



19th September 2013

British English edition

Issue Number 206

## In this issue

**Toyota** boss dies  
**Time** for small and large  
**Mars** moon eclipse  
**Election** in Norway  
**Chinese** ship crosses Arctic  
**Costa Concordia** salvage operation  
**Miskito** Indian land grant  
**Visiting** world's largest cave  
**Himalayan** peaks named  
**40th** anniversary protests in Chile  
**'New'** van Gogh painting  
**'Jurassic Park'** disproved  
**Australia's** new prime minister  
**World's** ugliest creature  
**Catalonia** human chain  
**Return** of Hercule Poirot  
**St Petersburg** G20 meeting  
**Ig** Nobel prize awards  
**Hitler's** last witness  
**Glossary** Crossword and Wordsearch Puzzle



John Kerry (L), the USA's secretary of state, and Sergei Lavrov (R), Russia's foreign minister, in Geneva

## SYRIA, CHEMICAL WEAPONS SOLUTION?

Sergei Lavrov, Russia's foreign minister, and the USA's secretary of state, John Kerry, met for talks, in Geneva, in Switzerland, on 13th September. Their meeting took place in one of the city's larger hotels. The two men discussed what should be done about Syria's chemical weapons.

In recent weeks Barack Obama, the president of the USA, and François Hollande, the president of France, threatened to launch airstrikes, or fire missiles, at Syrian army bases. They believe the Syrian army has carried out several chemical weapon attacks against opposition groups in the country. The airstrikes, the two presidents said, would be a punishment for using chemical weapons.

Traditionally, Russia has been a friend and ally of Syria. Syria buys many things from Russia including weapons. Syria allows Russian navy ships to use Tartus.

This is one of Syria's ports on the Mediterranean Sea.

Vladimir Putin, the president of Russia, and other Russian senior officials say they do not believe the Syrian army has used chemical weapons. They suspect opposition groups, or rebels, in Syria, have organised some chemical attacks. The rebels, they say, wanted the Syrian army to be blamed for them. If other countries, such as the USA, believed this they might then help the rebels by launching airstrikes against the Syrian army.

After three days of talks Mr Lavrov and Mr Kerry made an announcement. They said they had agreed on what should be done with Syria's chemical weapons. First, Syria would have to provide a list of all of them and where they were being kept. Next, the Syrian government must allow a team of specially trained chemical weapons experts to enter the country. Then, by

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the middle of next year, all the country's chemical weapons would have to be handed over to the inspectors. After this the weapons would be taken out of the country or destroyed.

Mr Lavrov said the agreement, or deal, meant American and French military strikes on Syria were no longer necessary. Russia is believed to have made sure that Syria agrees with this plan. By stopping the USA and other countries from attacking Syria its army now has a better chance of defeating the rebels.

Mr Obama insisted that Syria must comply with the agreed arrangements. If it didn't, he warned, the USA would be prepared to launch air attacks on Syrian army bases.



*Bashar al-Assad, president of Syria*

The fighting began in Syria over two and a half years ago. It started after the government ordered the army to use weapons to stop street protests in several towns. The demonstrators were complaining about the country's president, Bashar al-Assad, his government and the police force. Mr al-Assad and his family have controlled Syria for over 40 years.

So far it's thought that the war in Syria has been the cause of at least 100,000 deaths. Over two million Syrians have crossed the borders into Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq to get away from the fighting. Many of these people are now living in special refugee camps.

The war is being fought by the Syrian army and a number of rebel

opposition groups. Some rebel groups do not work with each other. Yet all oppose Mr al-Assad and his government. Many people in Syria support the Syrian government and its army. Like Mr al-Assad they claim that the rebels are terrorists who want to destroy the country.

Several Arab nations such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia have been supplying the rebels with weapons and money. Since the war began other countries, including the USA, the UK and France, have said that they want the rebels to win.

However, the Russian president has told other countries that they should not support the rebels. He insists that this will make the problem worse. Others who support Mr al-Assad and his government include Iran and Hezbollah, which is based in Lebanon. Hezbollah is both a political and military organisation. It has a large number of well-equipped fighters.

Even though it did not admit it, Syria was known to have supplies of chemical weapons. These include highly poisonous, or toxic, gases. These gases are very dangerous. They can kill thousands of people very quickly. The toxic gases can be put inside artillery shells or rockets. They can also be dropped from planes and fitted to both short- and long-range missiles. Using chemical weapons is against international law.

Last month a team of United Nations (UN) weapons inspectors arrived in Syria. The Syrian government agreed that they could carry out tests. These would be done where chemical weapon attacks were reported to have happened. One place was the city of Aleppo. The inspectors' job was to find out if these types of weapons had been used. They were told not to try to work out which side used them.

Then, on 21st August, the day after the inspectors arrived, a much larger chemical attack took place. This time it happened in an area of Damascus. The rebels control this part of the capital city.

Leaders of the USA, the UK and France are sure that the Syrian army carried out this latest attack. The USA claims that as many as 1,400 people were killed. Many are believed to have been women and children. The rebels said rockets containing poisonous gas had landed in the area. The Syrian government insists that its army did not fire the rockets.

The UN weapons inspectors visited the area of Damascus where the attack took place. They collected samples of things such as people's hair and soil. The inspectors then left the country to carry out their tests.

Three weeks later they visited the UN's headquarters, in New York City, in the USA. Their report was given to Ban Ki-moon, the secretary-general, or leader, of the UN. The report said that a type of poisonous gas was used in Damascus. The inspectors did not blame one side or the other. Mr Ban immediately declared that the incident in Damascus on 21st August was a war crime.

Most people think that Russia has gained an advantage by arranging the chemical weapons deal. Some believe Mr Putin has managed to outdo, or get the better of, Mr Obama. This is because Mr al-Assad is now more likely to remain in charge of Syria and the USA has been made to look indecisive.

Many people were pleased to hear the announcement made by Mr Lavrov and Mr Kerry. However, most agreed the chemical weapons' deal wouldn't do anything to stop the fighting in Syria. ■

## 'TOYOTA WAY' BOSS DIES

On 17th September an official from the Toyota Motor Company announced that Eiji Toyoda had died. He was 100 years old. Toyoda was the boss, or president, of the car making company between 1967 and 1982. When he took over Toyota was a small company in Japan. Within ten years it had become one of the world's most successful automobile manufactures.

Eiji Toyoda was born in 1913. He studied engineering at university. His cousin, Kiichiro Toyoda, had opened a small car making company in the city of Nagoya. After finishing his studies Kiichiro Toyoda asked his cousin to organise the building of a new factory about 30 kilometres (19 miles) from Nagoya.



*Eiji Toyoda*

The place where Toyoda set up the factory became the carmakers headquarters. Today the company's many buildings and factories are known as Toyota City.

In the early 1950s Toyoda's cousin sent him to the USA. There he visited one of the Ford car making company's large factories.

Ford was the first company to mass-produce cars. In its factories there were long assembly lines. On the assembly line the first group of workers put one part of the car together. The car then moved along to another group who attached different parts. This continued until a

finished car came off the end of the assembly line.

When Toyoda visited Ford it produced more cars in a single day than the Japanese company did in one year.

Toyoda spent six weeks at the Ford factory. He then returned to Japan. He said he was impressed with the American company's assembly lines. However, Toyoda was sure that he could design a production line even better than Ford's.

Toyoda created what later became known as the 'just in time' system. At Toyota's factory the right number of car parts had to arrive at the right time. The company only made or ordered the number of parts it needed. This meant parts were not wasted and did not have to be stored. The system saved money. It also meant that more cars were made in a shorter time.

To improve the system Toyoda encouraged groups of people working on the assembly line to make their own decisions. These groups then worked out how production could be speeded up. This was very different to how American car factories operated at that time.

The 'just in time' system meant that Toyota was able to produce cars quickly and for a low price. What's more the quality of the company's cars was very high. Toyota cars soon became known for their **reliability**. Toyoda's production system was nicknamed the 'Toyota Way'. Nowadays factories all over the world use similar systems.

In 1966 the company began making a car called the Toyota Corolla. In 1974 it became the best-selling car in the world. The number of Toyota Corollas sold has now exceeded 40 million.

