to the group.

The heavy infusion of outside money comes on top of candidate spending and ads financed by the political parties. While it can alter a race in several ways, one Democrat with long campaign experi-

ence cautioned that the impact easily can be overstated.

"You hate to be outspent at all, but in point of fact if you're communicating loudly and the other guy is communicating twice as loudly, that doesn't mean he's communicating twice as effectively," said Jim Jordan, who has worked in presidential and Senate races.

Outside groups have allowed Romney to remain competitive in the television ads wars while restocking a treasury that was depleted during the battle for the Republican nomination. It also raises the possibility that Obama, the Democratic Party and allied groups will be outspent by a combination of Romney, the GOP and allied organisations, erasing an advantage the president had in 2008.

Earlier this year, Obama's campaign decided to dip into its own treasury to respond to commercials from the American Energy Alliance, which had spent more than \$3 million attacking the president.

Privately, the president's top campaign aides frequently express concern about the disparity, according to several Democratic officials who spoke on condition of anonymity. There is irony in that, because Obama previously had shunned support from groups that may rely on unlimited or undisclosed donations.

## Brazil govt grants asylum to Bolivian senator

AP  
LA PAZ (BOLIVIA)

BRAZIL announced on Friday that it was granting asylum to a Bolivian opposition senator who has holed up in its embassy in La Paz claiming political persecution and saying he feared for his life.

The decision about Senator Roger Pinto came in a one-sentence email that did not explain Brazil's reasoning for granting the request.

Pinto, a member of Bolivia's small right-wing opposition bloc in congress, has been living in the embassy since May 28 and accuses President Evo Morales' government of corruption though he has provided no evidence.

He says he sought asylum after he and his family received telephoned death threats.

But Bolivia's government says Pinto's exile is an opposition smear campaign against Morales. It accuses Pinto of corruption and wants him on criminal charges including economic damage to the state from when he was governor of the northern state of Pando, which borders Brazil.

Pinto did not make any statement but one of his colleagues, Senator Geanine Anez, said Brazil had confirmed Pinto's accusations.

Tovar Munes, a spokesman for Brazil's Foreign Ministry in Brasilia, said Pinto remained in the embassy in La Paz.

Despite winning asylum, Pinto will not be allowed to travel to Brazil until the Bolivian government agrees with Brazil's action, Munes said, citing rules within a 1954 convention on diplomatic asylum.

If the Bolivian government decides it will not allow Pinto to leave, "he could give up his asylum request and leave the embassy, or he could stay for a long period of time at the embassy," said Munes.

The spokesman added that Pinto's is alone in the embassy that his family is not with him.

## Hundreds rally against birth control law in Chicago

REUTERS  
CHICAGO

MORE than 500 people, some carrying crucifixes and pictures of religious saints, rallied in Chicago on Friday to protest a government regulation that requires employers to provide health insurance coverage for contraceptives to employees.

The regulation, which is part of President Barack Obama's healthcare reform law, has sparked a dispute between the administration and the Roman Catholic Church, which opposes artificial contraception.

**The original law exempted churches and other houses of worship from covering contraception on the basis of religious objections.**

Opponents of the law say the government is forcing them to support contraception and sterilisation in violation of their religious beliefs.

"I think this is more than a Catholic issue - this is a religious freedom issue," said Linda Duplantis, a Catholic who attended the rally in Federal Plaza. "I think it's for anybody who believes in religious freedom in this country."

Speakers at the rally included Rabbi Philip Lefkowitz, chair of the legislative committee of the Chicago Rabbinical Council, who said an attack on the freedom of one religion is "an attack on any

religious faith in this country".

Eric Scheidler, executive director of the Pro-Life Action League, said similar protests were held Friday in other cities, including Atlanta, Madison, Wisconsin, Wilmington, Delaware, Lansing, Michigan, and Santa Ana, California.

Rally participants in Chicago held yellow-and-white papal flags and signs with slogans such as "Keep Your Mandate Off My Rosary." Also attending were Catholic priests and nuns.

Last month, the University of Notre Dame and other Catholic institutions sued the Obama administration to block the regulation.

The original law exempted churches and other houses of worship from covering contraception on the basis of religious objections. But it did not carve out an exception for religious nonprofits, such as hospitals, charities and schools, sparking protests from church leaders.

As a compromise, Obama scaled back the healthcare rule in February, announcing that insurance companies would cover the cost of the birth control for religious employers. Lawsuits said the accommodation did not go far enough.

