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Photographs of Germany's chancellor, Angela Merkel, on newspaper front pages, the day after the election

## ANGELA MERKEL WINS AGAIN

An election for members of Germany's Bundestag, or parliament, was held on 22nd September. In Germany elections for the Bundestag take place every four years. The parliament building, called the Reichstag, is in Berlin, the country's capital city.

Angela Merkel has been Germany's leader, or chancellor, since 2005. Her party, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), did well. The result means that Mrs Merkel will continue to be the chancellor. This will be her third four-year term as Germany's leader. However, to govern the country Mrs Merkel will need to form a coalition with at least one other party.

Mrs Merkel was born in 1954. Her family name was Angela Kasner. As a young girl she grew up in a town in East Germany. Her father was a pastor, or priest. At the end of the Second World War (1939 – 1945) Germany was divided

into 'East' and 'West'. East Germany was a communist country and part of the Russian-led Soviet Union.

As a student Angela Kasner was good at maths and science. She also enjoyed languages and learnt to speak Russian. She studied physics at university and later worked as a chemist in East Berlin. After the war ended the city of Berlin was also divided into East and West. She married Ulrich Merkel, a physics student, and took his name. They divorced in 1982. She married her second husband, Joachim Sauer, in 1988. He is a professor. The couple do not have any children.

In her younger years Mrs Merkel had no interest in politics. In 1989 she was 36 years old. This was when the Berlin Wall came down and the Soviet Union began to break up. The following year East and West Germany were reunited as one country. Two months before this happened Mrs

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Merkel joined the CDU. By 2000 she had become the party's leader.

Each year an American publishing company called Forbes produces a list of the 100 most powerful women in the world. Mrs Merkel has been at the top of this list for the last three years and seven times in total.

Today Germany is a very successful country. It has the world's fourth largest economy after the USA, China and Japan. Germany is one of the 28 European Union (EU) member countries. It is also one of the 17 EU countries that decided to use the euro as its currency. These 17 nations are often described as the 'eurozone'. Of the EU member countries Germany is the wealthiest by far.

In recent years several eurozone countries have had serious financial problems. These include Greece, Portugal, Spain, Ireland and Cyprus. The governments of these countries have either borrowed too much money or their banks have got into difficulties. As the leading nation in the eurozone, Germany has had to help these countries with 'bailouts' or extra money.

The voting system is [complicated](#) in German elections. People have a first and a second vote. Some members of the Bundestag are elected directly, as they get the most votes within a certain area of the country. Others are chosen as a result of the percentage of the second votes their party receives. What's more the total number of seats can change depending on the second votes. In the most recent election 630 members were elected to the Bundestag. To win seats in the Bundestag a political party must get at least 5% of the votes.

German governments are usually made up of a coalition, or group of political parties that agree to work together. When there are 630 seats in the Bundestag a party or coalition



*Reichstag building, in Berlin*

needs at least 316 for a majority. A majority means one party or group is able to outvote all the others.

The CDU has a 'sister' political party called the Christian Social Union of Bavaria (CSU). Bavaria is a region in southern Germany. The CDU and CSU are often thought of as the same political party. In elections their members do not compete against each other.

The two main parties in the election were Mrs Merkel's CDU/CSU and the Social Democratic Party (SPD). Peer Steinbrück leads the SPD. Between 2005 and 2009 the CDU and the SPD governed as a coalition. Mr Steinbrück worked with Mrs Merkel as her finance minister.

In the election Mrs Merkel's party won 311 seats and 41.5% of the votes. Mr Steinbrück's SPD was far behind. It got 192 seats with 25.7% of the votes. The CDU/CSU were only five seats short of a majority. It is very unusual for one party to get a majority in German elections. The last time this happened was in 1957.

After winning the election in 2009 Mrs Merkel organised a coalition with a party called the Free Democratic Party (FDP). Yet at this election the FDP got less than 5% of the votes. This means it can no longer be a coalition partner with Mrs Merkel's Party, as it did not get any seats in the Bundestag.

With 4.8% of the votes the Alternative for Germany (AfD) was another party that failed to win any seats. This party was only set up seven months ago. Its leader, Bernd Lucke, is an economics professor. He disagrees with Germany providing other eurozone members with bailouts. He blames the euro currency for many of the EU's problems. People, or parties that are anti-euro or anti-EU are often described as 'eurosceptic'.