Between 1982 and 1994 Toyoda was the chairman of the company.

## NEWSCAST

**LOST WINNER** — Just over one year ago a man from Spain, Manuel Reija, found a lottery ticket. It had been left in one of his shops that sell the tickets. Someone must have paid for it and left it behind. Mr Reija checked the numbers. He was surprised to find that the ticket had won a prize of €4.7 million (£3.96 million). Mr Reija gave the winning ticket to the organisation that runs the lottery. Recently a message has been put on its website saying it is looking for the person who paid for it. It does not say where or when the ticket was bought, as only the real winner will know. One newspaper reported that, so far, six people have tried to claim it. Mr Reija said that if he had kept the prize 'he would never have been able to sleep at night'.

During this time Toyota started to make luxury cars. It also began work on developing cars that ran on electricity. Toyoda retired in 1994 aged 81.

Today Toyota has a worldwide workforce of just over 300,000 people. In 2012 the company announced that it had made its 200 millionth vehicle. ■

## SENSE OF TIME

A recent scientific study shows that time seems to pass more slowly for some small animals and insects. This, the study says, is because they can see far more information, in one second, than larger animals are able to.

A team of scientists used a method, or technique, which measures

how fast an eye can process light. They discovered that some smaller animals were able to respond much quicker to something such as a flashing light. So, in a given time, birds and insects can see and process more information than a cow.



The scientists' research may explain why it can be difficult to hit, or swat, a fly. A fly, the scientists say, can process seven times more information than a human can in the same period of time. When you try to swat a fly it looks as if your hand is moving very fast. Yet the fly sees your hand in a different way. Because it processes visual information so much faster the fly sees your hand moving in slow motion. It therefore has time to easily escape and fly away.

For some larger animals the opposite is true. So, to them, time seems to pass faster. The leatherback turtle, for example, is a slow moving creature. In one second, these large turtles are only able to process about one-third of the visual information that humans can.

Dogs, the scientists say, can process visual information twice as fast as humans. This is why they are not interested in looking at televisions. Instead of seeing what humans are watching they just see a flickering screen.

The scientists also believe that an animals' metabolic rate affects how quickly time passes. The metabolic rate is a chemical processes inside

living things. These control growth, energy production and the removal of waste. Time seems to pass faster for animals with faster metabolic rates.

The scientists say that their research might explain other things. One example is a car crash. When people are involved in car accidents they often describe how everything happens very slowly. This may be because the brain starts to take in more information. It does this because it knows there is danger and wants to avoid it. When more visual information is suddenly processed in a few seconds time appears to slow down.

Another example is how time seems to speed up when you get older. It's possible that this is because the older you get the less information you can process in a certain time. If this is true it might even explain why time seemed to pass more slowly when you were younger. ■

## MARS ECLIPSE

Scientists working at NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) have recently created a short film of an eclipse as seen from Mars. NASA's Mars Rover Curiosity recorded the pictures, which were used to make the film, about one month ago.

Curiosity successfully landed on Mars in 2012. It has been designed to try to find out more about what the planet was like in the distant past. Curiosity has six wheels and is about the size of a small car. It also includes specially designed equipment for testing and working out what various rocks are made from.

Mars has two moons called Phobos and Deimos. Both were discovered in 1877. They are named after ancient gods. In Greek mythology

Phobos (fear) and Deimos (dread) were twins. Phobos is the larger of the two. It also goes around, or orbits, much closer to Mars than Deimos.

Phobos has an irregular shape. This means it is not perfectly round. At its widest point it is about 25 kilometres (16 miles) across. The distance from the surface of Mars to Phobos is roughly 6,000 kilometres (3,700 miles).

One day on Mars is 24 hours and 37 minutes long. If you were to stand on Mars you would see Phobos rising in the west and setting in the east. However, as it is quite close to Mars, Phobos orbits the planet very quickly. From the time it rises to the time it sets is just over four hours. So standing on Mars you could watch Phobos crossing the sky twice each day.

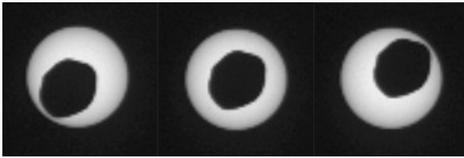


Phobos (NASA)

Phobos creates frequent eclipses. This is when it passes between Mars and the Sun. From the surface of Mars this looks like a black irregular shaped shadow going across the bright round face of the Sun. As Phobos is travelling so fast, each eclipse only lasts about 30 seconds. At the same time, the shadow created by Phobos can be seen moving quickly across the surface of the planet.

The eclipses that Phobos creates are really annular eclipses. A total

eclipse is when an object such as our own Moon completely covers, or blocks out, the Sun. Annular eclipses happen when our Moon appears to be slightly smaller than the Sun. This means a very bright 'ring', or annulus, can be seen around the dark shape of the Moon. In Latin *annulus* means 'little ring'. Curiosity also recorded the dip, or reduction, in the daylight as Phobos passed across the face of the Sun.



*Pictures taken by the Mars Curiosity Rover of Phobos moving across the face of the Sun*

When a much smaller object (or an object that appears to be much smaller) passes across the face of the Sun it is known as a transit. Deimos is too small and too far away to create an annular eclipse. However, from Mars' surface Deimos can be seen to transit across the face of the Sun. ■

## ELECTION IN NORWAY

Voting in an election for Norway's parliament took place on 9th September. The country's Conservative Party did well. The election result means that the party's leader, Erna Solberg, will become the new Norwegian prime minister.

Elections for Norway's Storting, or parliament, take place every four years. They are usually held on a Monday in September. The Storting has 169 seats. So a party, or group of parties working as a coalition, has to have at least 85 seats to outvote all the other parties.

Jens Stoltenberg has been the prime minister for the last eight years. He is the leader of the Labour

Party. In the last two elections Mr Stoltenberg's party got the most number of votes. With the support of several other smaller parties Mr Stoltenberg had a majority of the seats in parliament.

In the election the Labour Party got 55 seats. This was nine less than last time. Mr Stoltenberg's party still won more seats than any of the others. However, the coalition that includes Labour now has fewer seats than the Conservative Party and the Progress Party combined. Therefore these two parties, together with a few smaller ones, will form the new government. Ms Solberg will be the leader of this coalition. The Conservative Party increased its number of seats by 18. It now has a total of 48. The Progress Party won 29 seats.

Two years ago a terrible attack happened in Norway. A man called Anders Breivik parked a car outside some government buildings in the centre of Oslo, the capital city. It contained a large bomb. When the bomb exploded it killed eight people and injured over 200 others. The surrounding buildings were also badly damaged.



*Erna Solberg, Norway's new prime minister*

After leaving the car bomb Breivik travelled to an island about 40 kilometres (25 miles) from Oslo. At the time a summer camp for young people was being held on the island. Breivik had several guns with him. Before being arrested by the police he had shot and killed 69 people.

Many others were badly wounded. A court has found Breivik guilty of all the murders. It's likely that he will be kept in prison for the rest of his life.

Mr Stoltenberg was admired for the way he led the country at the time of this [tragedy](#). However, a later investigation showed that the police and the government were badly prepared. The investigation report said that Breivik's attacks could have been prevented. After the report was published support for Mr Stoltenberg's Labour Party began to decline.

One of the things that Breivik said he was angry about was immigration. In recent years the government has allowed many people who follow the Islamic faith to move to Norway. Most of these people come from countries in the Middle East. For a short time Breivik was a member of the Progress Party. This party is known to be anti-immigration. The election result means that, for the first time, the Progress Party will be part of the country's government.

Ms Solberg will be Norway's second female prime minister. She is expected to officially take over from Mr Stoltenberg on 14th October. ■

## CHINA'S FIRST ARCTIC CROSSING

On 10th September a cargo ship from China, called the *Yong Sheng*, arrived in The Netherlands. The container ship had left the Chinese port of Dalian 35 days earlier.

When the ship sailed into the port of Rotterdam it was greeted with cheers and [bouquets](#) of flowers. A television company from China filmed the ship's arrival.