Sarah Lipton-Lubet, a lawyer with the American Civil Liberties Union, said the mandate is not new and 28 states require insurers to cover birth control to the same extent as other medications.

## Probe into classified US security information leaks begins

AFP  
WASHINGTON

US ATTORNEY-GENERAL Eric Holder has appointed prosecutors to lead two criminal investigations of high-profile leaks of classified national security information to the media.

The "highly-respected and experienced prosecutors will be directing separate investigations currently being conducted by the FBI," Holder said in a statement on Friday. "I have notified members of Congress and plan to provide more information, as appropriate, to members of the Judiciary and Intelligence Committees," Holder said.

"The unauthorised disclosure of classified information can compromise the security of this country and all Americans, and it will not be

tolerated," he added.

The prosecutors were identified as US Attorneys Ronald Machen of the District of Columbia and Rod Rosenstein of Maryland. Holder expressed confidence in their ability to "doggedly follow the facts and the evidence."

**The unauthorised disclosure of classified information can compromise the security of this country and all Americans, and it will not be tolerated.**

ERIC HOLDER

ence in the pursuit of justice wherever it leads."

The announcement followed several explosive stories in US media: describing

President Barack Obama's alleged push for cyber attacks on computers that run Iran's nuclear facilities; an apparent "kill list" of counterterrorism targets against whom Obama has authorised lethal action; and a secret drone campaign against terrorists in Yemen.

The New York Times reported that sources for their articles on the covert programmes included former or current administration officials.

Some Republicans have suggested the information was leaked to boost Obama's image as a tough commander-in-chief in an election year.

Senator John McCain, who lost the 2008 presidential race to Obama, has been leading the accusations. He received backing Thursday from Peter King, chairman of the House Homeland Security

Committee. "It has to be for reelection," King told Politico about the leaks. "They can deny it all they want. But it would require a suspension of belief to believe it's not being done for political purposes."

Obama hit back on Friday, labeling the allegations "offensive."

"The notion that my White House would purposely release classified national security information is offensive," Obama said. "It's wrong. And, you know, people I think need to have a better sense of how I approach this office and how the people around me here approach this office."

"We're dealing with issues that can touch on the safety and security of the American people, our families, or our military personnel, or our allies. And so we don't play with that," Obama said.

## Mexican ex-governor denies drug link charges

AP  
MEXICO CITY

THE former governor of the Mexican border state of Tamaulipas on Friday denied that he took money from drug cartels and channelled it through front men to buy properties in Texas, calling the allegations part of an effort to influence the July 1 presidential elections.

Former governor Tomas Yarrington told MVS radio station that President Felipe Calderon's administration was using the allegations to help the candidate of his conservative National Action Party, or PAN, which has sought to portray Yarrington's Institutional Revolutionary Party as corrupt and soft on drug trafficking.

"What is happening here is a malicious use of law enforcement instruments to influence



Mexican marines escort Fernando Zurita Herrera, a financial operator for Zetas drug gang, in Veracruz, on Friday. (REUTERS)

an election once again," Yarrington told the radio station. "It is very clear that they

are trying to make the investigations coincide with the campaign ads and political speech-

es of the PAN candidate."

U.S. authorities have filed civil suits to try to confiscate

a condominium in South Padre Island and a 46-acre (18.6-hectare) property in San Antonio allegedly owned or controlled by Yarrington. He has denied owning the properties.

No criminal charges have been filed against Yarrington, who was Tamaulipas governor from 1999 to 2004.

"I have not had any relation with organised crime, I have not received bribes nor have I protected any criminal," he said. "I have not laundered money, nor do I have real estate interests in Texas."

Mexican investigators have ordered his accounts frozen, but Yarrington claimed he had only about 200,000 pesos (\$11,500) in the accounts.

Yarrington also said he had no business dealings with a Mexican businessman, Fernando Alejandro Cano Martinez, named in a US indictment.

# Five bombs hit Iraq pipelines, exports unhurt

AFP  
KIRKUK

FIVE bombs exploded at a northern Iraqi oil field on Saturday morning, damaging two pipelines without affecting the country's vital crude exports, officials said.

The pipelines transport oil from the Bai Hassan field in the disputed province of Kirkuk to the Ceyhan pipeline that exports crude via Turkey.

"There was an explosion against oil pipelines in the Bai Hassan oil field; it was a terrorist attack," said Abid Hassan, mayor of the Dibis district where the field is located.

An executive of state-owned North Oil Co said two bombs struck the pipelines at around 6:30 am which damaged the pipelines but "has not affected the export of oil".

Three other roadside bombs detonated at the field, but did not cause any damage, and security forces defused two more.