As the FDP did not get any seats Mrs Merkel will probably have to form a coalition with the SPD, or main opposition party. When two larger parties, which oppose each other, agree to work together it is often called a 'grand coalition'. The last grand coalition was between 2005 and 2009.

At the 2009 election the SPD did very badly. Many of its members think this was because its supporters were angry with their party leaders for agreeing to work with Mrs Merkel. So, this time, to get the SPD to work with her party, Mrs Merkel will probably have to accept many of their demands. One is that every worker in Germany must be paid at least €8.50 (£7.15) per hour. This is known as a minimum wage.

Therefore, even though Mrs Merkel's party easily won the election the chancellor may now have less 'power' than she did before. ■

## LATEST IPCC REPORT

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released the [summary](#) of its latest report on 27th September. The United Nations (UN) set up the IPCC, which is based in Geneva, in Switzerland, in 1988.

The IPCC's job is to provide a scientific view on climate change and the effects it may have on certain parts of the world. Since it was set up the IPCC has produced a number of [assessment](#) reports. These are based on the results of the latest scientific work on climate change. Using this research the IPCC also makes predictions about what is likely to happen in future.



The summary that has just been published is from the IPCC's 5th assessment report. The main part of this report will be released next year. The IPCC's last, or 4th, assessment, report was published in 2007.

Everyone agrees that human activity has increased the amount of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in the atmosphere. This has mainly come from the burning of fossil fuels such as oil, gas and coal. Most scientists believe that this extra CO<sub>2</sub>, as well as other gases in the air, such as methane, is causing average world temperatures to rise. This is known as the greenhouse effect.

The summary of the IPCC's latest report says that scientists are now 95% sure human activity is the main cause of climate change. It says that since 1900 world temperatures have risen by about 0.9°C. This figure is an average, so this temperature rise is not evenly spread all over the

world. Some places may have become much hotter while others may have got cooler.

The IPCC warns that the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> in the air needs to be reduced. It says that if greenhouse gases keep increasing world temperatures will rise more quickly. The IPCC predicts that by 2100, depending on the amount of extra greenhouse gases in the air, this increase will be between 1.5°C and 4.5°C. It claims that this temperature rise will have a big effect on the climate in certain parts of the world. There will be more powerful storms and floods and sea levels will rise.

Not everyone agrees with what the IPCC says. Some, who are not scientists, insist that extra CO<sub>2</sub> in the air is not the reason for the temperature rise. They argue that this increase is natural and not man-made. World temperatures, they say, have gone up and down in the past, long before humans started burning fossil fuels.

Others agree that extra CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere is increasing average world temperatures. Yet they disagree with the IPCC's predictions. They believe the warming effect is much less.

For people who have to pay electricity bills these arguments are important. This is because most countries burn fossil fuels to make energy, or electricity. 'Green energy' from things like wind farms and solar panels can be expensive to set up. It will be a long time before green energy can generate as much electricity as power stations burning fossil fuels.

Changing from fossil fuels to green energy means electricity becomes more expensive. This can affect a country's economy. If companies pay more for the power they need what they produce costs more. This may mean fewer people buy

what these companies make. Not many people want to pay higher electricity bills.

Most governments accept the IPCC's predictions. Their leaders agree that more green energy is needed. They also believe that less electricity should be made from fossil fuels. Yet trying to make this happen without increasing the cost of electricity will be very difficult. ■

## ETRUSCAN TOMB OPENED

Archaeologists in Italy have discovered an Etruscan tomb. They believe that the remains of the two people found inside it were buried about 2,600 years ago. The tomb was a chamber that had been carved out of the rock. Inside were two rock-cut platforms. On one was a complete skeleton. On the other were the remains of a body that had been burnt.



*Etruscan tombs, in Italy*

Not much is known about the Etruscans. Their civilisation was centred on the western side of central Italy, to the north of Rome. The area in which they lived was known as Etruria. This ancient civilisation dates back to about 760 BCE. The Etruscans were at their most powerful around 500 BCE. Yet by 264 BCE most of Etruria had been taken over by the Romans.