The *Yong Sheng's* owners said that their ship had made history. This was because it was the first Chinese

container ship to have travelled from China to Europe through the Arctic Ocean. This route is known as the Northern Sea Route (NSR). Some people in Europe call it the North East Passage. The ship sailed through the Bering Strait, between Russia and the American state of Alaska, and then followed Russia's northern coastline across the Arctic Ocean.



Yong Sheng

In the past, apart from a few weeks in the summer, the NSR was completely blocked by sea ice. More recently Russian navy ships have used the NSR. They have had to be accompanied by icebreakers. These are ships designed to clear, or break, a path through thick sea ice. Ships following behind can then use these paths.

Over the last 15 years sea ice in the Arctic Ocean has been shrinking. Most scientists believe this is a result of climate change and the rise of average world temperatures. Some have suggested the last time the NSR was as open as it is today was between 7,000 and 5,000 years ago.

Rotterdam is one of Europe's largest ports. Usually, ships sailing to Rotterdam from ports in China would use the southern, or Suez Canal, route. This takes them across the South China Sea through the Strait of Malacca and into the Indian Ocean. From there, via the Suez Canal, they sail across the Mediterranean Sea and around the coasts of Spain and France.

The Northern Sea Route is approximately 5,600 kilometres (3,500 miles) shorter than the Suez Canal one. This means ships using it can reduce the time it takes to complete the journey by 12 to 14 days. Another advantage of the NSR is that shipping companies do not use as much fuel. This means it is less expensive to transport the goods.

However, the NSR cannot be used throughout the year. Nowadays, it is possible to make the voyage for ten weeks from July to November. This is when higher summer temperatures melt the ice.

Ships from Japan, Germany and South Korea have already used the NSR. This year Russian officials say that they have given 46 ships permission to use the route.

China is the world's biggest exporter of goods. Thousands of container ships sail from Chinese ports to other parts of the world every year. This explains why the recent voyage of the *Yong Sheng* was important.



Now that one Chinese ship has used the NSR many people expect more to do so. However, not everyone agrees. They say ships using this route still have a chance of getting stuck in the ice. Russian icebreakers will then have to be used to free them. If this happens the ship's

journey times could be much longer. What's more paying for the icebreakers would be very expensive. ■

## LINER SALVAGE OPERATION BEGINS

On the morning of 16th September salvage teams began work close to Giglio Island, which is part of Italy. They planned to pull a cruise liner, called the *Costa Concordia*, upright. For the last 20 months the large ship has been lying on its side, half-underwater, near the island's coast.

On the evening of 13th January 2012 the 290-metre (952 foot) long ship left the port of Civitavecchia near Rome, Italy's capital city. The cruise ship was to visit several Italian ports along the country's north east coast. On board were around 3,200 passengers and a crew of just over 1,000.

The *Costa Concordia's* planned route meant it would sail past Giglio Island. Yet when it neared the island, around two hours after setting off, the ship changed direction and sailed towards it. Then, about 300 metres (984 feet) from Giglio, the liner hit some underwater rocks.

The ship's captain knew there was a problem. Yet, at first he didn't think it was serious. He decided the cruise liner should carry on sailing. About 20 minutes later the ship began to lean to one side. This was because seawater was pouring into the bottom of the liner through a large hole. Passengers were told to put on their life vests. The captain, realising that it was sinking, began sailing the ship back towards the island.

About 40 minutes after hitting the rocks, the order was given for all the passengers to abandon, or get off, the ship. Crew members began to try to organise them so they could

all get into the lifeboats. Yet, as the cruise liner was now leaning so far over, about half of the lifeboats could not be used.

Many passengers decided to jump into the sea and swim to the island. The *Costa Concordia* ended up lying on its side half underwater close to the island's coast. Thirty-two people died in the accident. The bodies of two of them have never been found.



Wreck of the *Costa Concordia*

The captain was blamed for the disaster. He was also accused of leaving the ship while many passengers were still on board.

The cruise liner came to rest on a rock ledge. At first it was feared that it might slip deeper underwater. All the oil was pumped out of the ship's fuel tanks to stop it leaking into the sea.

The company that owns the *Costa Concordia* decided that the wrecked ship should be cut up for scrap. This means that most of the metal from which it is made will be recycled. To do this the ship would have to be pulled upright and refloated. It could then be towed away.

It took engineers many months to plan the salvage operation. Thick steel cables were fitted around the cruise liner. These were attached to a floating crane. A special steel platform was built on the seabed. This was to support the ship after it was pulled upright. Large containers, or tanks, were fitted to the side that was above the water. As the crane pulled

the cables these tanks were filled with seawater. The weight of this water then helped to pull the ship up. The plan was successful. Eighteen hours after the operation began the bottom of the *Costa Concordia* was resting on the steel platform.

More large tanks will now be fitted to the sides of the cruise liner. These will be filled with air to help it float. It will then be possible to tow the wreck away. This is expected to happen in six months time. The total cost of the salvage operation is estimated to be €600 million (£506 million). ■

## HONDURAS GIVES LAND TO MISKITO

The government of Honduras has agreed to give a large area of land to an [indigenous](#), or native, group of people in the country. Often called the Miskito Indians their original homelands are on the Atlantic, or Caribbean, coast of Central America.

Europeans first arrived in Central America about 500 years ago. They called the Caribbean coastline of Nicaragua and part of Honduras the Mosquito Coast. For much of this time Spain controlled most of Central America. However the Miskito people were able to resist the Spanish. The areas of mountains and coastline, which were covered in jungle, were too difficult for the Spanish to capture.

Around that time Britain and Spain were enemies. The British made friends with the Miskito people. Many British pirates also set up bases along the Mosquito Coast. The British did not want to occupy the Miskito lands. Yet they were happy to help the local people attack the Spanish.

The British protected the Miskito Indians for many years. They seem to have encouraged them to set up dynasties, or royal families. Between 1638 and 1894 Miskito tribal leaders called themselves kings. These rulers even used British names such as Edward and George. Their sons were sent to be educated in Jamaica, which was a British colony.

By the 1820s Nicaragua and Honduras had become independent countries. In the 1860s the British decided to withdraw from the Mosquito Coast. In the following years the Miskito lands became part of Honduras and Nicaragua.

In recent years the Miskito Indians in Honduras have claimed ownership of the territories, or lands, in which they live. Many years ago they signed some agreements with the British. The Miskito believe these mean they have a legal right to own this part of Honduras.



Mosquito Coast

The government announced that it was giving, or granting, an area of around 6,500 square kilometres (2,500 square miles) to the Miskito. This is the second time that this has happened. Now the Miskito lands will cover an area of about 10,000 square kilometres (3,860 square miles). This is roughly 2.5% of the whole country. This part of Honduras contains around 100 villages and is home to 22,000 Miskito Indians.

These lands will still be part of Honduras, but the Miskito will have

autonomy. This means that they will be able to make many of their own decisions. In recent years the governments of Nicaragua, Panama and Belize have made similar arrangements. They too have handed over lands to indigenous people living in their countries.

The government of Honduras hopes that the Miskito will be able to protect their lands. In other parts of the country large areas of forest have been cut down for farmland. The Miskito will be able to stop this from happening in their homelands. Some companies plan to look for oil and gas in the area. Now they will have to get permission from the Miskito to do so. ■

## WORLD'S LARGEST CAVE TOURS

A company in Vietnam has announced that next year it will be organising a number of trips, or tours, to the world's largest cave. The cave was first explored in 2009. Called Son Doong it is in a remote jungle area of Vietnam.

Son Doong means 'mountain river cave'. The huge cave is in the Phong Nha-Ke Bang national park. This park includes one of the largest karst regions in the world.

Karst regions are mostly made up of limestone – a type of rock that is **soluble** in water. This means karst areas often have many caves. These are formed over millions of years by underground rivers, streams and dripping water. These cave systems can also have **spectacular** formations of stalactites and stalagmites.

There are many caves and grottoes in the national park. Grottoes are smaller caves or chambers leading from larger caves and passageways. So far 20 cave systems have been



Son Doong cave

(www.sondoongcave.org)

fully explored in the park. These have a total length of 70 kilometres (44 miles). One, called Phong Nha – from which the park gets its name – has unusual rock formations. These have been given names such as the 'Buddha', the 'Lion', the 'Royal Court', and the 'Fairy Caves'.