"There is no protection for this oil field from the oil and security ministries," the executive said, referring to the interior and defence ministries. "They depend on tribes who live nearby to protect them, but these tribes do not have arms."

Two bombs blew up near two oil wells in Bai Hassan oilfield without causing a fire. We are assessing the damage and a technical crew has started repairs. Exports were not affected," Asim Jihad, a

spokesman for the oil ministry, said.

The explosion occurred early on Saturday and was caused by bombs placed under two oil pipelines around 45 km (25 miles) northwest of the oil city, an oil police official in Kirkuk said.

The Bai Hassan field lies within a tract of disputed territory that is claimed by both the central government and Kurdish regional authorities. The unresolved row is frequently cited by diplomats and officials as one of the biggest threats to Iraq's long-term stability.

The Kirkuk-Ceyhan pipeline pumps between 450,000 to 500,000 barrels of crude oil per day.

Iraq relies on oil sales for the vast majority of government income, and of its approximately 2.45 million bpd of exports, most are via terminals in the south of the country.

"We managed to defuse four more bombs in the same area," the official said on condition of anonymity. Energy installations are frequently targeted by insurgents more than nine years after the 2003 US-led invasion that ousted Saddam Hussein.

The bulk of Iraq's oil is exported from the southern terminals of Basra but around 400,000-450,000 barrels - a quarter of all exports - is pumped through the strategic Kirkuk-Ceyhan pipeline to Ceyhan port in Turkey. The pipeline has a capacity of 1.6 million barrels per day.

## EURO SOCCER DANCE

Artistes perform a traditional dance at the start of the Euro 2012 championship football match between Germany and Portugal, at the Arena Lviv, Ukraine, on Saturday. (AFP)



# 9 Jihadists, among 11 killed in Yemen

AFP  
ADEN

AL QAEDA militants have killed two soldiers in Yemen's Abyan province, prompting troops to shell jihadist positions and kill nine extremists, military and local sources said on Saturday.

"Al Qaeda militants opened machinegun fire on an army post on the western outskirts of Jaar," an Al Qaeda stronghold the army has been trying to retake since last month, "killing two soldiers and wounding four others," a military official said.

## Yemeni forces launched an all-out offensive at reclaiming towns lost to Al Qaeda

Troops responded to the late Friday assault by shelling Al Qaeda positions on Jaar outskirts killing "several militants," the official said.

A source in Jaar confirmed the shelling saying "we have buried nine Al Qaeda militants in the town's cemetery," adding that five other jihadists were also wounded.

Yemeni forces launched an all-out offensive on May 12 aimed at reclaiming towns and cities lost to Al Qaeda during the past year, including Abyan's capital Zinjibar. Since the beginning of the attack, 457 people have been killed, according to an AFP tally combined from different sources.

This includes 342 Al-Qaeda militants, 70 soldiers, 26 local armed men, and 19 civilians.

# French Afghan pullout from July

AFP  
TULLE (FRANCE)

PRESIDENT Francois Hollande said on Saturday that France will begin its Afghanistan pullout next month and complete it by year-end, after four French troops were killed in a Taliban attack.

Hollande said France would pay a "national homage" to the men killed in a suicide bombing and that five wounded soldiers would be repatriated rapidly.

Defence Minister Jean-

Yves Le Drian will head to Afghanistan on Sunday.

Hollande said the withdrawal of French troops from Afghanistan, one of his presidential campaign pledges, "will begin in the month of July, will be carried out and be completed at the end of 2012."

"In the meantime, everything must be done for our troops to meet their obligations but with the highest level of security and with the greatest vigilance for the lives of the soldiers.

"I am making this engage-

ment here and I will be the guarantor for this operation,"

Hollande said in the central town of Tulle, where he was to attend a commemoration of the massacre of civilians by the Nazis on June 9, 1944.

He added that the attack "does not change anything, it neither accelerates nor delays" withdrawal plans.

While some have called for the pullout to be sped up, "it is not possible to go faster," he said.

The four killed on Saturday were the first French soldiers to be lost in Afghanistan since

January 20, when an Afghan soldier shot dead four unarmed soldiers and wounded 15 others.

According to the French defence ministry, the soldiers taking part in a "control operation" in the eastern province of Kapisa bordering Pakistan where insurgents are very active.

Afghan interior ministry spokesman Sediq Sediqqi told AFP the attacker was disguised as a woman wearing a burqa.

Three of the five wounded were in critical condition.