The Etruscans left no written texts and not much is known about

## NEWSCAST

**GOLF BALL THIEF** — People playing golf on a course in Switzerland now have to get past an unusual hazard. Many lose their golf balls in lakes and surrounding woods. Yet having a fox steal them is new. Each day, between four and six o'clock in the afternoon, the animal waits in the bushes on one part of the course. As soon as it sees a white ball the fox runs out and picks it up with its mouth, even if the ball is still moving. Over 100 balls have been found in nearby bushes where the fox has hidden them. At first it was thought the animal was mistaking the balls for eggs. Yet it looks as if the fox is playing. It does not seem frightened of humans. Some think that the fox must have come from a place where humans were feeding it.



the language they spoke. Most information about them comes from early Roman descriptions, or writings, and studying items found in their graves and tombs.

The recently discovered tomb was unusual. This was because it had never been opened. Most Etruscan tombs were found and opened by grave robbers many hundreds of years ago. The tomb is close to the modern day city of Tarquinia. Nearby are two large Etruscan cemeteries.

Both cemeteries contain thousands of tombs. One is set out like a city with streets and small squares. It has many different types of tombs. Some are trenches. Others are made out of stone blocks or large mounds. There are also rock-cut tombs in the shape of huts or houses. The other cemetery has about 6,000 graves. All have been carved out of rock. About 200 of them

have wall paintings. Some of these pictures are of daily life.

The skeleton in the recently discovered tomb had been wrapped in a decorated piece of cloth, or cloak. The archaeologists believe that it was probably the tomb of an important person. They suggest the man may have been a warrior prince. The burnt body is believed to have been his wife.

Jars and vases discovered just outside the tomb show that a special burial ceremony must have taken place. Other items found in the tomb include a spear, a jewellery box as well as pots and dishes. The pots still contained preserved food. On the back wall of the tomb was a tiny vase. The archaeologists think it probably contained a type of ointment. The vase was hanging on a small nail, exactly as it must have been left 2,600 years ago. ■

## MOUNTAIN TREASURE

In September a French mountaineer was climbing Mont Blanc. While crossing a glacier he found a metal box. Inside were about 100 gemstones, including rubies, sapphires and emeralds. The jewels were wrapped in small sachets, or bags. Some of the sachets had the words 'Made in India' written on them. On his return the climber went to a police station in a nearby town and handed the box over.

Mont Blanc is on the border between France and Italy. It is the highest mountain in the Alps. The mountain is 4,810 metres (15,781 feet) high. It's thought that it was first climbed in 1786. In France Mont Blanc is known as *La Dame blanche* (the White Lady). Italians call it *Il Bianco* (the White One).

A cable car was built on the mountain in the 1960s. Yet it does not go to the top. Under the mountain is the Mont Blanc tunnel. This is one of the main road routes between France and Italy. Nowadays around 20,000 people climb to the top of Mont Blanc every year.

There have been two air crashes at Mont Blanc. Both involved Air India planes. The first happened in 1950 and the other in 1966. Forty-seven years ago, in 1966, an Air India plane was flying from Bombay (now called Mumbai), in India, to London, the capital of the UK. From London the aircraft was going to fly to New York City, in the USA.

The aircraft crashed as it was descending to land at Geneva airport, in Switzerland. The pilot seems to have made an error in navigation. This caused the plane to hit the mountain. Everyone on board was killed.



Mont Blanc

Last year an Indian diplomatic mailbag was found on Mont Blanc. It was full of government papers, letters and newspapers. The dates on the letters and newspapers showed that the bag came from the 1966 accident. It was given to the Indian embassy, in Paris, the capital of France.

The police were surprised to receive the box of gemstones from the climber. They said he was a very honest man. The box is also believed to have come from the 1966 crash.

The jewels inside are estimated to be worth €250,000 (£210,000).

The French police will now contact officials in India to see if they can find out who owned the gemstones. French law says that if the owner, or his or her relatives, cannot be found then the jewels will be given to the person who discovered them. ■

## 'SHUTDOWN' IN THE USA

On 1st October the government of the USA began a **partial** shutdown. The reason for the shutdown is that the two houses of Congress were unable to agree on the government's annual budget.

The budget is a spending plan. It sets out on what, and how much money the government will spend over the next 12 months. The new budget should have started on 1st October. The elected members of Congress were arguing about some of the things in the budget until midnight on 30th September. Yet they failed to come to an agreement.

As a vote on the budget has not been passed the government is unable to spend any money. The last time this happened was 17 years ago.

The partial shutdown means that around 700,000 government employees cannot go to work. Museums and national parks are closed. Most people in certain government organisations, including NASA, have been sent home.