A local man discovered the entrance to the Son Doong cave in 1991. However, no one dared go inside because of the strong wind and loud noise coming out of it. A team of explorers from the UK travelled to Vietnam to investigate the cave in 2009.

The team had to walk for six hours through the jungle from the nearest road to reach the cave entrance. They soon found out that a large underground river, which flows through part of the cave, was the cause of both the wind and noise.

Using special laser measuring devices the team discovered that in some places the Son Doong cave is around 150 metres (492 feet) wide and 200 metres (656 feet) high. This means that a 40-storey building could fit inside these parts of the cave. Son Doong is nearly nine kilometres (5.6 miles) long. In one part there is a large lake, which is over

200 metres (656 feet) deep. In several places the roof has collapsed. Where this has happened sunlight shines into parts of the cave.

Before the discovery of Son Doong the cave thought to be the largest in the world is in a karst region in Malaysia. Called the Deer Cave, it is two kilometres (1.25 miles) long, 100 metres (328 feet) high and 90 metres (295 feet) wide.

Limestone caves in other parts of the world are much longer and deeper. Yet none are so high and wide as Deer Cave and Son Doong.

Tours to Son Doong will be for groups of eight people. A team of guides and safety experts will lead them. Each trip will take about six days. Three nights will be spent camping inside the huge cave. ■

## MOUNTAINS NAMED AFTER CLIMBERS

The government of Nepal has announced that it plans to give new names to several of the many high mountains in the country. The mountain peaks are to be named after famous mountain climbers.

Nepal is in the Himalayas. This is the world's biggest mountain range. The 14 highest mountains in the world are nicknamed the 8,000ers (or eight-thousanders). This is because they are all over 8,000 metres (26,247 feet) high. Eight of the eight-thousanders are in Nepal. They include Mount Everest. At 8,848 metres (29,029 feet) Mount Everest is the world's highest mountain. It is on the border between Nepal and Tibet, which is a region of China.



*Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay at Mount Everest in 1953*

In Nepal there are more than 100 mountains over 7,200 metres (23,600 feet) high. All are taller than the highest mountain in the Andes mountain range in South America. Many of these mountains in Nepal do not have names. Only a few have been climbed.

Two of the unnamed mountains will be named after Sir Edmund Hillary (1919 – 2008) and Tenzing Norgay (1914 – 1986), who was also known as Sherpa Tenzing. In 1953 Hillary and Tenzing were the first climbers to reach the top, or summit, of Mount Everest. Hillary was from New Zealand and Tenzing came from a village not far from Mount Everest. The two climbers were part of a large team, which was put together by an organisation in the UK.

As Mount Everest is so high, near the top there is very little oxygen in the air. Therefore nearly all climb-

ers now use special oxygen tanks when they are close to the summit. Since 1953 nearly 4,500 people have climbed to the top of Mount Everest. This year, a Japanese man, who is 80 years old, became the oldest person to reach the mountain's summit.

Nowadays climbers use specially designed, very light equipment. However, in 1953 Hillary and Tenzing were not able to use this modern equipment. For example, the oxygen tanks the two men carried were very heavy. This meant that getting to the top of Mount Everest 60 years ago was much more difficult than it is today.

The two unnamed mountains are to be called Tenzing Peak and Hillary Peak. Tenzing Peak has a height of 7,916 metres (25,971 feet) and Hillary Peak is 7,681 metres (25,200 feet). Both have never been climbed.

Nepal is a poor country. Its government makes money by selling [permits](#) to people who apply to climb some of the country's mountains. Many tourists visit Nepal to see the Himalayas and walk, or trek, in the foothills. A large number of people work in tourism in Nepal. It is therefore an important part of the country's economy.



*Annapurna (Wolfgang Beyer)*

The Nepalese government hopes that the new names of the two mountains will help to attract more tourists and climbers to Nepal. It's possible that two other mountains in the country will be named after

Maurice Herzog (1919 – 2012) and Louis Lachena (1921 – 1955). Both men were from France. In 1950 they were the first to reach the summit of Annapurna. This mountain, which is also in Nepal, is the tenth highest in the world. ■

## COUP ANNIVERSARY PROTESTS IN CHILE

Thousands of people took part in street protests in Santiago, the capital of Chile, on 11th September. The organisers arranged the demonstration to protest about what had happened in the country on this day 40 years ago.

In 1973 Salvador Allende was the president of Chile. He had won the presidential election two years earlier. Many people thought that he wanted to turn the country into a communist state. The economy was getting worse and the country's currency was losing its value.

At that time General Augusto Pinochet was head of the army. On 11th September 1973 he ordered soldiers to surround the presidential palace and arrest Mr Allende. To avoid being captured the president committed suicide. General Pinochet then took charge of the country. When a military force takes control in this way it is known as a coup d'état, or coup (pronounced coo).

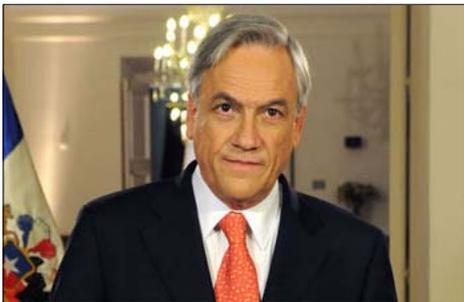
At first many politicians and people supported the army. They thought that General Pinochet would announce new elections after the army had restored order. Yet this did not happen. He said that all [traces](#) of communism had to be removed. General Pinochet believed that elected politicians would not be able to do this.

All political parties and trade unions were banned. Congress – the

Chilean parliament – was closed. Many supporters of President Allende were arrested. Over 3,000 of them were never seen again. Most people think they were murdered. Thousands more were imprisoned and tortured. Opponents who survived left Chile and went to live in other countries.

General Pinochet reorganised the country. He appointed civilians – not military people – to run the economy, which improved greatly. Medical services got better. Drinking water supplies to the towns were modernised.

In 1988 General Pinochet arranged a referendum, or vote in which all adults could take part. People were asked if they wanted him to stay on as president for the next eight years. Much to his surprise he lost: 57% voted no and 43% yes.



Sebastián Piñera, president of Chile

The following year elections were held. Different political parties were allowed to take part. In 1990 General Pinochet handed over to Patricio Aylwin, who had been elected as the country's president. General Pinochet then went back to leading the army. He retired in 1998 and died eight years later. Many people wanted him to be put on trial for what he had done.

What General Pinochet did causes many disagreements in Chile. Some believe that he saved their country. Others say he was responsible for the murder of thousands of people. When his death was announced many

people celebrated by sounding car horns and dancing in the streets.

The 40th anniversary protests became violent. Buses and cars were set on fire. An electric power line was cut. Over 200,000 houses in Santiago had no electricity. Several policemen were injured and over 260 people arrested.

Sebastián Piñera, Chile's president, praised the police. He insisted that there was no reason for the violence. The president said that he hoped all those who had been arrested would be severely punished by the law courts for what had happened. ■

### VAN GOGH PAINTING 'REDISCOVERED'

Museum officials have announced that they have identified a 'new' painting by Vincent van Gogh. For many years the picture was kept in an attic in Norway. The officials work at the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, the capital of The Netherlands. They say they are now certain that the famous artist painted the landscape picture.

Vincent van Gogh (1853 – 1890) was a Dutch artist. Today his paintings are very valuable. Yet during his lifetime van Gogh was not well-known. His work is now considered to have had an influence on many famous artists.

Van Gogh was an unusual painter for his time. He liked to use very bright colours, especially yellows. He suffered from anxiety and mental health problems. For the last ten years of his life van Gogh moved to the city of Arles, in the south of France. He hoped that the warmer weather in this part of Europe would improve his health.

Van Gogh never had much money. It's said that he never sold any of his paintings. He did swap one for some food and other things. His brother, Theo, lived in Paris, the capital of France. They frequently wrote letters to each other. Van Gogh relied on his brother for both money and help with his mental problems.



Sunset at Montmajour by Vincent van Gogh

The newly discovered painting is called *Sunset at Montmajour*. It shows a type of vegetation, or plants and trees, which grow in southern France. In the background are some ruins of an old building.

When van Gogh died many of his paintings passed to his brother. There is a record of the *Sunset at Montmajour* picture being sold just over 100 years ago. This was after Theo had died. Yet then the painting seemed to 'disappear'.