# Many wounded as Bahraini police tackle protesters

AFP  
DUBAI

BAHRAINI police wounded several people on Saturday morning when they fired sound bombs, tear gas and bird shot to disperse dozens who protested across several Shiite areas, witnesses said.

"Down Hamad," chanted dozens of supporters of the youth group of the "Revolution of February 14," referring to Bahrain's Sunni monarch. "The people want to overthrow the regime."

"We have the right to choose our destiny," they chanted, waving the kingdom's red and white flag.

An exact toll of those hurt cannot be obtained, as wounded protesters are treated in homes from fear of being arrested in hospital.

Hundreds took part in similar protests near Manama on Friday calling for the release of opposition detainees, witnesses said.

And on Wednesday, leading Shiite rights activist Nabil Rajab was re-arrested pending a probe into tweets deemed insulting to Sunnis, prosecutors said.

## Bahrain's rulers have crucial support from neighbouring Saudi Arabia, but are under pressure from their US allies to reopen dialogue with Shiite opposition factions.

Rajab led anti-government protests following a government crackdown on Shiite-led demonstrations against the regime in March 2011. The six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, a grouping of the Sunni Arab monarchies in the Gulf, have been discussing a Saudi proposal that would lead to a form of closer political union.

The first step in this process would be the union of Sunni-ruled

Bahrain, which has a Shiite majority, with Sunni-dominated Saudi Arabia. The proposal has prompted protests from Bahraini Shiites, who insisted that a referendum must be held for such a proposal to be endorsed.

Bahrain's rulers have crucial support from neighbouring Saudi Arabia, but are under pressure from their US allies to reopen dialogue with Shiite opposition factions. A new government initiative for talks is expected to be announced next week. But main Shiite groups have already signaled that negotiations are futile unless the ruling dynasty agrees to give up its near total control of government affairs in the strategic island, which is home to the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet.

Earlier Friday, a defense lawyer said a court hearing is planned next week for an 11-year-old boy detained for allegedly taking part in the anti-government protests.

# Global outlook to be gloomier: QNB

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

developments" in the eurozone over the next two years.

However, this scenario is challenged by a recent but growing consensus that a Greek exit from the eurozone is now highly likely within the next year, possibly within months.

On June 4, Standard & Poor's credit ratings agency assigned a 33 percent probability to a Greek exit, and even higher odds are implied on spread betting markets.

The outcome of the Greek elections on June 17th may affect only the timing of this exit. An increase in the number of seats going to anti-bailout parties would increase the likelihood of an early exit, but the opposite result might only delay the event.

In addition, there are fears that Spain, with an economy five times larger than Greece, might also be forced to leave the Euro. On May 25th, Spain's third biggest bank, Bankia, announced that it required a 219bn bailout.

This increased concerns about government debt obligations and the health of the country's residential property market, the main source of Bankia's losses.

Finally, a slew of negative data over the last few weeks from beyond the eurozone suggests greater weakness in other parts of the global economy.

In the US, job creation in May was sharply below expectations and the unemployment rate ticked up, after a period of steady decline, to 8.2 percent. In China, house prices continue to fall and the latest services sector

data was the weakest in a year. More worryingly, India's GDP growth fell to a nine-year low of 5.3 percent in the first quarter.

In response to the bad data and heightened risk-perceptions emanating from the eurozone, equities have been falling and oil has slipped to its lowest level since January 2011, as the outlook for global demand has weakened.

On the policy front, the OECD report offered some suggestions for addressing the eurozone woes. Firstly, it suggested that some of the resources of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) should be used to recapitalize banks. The ESM is a 2500bn rescue fund, with contributions from all the eurozone members, and may start operations on July 9th, pending member state ratifications.

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We are looking forward to your application to join our group of smart and savvy news professionals

## Reporters

- Work experience as a Print Journalist in an English language newspaper for 2-5 years
- A graduate degree, preferably in Journalism or English Literature or any social science
- Knowledge of Arabic an added advantage
- Good knowledge of Qatar and the region
- Possession of a valid Qatari driving licence preferable

## Copy Editors

- Work experience as a Print Journalist in an English language newspaper for 2-5 years
- Having sound knowledge of Quark Xpress 6.5 in Macintosh
- A graduate degree, preferably Journalism or English Literature or any social science
- Should have a good command over English grammar
- The ability to make pages with speed and accuracy

## Secretarial Staff

- A graduate degree
- Fluent in English
- Good computer skills
- Systematic, methodical and hard working

Attractive remuneration packages. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Please email your resume to [mediajobsqatar@gmail.com](mailto:mediajobsqatar@gmail.com)