Those who have been told not to go to work will lose much of their pay, or wages. Education, health and energy departments will be affected. This is because some of their staff have been told to stay at home.

**Essential** government workers such as air traffic controllers, or

those who direct passenger aircraft, will continue to work. Members of the army, navy and air force are to remain on duty. However, those who are still working are now unlikely to be paid their wages on time.



*The Capitol Building, in Washington DC, where the two houses of Congress meet*

The two main political parties in the USA are called the Democratic Party (Democrats) and the Republican Party (Republicans). Barack Obama, the country's president, is a member of the Democratic Party. The American Congress, or parliament, has two chambers or 'houses'. The lower house is called the House of Representatives (or the 'House') and the upper house the Senate. There are 435 elected members in the House. The Senate is different. It has 100 members, or senators, two from each American state.

Currently the Republicans have more members in the House of Representatives. Yet the Democrats have a majority in the Senate. The annual budget can only pass if both houses agree to it.

Two years ago Mr Obama decided to introduce a new system of healthcare in the USA. At the time both houses agreed on the health reform, which is called the Affordable Care Act. The new system has been nicknamed 'Obamacare'. It is supposed to begin on 1st October.

However, many Republicans in the House dislike Obamacare. They

claim it will cost far too much money. The Republicans want Obamacare to be taken out of the budget. This would mean it would either never happen or be delayed for several years. Yet the Democrats in the Senate insist that the health reform must be included in the budget.

Until the two houses agree about the budget the government shutdown will continue. Both sides blame each other for the problem. When something similar happened 17 years ago the partial government shutdown lasted for about 30 days.

The USA has the largest economy in the world. It is also one of the world's richest nations. Some people worry that if the government shutdown lasts for a long time it could affect the country's economy. ■

## DAY OF OLDER PERSONS

The International Day of Older Persons was on 1st October. The United Nations (UN) chose this date as Older Persons Day in 1999.



The UN says that the world's population is ageing, or getting older, much quicker than many people or governments realise. In less than ten years there will be over one billion people in the world who are aged 60 and above. By 2050 this figure is expected to double. Then the over 60s will make up around 20% of the world's population. This means, for the first time, there will be a greater number of older people in the world than children under the age of 15.

The UN warns that many governments need to plan how these older people are going to be looked after.

The UN says this is important, as there will be fewer younger people to support them.

To **coincide** with this year's Day of Older Persons the UN and an organisation called HelpAge International produced a special report or survey. HelpAge is based in the UK, but it operates in many different countries. Their report is called the Global AgeWatch Index.

### Global AgeWatch Index 2013

1 Sweden	6 Switzerland
2 Norway	7 New Zealand
3 Germany	8 USA
4 Netherlands	9 Iceland
5 Canada	10 Japan

Source: HelpAge International

The report covers 91 countries. In each a survey was done to find out information about 13 things that can affect older people. These included education, healthcare and medical treatment, government pension payments, opportunities for jobs and the amount of money older people can earn. Another thing recorded was how age-friendly certain things are. For example, how easy or difficult it is for older people to travel on buses and trains.

Sweden came top of the list. It therefore seems that this Scandinavian country is the best place in the world to grow old. The government in Sweden has been paying pensions to older people in the country for over 100 years.

Afghanistan came bottom of the list. There, only government officials get a pension from the government. In Afghanistan life expectancy, or the average number of years people live for, is 59 for men and 61 for women. The world average is 68 for men and 72 for women.

Other countries near the top were Norway, in second place, and

Germany, which was third. The USA was eighth, the UK thirteenth and Australia fourteenth.

It was not just the wealthier or **prosperous** countries that were higher up the list. Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa are often known as BRICS, from their initial letters. These countries all have fast growing economies. Yet, in the report, less wealthy nations, such as Panama and Uruguay, came above the BRICS countries. ■

### 'DIZZINESS' STUDY

A team of researchers from a university in London, the capital of the UK, has been studying the brains of ballet dancers. They believe their work could be used to help people who suffer from 'dizziness'.

Some people find that they frequently feel dizzy. Even though they are not moving, they feel as if they are. For some, this feeling of dizziness only lasts a short time. But others say it can last for much longer.