For many years a wealthy businessman from Norway owned the picture. At first he believed that van Gogh had painted it. However, van Gogh signed most of his paintings and this one did not have a signature. Visitors to the businessman's house suggested the painting was a fake. He took it off the wall and stored it in his attic. The businessman died in 1970. Twenty years later his relatives showed the picture to officials at the Van Gogh Museum. However, they too insisted that the famous artist did not paint it.

In recent years scientific testing of oil paintings has improved. Nowadays it is even possible to work out who painted a picture by studying the paint that was used. Years ago artists had to mix their own paints. So if paint from an unnamed picture was found to match that used on another the same artist probably painted it.

In 2011 the Van Gogh Museum decided to look at the 'fake' painting again. Over the last two years several scientific tests have been done on the picture. These tests, officials say, prove that van Gogh painted it. What's more they now know exactly when he did so. This is because the artist mentions it in one of his letters to his brother. The letter was written in 1888. Before, this letter was

## NEWSCAST

**LOW COST FLYING** — Recently people in the USA were able to buy very inexpensive air tickets. When they visited a large airline company's website they were surprised to discover that tickets, which normally cost hundreds of dollars, were available for as little as US\$0. In the USA airline passengers pay an extra security fee of between US\$5 and US\$10. So those who ordered their tickets had to pay the security fee, but the flight was either free or only cost a few dollars. Eventually, the airline company realised there was a problem and closed its website down. Later company officials explained that a computer error was to blame. By the following day the problem had been fixed. However, the airline company said that those who paid a small amount of money for their tickets would still be able to use them.

thought to describe a different van Gogh landscape picture.

The painting is the first large van Gogh picture to be discovered since 1928. It will be put on display in the Van Gogh Museum at the end of September. ■

## 'JURASSIC PARK' NOT POSSIBLE

A group of scientists working at a university in the UK have recently completed a study on insects trapped inside pieces of copal. Their work suggests that what some people call the 'Jurassic Park [scenario](#)' can never happen.

The trunks and branches of some trees produce a sticky substance called resin. The resin helps these trees protect themselves against diseases or attacks by insects. It oozes from places where the tree has been cut or damaged. Resin can also be found inside these trees' trunks.

Resin is thick and sticky. Insects stuck in it are often unable to escape. The resin slowly becomes copal. Then, over many millions of years, copal turns to amber, which is as hard as stone. Amber is therefore the fossilised resin of prehistoric trees. It is usually a yellow-orange colour.

Insects as well as bits of plants trapped in resin before it hardened can be preserved for millions of years. Fossilised insects and plants found in pieces of amber are called inclusions.

So far the oldest inclusions to be found were of three arthropods, one fly and two mites. They were discovered in Italy a few years ago. The pieces of amber in which the arthropods had become trapped are about 230 million years old.

*Jurassic Park* is a book that was written by the American author

Michael Crichton. In the story a wealthy businessman sets up a special theme park on an uninhabited island. He has managed to get some scientists to 'recreate' several different dinosaurs. They do this by getting blood out of mosquitoes that were found in pieces of amber. Before becoming trapped the insects had bitten some dinosaurs and sucked their blood. The blood inside the mosquitoes therefore contained some of the dinosaurs' DNA. The scientists were then able to create the dinosaurs from this DNA.



Mosquito in amber

Several films about *Jurassic Park* have been made. The first one was based on Mr Crichton's book. The name comes from the Jurassic Period. This was roughly between 200 million and 145 million years ago. This was a time when large dinosaurs lived on the Earth.

The group of scientists decided to try to find out if it was possible to get DNA from insects that had been trapped in amber for millions of years. For their experiments they used pieces of copal inside of which a type of bee had become stuck. One was 60 years old. The other contained a bee that was trapped about 10,600 years ago.

Using special equipment the scientists did manage to find some of the 60-year-old bee's DNA. Yet none could be found in the one from 10,600 years ago. It seems that over time living things fossilised in rock or amber

change, or transform. These changes mean that DNA does not survive in these conditions for a long time. The scientists' work therefore means that mosquitoes trapped in amber during the time of the dinosaurs will not contain any DNA. ■

## NEW PRIME MINISTER IN AUSTRALIA

An election was held in Australia on 7th September. Tony Abbot was elected as the country's new prime minister. Mr Abbott is the leader of a political group known as the Liberal National coalition.

Like many other countries with a parliamentary system of government Australia has a lower and an upper 'house'. The lower house is known as the House of Representatives and the upper house is called the Senate.

The prime minister is the leader of the party that has the most seats in the House of Representatives. So it is the party that wins the majority of seats in the lower house that forms the country's government. The lower house has 150 seats. So to have a majority, or be able to outvote the other parties, the government needs at least 76 seats.

The election was for all the seats in the lower house and about half of those in the Senate. In Australia elections are held every three years. Unlike in many other countries, voting in Australian parliamentary elections is **compulsory**. People who don't vote have to pay a fine.

The two main political parties in Australia are the Labor Party and the Liberal National coalition. The coalition, which is usually called the Liberals, is made up of two parties that work closely together.

For the last six years the Labor Party has governed Australia. During this time the party has had two leaders, Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard. Both therefore served as Australia's prime minister. Mr Rudd and Ms Gillard often disagreed with each other. Mr Rudd managed to defeat Ms Gillard for the leadership of their party only a few weeks before the election. Many people suspect that Labor members of parliament chose Mr Rudd as they thought he had a better chance of winning the election.



*Australia's new prime minister, Tony Abbott*

Mr Abbot's party won 91 seats and Mr Rudd's Labor Party got 55. The remainder went to one smaller party and several independents. These are people who are not members of any political party.

As a young man Mr Abbot trained to be a Catholic priest. He often enters triathlon competitions where people who take part have to cycle, swim and run long distances. After studying at university Mr Abbot was awarded a Rhodes scholarship. These scholarships are named after Cecil Rhodes. He was a British born South African businessman who made a fortune from mining diamonds.

Rhodes died in 1902. Just before his death he arranged for some of his fortune to be used to pay for clever students from other countries to study at Oxford University, in the UK. These students are

known as Rhodes Scholars. Like Mr Abbot, Bill Clinton, a former president of the USA, is also a Rhodes Scholar.

After the election result was announced Mr Abbot said that he planned to make several changes. These include reducing the number of people entering the country illegally and getting rid of an unpopular tax. After congratulating Mr Abbot on winning, Mr Rudd said that he now plans to stand down as leader of the Labor Party. ■

## UGLIEST ANIMAL

An organisation called the Ugly Animal **Preservation** Society recently set up an online poll, or vote. It wanted to find out which creature in the world was thought to be the ugliest. On 12th September the society, which is based in the UK, announced the winner. It said the blobfish had got the most votes.



*Blobfish*

The Ugly Animal Preservation Society says it wants to make everyone more aware of endangered animals that are not well known. It argues that most people know that there are not many pandas in the world. They are also aware that, in the wild, pandas are only found in certain parts of China. The society thinks one reason that everyone knows about pandas is that they look 'cute' or 'cuddly'.

Other endangered species such as tigers, leopards and rhinos are also well-known. This, the society says, is probably because they are powerful and dangerous. Yet there are many other endangered species that are not powerful or do not look attractive. The society argues that it is just as important to save, or preserve, these ‘ugly’ animals.



Long-nosed monkey (David Dennis)

Blobfish live in the deep oceans close to Australia and New Zealand. The largest ones are about 30 centimetres (12 inches) long. Blobfish

have jelly-like bodies. This ‘jelly’ helps them to withstand the enormous pressure from the weight of water above them. Blobfish float just above the bottom of the sea.

Not much is known about blobfish. For example, no one has ever seen the fish eat. Unfortunately, they are often caught in the nets used by deep-sea fishing boats. This is why some people worry that blobfish are becoming an endangered species.

Those who took part in the poll could choose from 12 different ugly creatures. The kakapo, which is only found in New Zealand, came second. Kakapos are a type of parrot. Adults are about 60 centimetres (24 inches) long. They are heavy with short wings. The birds cannot fly and are more active at night. It’s thought that fewer than 150 kakapos remain.

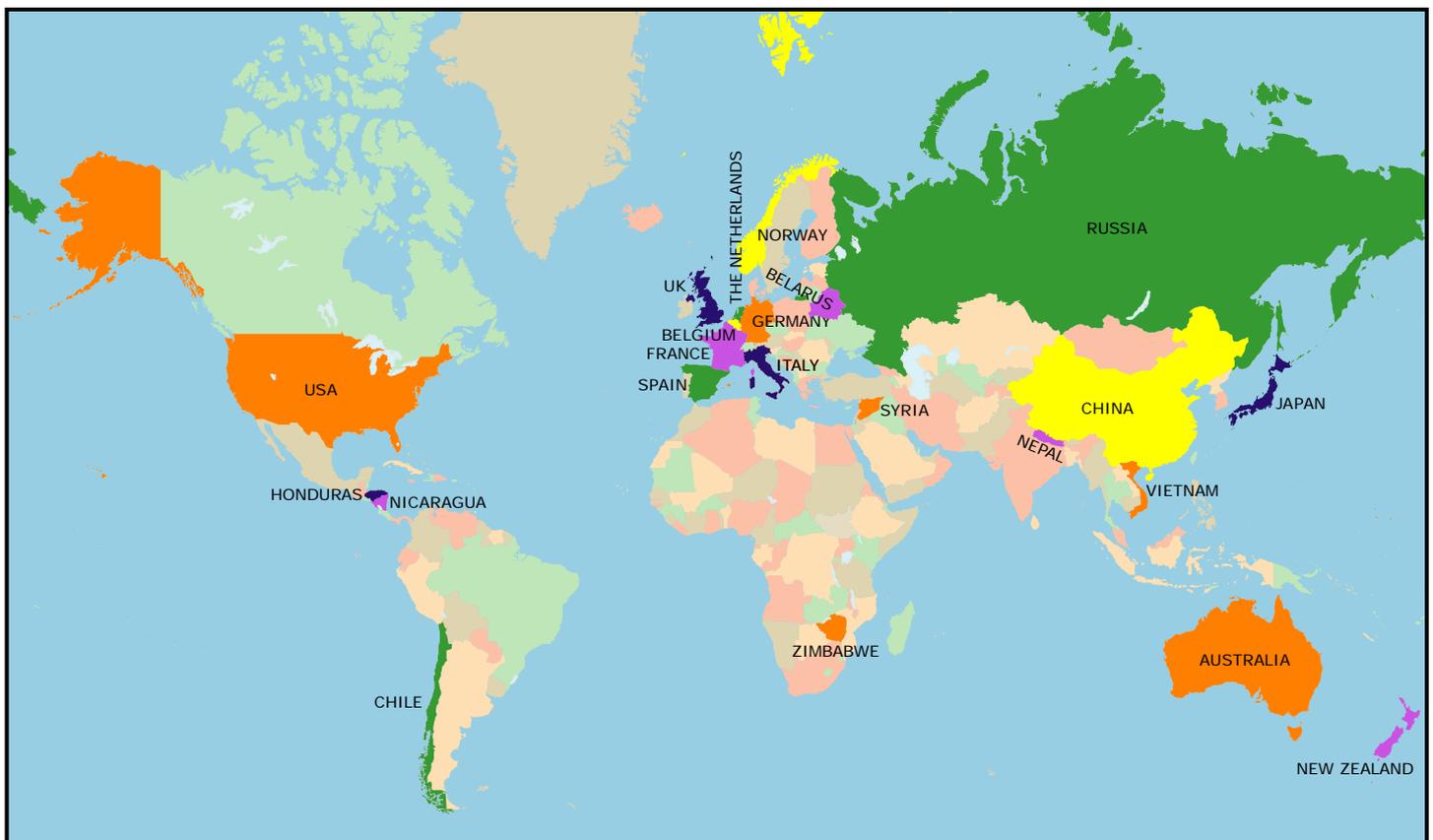
Another animal on the list was the long-nosed, or proboscis, monkey.

These monkeys live in the forests of Borneo, a large island in South East Asia. The males have much longer noses than the females. When sitting, adult long-nosed monkeys are about 70 centimetres (28 inches) tall. The reason these monkeys have become endangered is that large areas of the forests in which they live have been cut down.

As it came top of the poll the Ugly Animal Preservation Society says it now plans to use the blobfish as the organisation’s [mascot](#). ■

## CATALAN WAY

On 11th September hundreds of thousands of people held hands to form a long human chain in Catalonia, in Spain. The organisers claimed that the chain was about 400 kilometres (250 miles) long. The human chain was



This map shows countries to which news stories refer in this issue. Visit [www.newsademic.com](http://www.newsademic.com) for more detailed world maps.

a protest. Those who took part want Catalonia to break away from Spain.

Spain's population is about 47 million. Of these roughly 7.6 million live in Catalonia. Even though Catalonia is a region of Spain, many who live there think it should be a separate, or independent, country. Catalans have their own language, traditions, flag and a regional parliament.



Human chain in Catalonia

Over the last two years Spain has had serious financial problems. These difficulties are expected to continue for several more years.

Catalonia is one of the wealthiest regions of Spain. However, many people who live there complain that the government in Madrid, the country's capital city, is now taking too much of the money made by Catalonia. This is then used to help Spain's less wealthy regions. About 16% of Spain's population live in the region. Yet of all the things that are exported from Spain to other countries about 30% come from Catalonia.

Many Catalans want their parliament to be able to make more of the decisions that affect Catalonia. Currently the most important decisions are made by the Spanish parliament in Madrid.

As well as having its own regional parliament Catalonia also has a president. Last year the region's president, Artur Mas, said that he wanted a referendum on independence for Catalonia to be held in

2014. A referendum is a vote in which all adults can take part.

Surveys show that most people in Catalonia agree that a referendum should be held. They also predict that about 50% of Catalans would vote for independence. Yet many Spanish people think that a referendum is unlikely to happen. This is because the constitution of the country, or rules by which Spain is governed, say regional votes about secession, or independence, are unlawful.

The human chain protest was organised on Catalonia's National Day. The organisers claim that around 400,000 people took part. Most were dressed in yellow, which is Catalonia's national colour. Many of them waved Catalonia's flag. The chain followed the *Via Augusta*. This is the route, which runs along the coast, of an ancient road built by the Romans.



The organisers called the human chain the Catalan Way. They started planning it several months ago. People who wanted to take part were asked to register. On the day around 1,500 coaches were used to take people to the right places. The organisers say that they got the idea from the Baltic Way.

The Baltic Way took place in 1989. It was held in three countries, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. These countries are often called the Baltic States. Then, they were part of the

Russian-led Soviet Union. The Baltic Way was a protest against the Soviet Union. It stretched across all three countries for a distance of 600 kilometres (370 miles). The chain included around two million people. Within the next two years the Soviet Union broke up and each of the Baltic States became an independent country. ■

## HERCULE POIROT RETURNS

A well-known fictional character is to be brought back to life in a new novel. Sophie Hannah, an author from the UK, has been asked to write a book that will feature Hercule Poirot, Agatha Christie's famous detective.

Agatha Christie (1890 – 1976) is believed to be one of the world's most successful authors. She wrote plays, short stories and novels. Over four billion copies of her books have been sold. Christie is also the world's most translated author. Her novels have been translated into over 100 different languages.

Christie is best known for her crime mysteries. Often these are stories about somebody being murdered. A person then solves the mystery by working out who committed the crime. Two of her most famous crime-solving characters are Hercule Poirot and Miss Jane Marple. Poirot appeared in one play, 33 books and over 50 short stories. Eventually, Poirot dies in a book called *Curtain: Poirot's Last Case*. This was published in 1975, one year before Christie's death.

In Christie's books Poirot is from Belgium, where he worked as a policeman. He moved to the UK after the German army invaded his country in the First World War (1914 – 1918). Poirot then began

working as a private detective. Most of Christie's crime mysteries are set in the 1920's. Some take place in other countries. Two of Christie's most famous Poirot books are *Murder on the Orient Express* (1935) and *Death on the Nile* (1937). In the book about the Orient Express a person is killed on a train travelling across Europe. In the other the murders happen on a boat that is sailing along the River Nile, in Egypt.



Agatha Christie

In more recent times there have been many films and television programmes based on Christie's Poirot stories. However, there have not been any more books. This is because there can be legal **restrictions** about using well-known fictional characters in new stories and making money from them.

When famous authors, such as Christie, die their possessions and copyright of their books pass to what's known as their estate. Often the people in charge of the estate are the author's close relatives. Nowadays, it is not unusual for a well-known author's estate to decide to bring back famous characters from the past. Recent examples are Peter Pan, Sherlock Holmes and James Bond.

The estate decides how the characters may be used and for what purpose. Usually the new book must be written in the correct style. When a character is as famous and as

popular as Poirot, nobody wants to be disappointed by a new story. So the language, style, and characters in the new novel have to be similar to the Poirot books written by Christie.

Mrs Hannah has written a number of popular crime fiction books. She was chosen to write the new Poirot book by the people who are in charge of Christie's estate. This was after she gave them a 100-page outline of her idea for the story.

The title of the new book is not yet known. However, Mrs Hannah says it will be set in the 1920s. ■

## G20 IN ST PETERSBURG

The leaders of the G20 group of countries held a two-day summit on 5th and 6th September, in St Petersburg, in Russia. The country's president, Vladimir Putin, hosted the meeting.

The G20 – which stands for Group of 20 – includes the world's 19 wealthiest countries plus the European Union (EU). The EU has 28 member countries. The UK, Germany, France, and Italy, are members of the G20 as well as being EU members.



Leaders of the G20 in St Petersburg

The G20 countries have an estimated 65% of the world's population and are responsible for about 80% of the world's total economy. The G20 first met in 1999 in Berlin, the capital of Germany. At first

## G20 MEMBERS

Argentina	Mexico
Australia	Russia
Brazil	Saudi Arabia
Canada	South Africa
China	South Korea
France	Turkey
Germany	UK
India	USA
Indonesia	European Union (EU)
Italy	
Japan	

the group met twice every year. Yet, from 2011, G20 summits have been held annually.

Normally, several subjects are discussed. Often these subjects are about economics and how the member countries can trade with each other more easily. Yet this year most of the talks were about what is happening in Syria.

Two and a half years ago a civil war began in Syria. The fighting is between the Syrian army and a number of different opposition groups. These groups are often called the 'rebels'. The rebels want to overthrow, or get rid of, Bashar al-Assad, the president of Syria, and his government.

It's believed that at least 100,000 people have been killed since the war started. Over two million Syrian's have left the country to get away from the fighting. Many have walked across the borders into Turkey, Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon. Most of these people are now living in large refugee camps.

Traditionally, Russia has been a friend, or ally, of Syria. In the recent past several members of the G20 have declared that they support the rebels. These countries include the USA, the UK and France. Saudi Arabia, another G20

member, is one of the Arab countries that have been supplying the rebels with weapons.

A few weeks before the summit a chemical weapons attack took place in a [suburb](#) of Damascus, the capital of Syria. A type of poisonous gas was used. Some reports said that as many as 1,000 people died. Many of them were women and children. Under international law using these types of weapons is illegal.

The Syrian government and the rebels blamed each other for the attack. Most people think the Syrian army carried it out. Just before the summit took place Barack Obama, the president of the USA, and France's president, François Hollande, threatened to launch airstrikes on army bases in Syria. These strikes, they said, would be a punishment for the use of chemical weapons. Mr Putin insisted that airstrikes would not solve the problem but make it worse.



During the summit the leaders of several other G20 countries said that Mr Putin was right. They declared that military [intervention](#) in Syria would be wrong. These countries included South Africa, China, India and Brazil.

Other subjects discussed at the summit were climate change and reducing corruption. There were also talks on creating more jobs, especially for younger people, and the price of energy.

Next year's G20 summit will be held in Brisbane, in Australia. ■

## IG NOBEL AWARDS

The award ceremony for the Ig Nobel Prizes took place at Harvard University, in the USA, on 12th September. Every year since 1991 the American humorous magazine *Annals of Improbable Research* (AIR) has awarded these joke prizes. They can be given to any scientist who has published his or her research work.

There are ten prizes. Each is for a different subject or category. They include medicine, physics, engineering, chemistry, and biology. The Ig Nobel prizes are a [parody](#), or a joke version, of the famous Nobel Prizes. The awards are called 'Ig Nobel' because it sounds like the word ignoble, which means bad or shameful.

The Ig Nobel prize event takes place a few weeks before the Nobel Prizes are announced. Nobel Prizes were first awarded in 1901. They were named after Alfred Nobel (1833 – 1896). He was a very wealthy scientist and businessman from Sweden. Nobel left a large amount of money to pay for the prizes after he died.

Each year Nobel prizes are given by the King of Sweden, in Stockholm, the Swedish capital city, to leading scientists and academics for their work. The award of one of the Nobel Prizes – the Peace Prize – takes place in Oslo, the capital of Norway. This is given to the person, or organisation, thought to have done the most to promote peace in the world. Last year the Peace Prize was awarded to the European Union (EU). The EU is a political and economical group, or union, of 28 European countries.

The AIR says it gives its Ig Nobel prizes for research that 'first makes people laugh, and then makes them think'. For instance, in the past Ig

Nobel Prizes have been given to scientists who studied why woodpeckers don't get headaches from the tapping they do, and whether dung beetles enjoy what they eat.

In 2000 Professor Andre Geim, a Russian-born scientist, won an Ig Nobel Prize for 'magnetically levitating a frog'. He used magnetic fields to make the frog float in the air. Ten years later Professor Geim was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics for discovering a new material called graphene.



Ig Noble Prizes, award ceremony

This year's Ig Nobel Prize for medicine went to a team of scientists from Japan. They discovered that when mice were given a new heart, or a heart transplant, they survived for longer if they listened to opera music. The Physics Prize was awarded to an Italian team. They worked out that some people would be able to run across a pond if it was on the Moon.

AIR also announces a joke prize for peace. This year's Ig Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Alexander Lukashenko, the president of Belarus. The organisers said he was given the prize for banning people from clapping in public.

Traditionally those who go to the Ig Nobel award ceremony throw paper planes onto the stage. Many of the scientists who are given the awards attend. They are allowed to make a one-minute speech. If it goes on for any longer they are 'booed off' the stage. ■

## HITLER'S BODYGUARD DIES

Rochus Misch died on 5th September in Berlin, the capital of Germany. He was 96 years old. Misch was the only person still alive who had been in Adolf Hitler's [bunker](#) at the end of the Second World War (1939 – 1945).

Misch was born in 1917. He grew up with his grandparents, as both his father and mother died when he was very young. In 1937 Misch joined the SS. This was a military organisation set up by the Nazi Party. Soon after the war began, during the invasion of Poland, Misch was wounded. After recovering from his injuries he was sent to work as one of Hitler's personal staff. For the next five years he travelled with the German leader as one of his bodyguards. At Hitler's

different headquarters Misch would operate the telephones.

Towards the end of the war Hitler moved into a bunker near the centre of Berlin. Several army commanders and Nazi party leaders, as well as his personal staff, joined him. The bunker had been built deep underground. This was so that those inside were sheltered from the bombs that British and American planes frequently dropped on Berlin. By April 1945 the Russian army had reached the city and surrounded it.



Rochus Misch

On 30th April 1945 Hitler and Eva Braun committed [suicide](#) in one of the rooms in the bunker. The day before, in a quickly arranged ceremony, Hitler and Eva Braun had married.

Where Misch worked was only a short distance from the room where Hitler killed himself. Misch said that, after the door had been opened, he had seen the two dead bodies inside the room. He then watched as others took them up the stairs and outside the bunker. Hitler did not want his body to be found by the Russians. Therefore, before he died, he had ordered that his body was to be covered in petrol and burnt.

Soon after Hitler's death nearly all those remaining in the bunker decided to try to escape. Russian soldiers soon caught most of them, including Misch. Like many other

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### Acknowledgements:

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German soldiers, who were captured by the Russians, Misch was sent to a prison camp in Russia. Later he claimed that he had been [tortured](#). This, he said, was because the Russian leaders wanted to find out what had happened to Hitler.

Misch returned to East Germany in 1954. East Germany was part of the Russian-led Soviet Union until it was reunited with the rest of Germany in 1990. In Berlin Misch worked as a decorator and ran a shop. His wife died in 1997.

Because he had seen what had happened during Hitler's final days Misch was often interviewed. He always said that Hitler treated him as part of the 'family'. He never criticised the Nazi leader. Misch claimed that he was just an ordinary soldier who was doing his job. He insisted that he only heard about many of the terrible things that took place, such as the killing of millions of Jewish people, after the war ended.

In recent years, as he was the only remaining survivor of Hitler's bunker Misch often described himself as the 'last [witness](#)'. ■

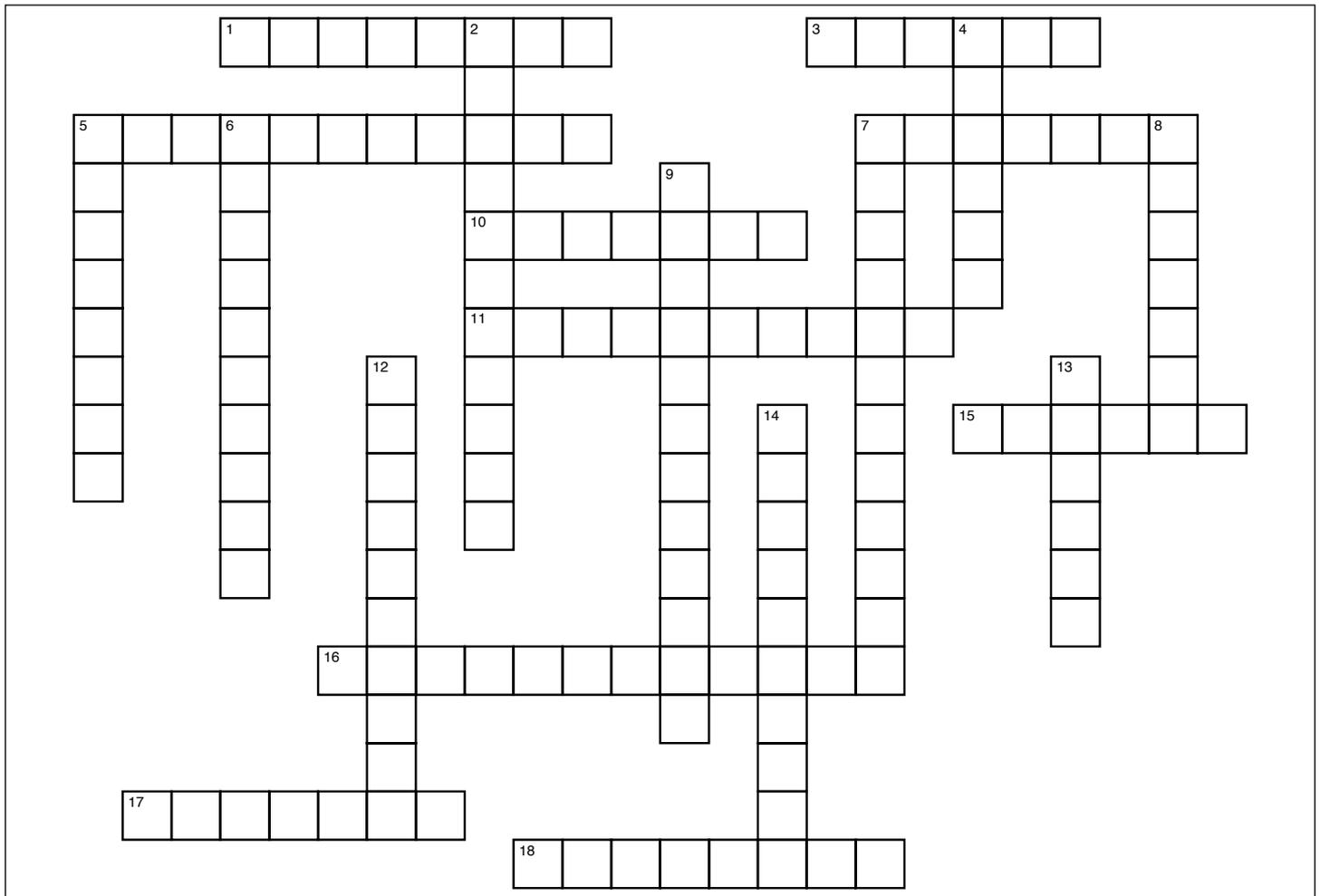
## NEWSCAST

**UNWELCOME BEDFELLOW** — A man in Zimbabwe recently had a shock after a maid went into the bedroom where he had been sleeping. The maid screamed and ran out. Under the bed was a 2.4-metre (eight foot) long crocodile. The crocodile must have managed to get into the room the previous day. It then hid under the bed. When the man went to bed in the evening he did not notice it. The following morning he got up after sleeping for eight hours. Then, as usual, he sat on the edge of the bed with bare feet before getting dressed. His feet must therefore have been only a few centimetres from the crocodile under the bed. Once it had been seen the crocodile was caught, tied up and taken to a nearby river where it was released. The man admits that he will now always check under the bed before going to sleep.

# ISSUE 206

## GLOSSARY PUZZLE

**INSTRUCTIONS:** ① Complete the crossword. The answers are highlighted in orange in the news stories. There are 25 words highlighted and you need 20 of them to complete the crossword. ② Once you have solved the crossword go to the word search on the next page ➡



### Across

- 1 *Verb* Deliberately hurt a person in a very cruel way, especially as a punishment or in order to make them say or do something
- 3 *Verb* Obey a set of rules or orders
- 5 *Adjective* Describes something that is impressive, grand, or dramatic
- 7 *Noun (Plural)* Written orders allowing someone to do something
- 10 *Noun* Medical problem when someone always feels worried and frightened
- 11 *Verb* Recognised something or someone and proved what or who they are
- 15 *Noun (Plural)* Indications or evidence that something has happened or existed
- 16 *Noun* The act of preventing or changing a result or a course of events
- 17 *Noun* Someone who has seen an event and is able to tell others about it
- 18 *Noun (Plural)* Arrangements of flowers that are usually given as presents

### Down

- 2 *Noun* The likelihood that something will always happen or work correctly
- 4 *Noun* A copy of something serious that is funny or humorous
- 5 *Noun* The outline of the story in a play, book or film
- 6 *Adjective* Describes something that must be done; there's no choice
- 7 *Noun* The act of protecting something from loss or danger
- 8 *Adjective* Able to be dissolved in liquid
- 9 *Noun (Plural)* The act of keeping things within set limits or rules
- 12 *Adjective* Originating in or native to a particular country
- 13 *Noun* A person, animal or thing that acts as a symbol of a team, organisation or company
- 14 *Adjective* Describes a person or people who are unable to make a decision about something

# ISSUE 206

## GLOSSARY PUZZLE *CONTINUED*

**INSTRUCTIONS:** ③ Find 19 of the 20 crossword answers in the word search. Words can go vertically, horizontally, diagonally and back to front. ④ After finding the 19 words write down the 20th (or missing) word under the puzzle.

N O I T A V R E S E R P F R O Q Y R  
 O G O E L B U L O S I D I V N X L E  
 I S A V T O C S A M R G Y O A Y P L  
 T E N I M C E T I J D R D O G E M I  
 N T U S J H C P E X O Y E K S V O A  
 E A N I M T T N L S D Z V G O I C B  
 V S E C A R T D L O Z V H O I N M I  
 R I Z E T Z Z U R U S N V P D H J L  
 E D P D A J P A V P I I Z U E H J I  
 T E O N U M P I E X N S R Q N L F T  
 N R O I O R W C E D M T Z Y T Z P Y  
 I U H C A Y T I I S S E N T I W M R  
 D T S R Q A G G L Q A U K M F C Z W  
 T R S Q C Z E C C W B Q R G I H B T  
 U O J U A N X I E T Y U J W E G I R  
 N T L D O F R Q Z A B O L E D Y D T  
 G A Q U I Y J H H H T B R M Z Z U Y  
 R E S T R I C T I O N S T I M R E P

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MISSING WORD ANSWER = \_\_\_\_\_

ISSUE 205 ANSWERS

ISOLATED