Ballerina

Scientists know that organs in the inner ear control balance. A fluid in these organs moves tiny hairs. These alert your brain that you are moving. However, if you quickly spin round

many times and then suddenly stop, this fluid keeps moving. This explains why you feel dizzy. The dizzy feeling ends when the liquid stops moving.

The researchers decided to study ballerinas, or female ballet dancers. When performing they often spin round very quickly. Yet they do not seem to get dizzy.

They asked 29 ballerinas and 20 female athletes to take part in an experiment. The age and fitness of the dancers and athletes was similar. Each was quickly spun round while sitting in a chair in a room with no light. After the chair stopped they had to turn a handle. They were asked to do this at the same speed at which they thought they were still spinning. The athletes felt they were still spinning for a much longer time than the ballerinas.

Special equipment was used to scan the brains of all the people who took part in the experiment. One part of the brain, at the back of the head, is known to control movement. The scans showed that this area of the ballet dancers' brains was smaller than those of the athletes'. This part of the brain is where the sense of dizziness comes from. The experiment and scans suggest that ballet dancers are able to 'train their brains' not to make them dizzy. After they spin round they seem to be able to 'ignore' the feeling of movement, which comes from the inner ear.

All successful ballet dancers have to train for many hours every week. They are taught to spin in a certain way. This is known as 'spotting'. They do not turn their heads at the same speed as their body. First they focus, or concentrate, on a point in front of them. Then, after their body has already turned, they rotate their heads very quickly and focus on the same point. This is then repeated as their body spins.

The researchers say that their study could help others to design treatments or exercises that might help people who suffer from dizziness. ■

## MYSTERY ERUPTION FOUND

About 20 years ago scientists discovered that a huge volcanic eruption had occurred around 1250. They found evidence of the eruption in ice cores, which had been drilled in Antarctica and Greenland, in the Arctic. Yet scientists were puzzled about where the volcano was. Now researchers from France believe they have solved the mystery.

Ice cores can be used to date certain events, such as volcanic eruptions, which happened a long time ago. To get an ice core scientists drill long hollow pipes into thick ice. When these pipes are pulled back up, they contain long tube-shaped pieces of ice from deep under the surface.

Scientists can work out many things from studying ice cores. The deeper the ice the older it is. When there is a large volcanic eruption enormous amounts of ash are thrown high into the air. This can spread over a wide area before it eventually falls to the ground. In ice cores this shows up as a thin layer of ash. Scientists are able to calculate when layers of ash in ice cores were on the surface. From this they can work out how many years ago these volcanic eruptions occurred.

The eruption around 1250 was the largest that had happened for thousands of years. It must have been a huge explosion for the ash in the atmosphere to spread over both the North and South Poles.

Scientists know that large volcanic eruptions can have a cooling

effect on temperatures in different parts of the world. This happens because the ash and dust in the atmosphere can block or reflect sunlight.

Old texts, or documents, from several European countries mention that the summer of 1258 was very cold. There were frequent heavy rains and floods. Many crops failed, or did not grow. This caused hunger and starvation. Mass graves that were dated to 1258 have been found in London, the capital of the UK.



Segara Anak lake on Lombok

Scientists had different ideas about where this volcanic eruption was. Some believed it was in Mexico. Others suggested Ecuador or New Zealand. Now the researchers are sure that it was on the island of Lombok, in Indonesia. Here there is an eight-kilometre (five mile) wide crater. Inside is a horseshoe-shaped lake called Segara Anak.

A large explosion formed this crater, but it was not known when it happened. Using modern scientific methods the researchers managed to match the volcanic ash found in the ice cores with ash surrounding the crater on Lombok.

The crater is the remains of a volcano that used to be around 4,175 metres (13,700 feet) high. The edge of the crater is 488 metres (1,600 feet) lower. Therefore, the top 'or missing' part of the volcano was destroyed in the eruption.

The researchers also discovered that an old Indonesian text still

exists. It was written on palm leaves. It says a huge explosion occurred on Lombok, but it does not give a date. The text describes how many thousands of people were killed. It also says that the capital city of a kingdom on Lombok was buried under the ash.

The researchers say the Lombok eruption must have happened in either 1257 or 1258. They believe an explosion of this size would have thrown about 42 cubic kilometres (ten cubic miles) of ash and rock high into the atmosphere. ■

## EUROPE WILDLIFE COMEBACK

A group called Rewilding Europe published a new report, or study, on 26th September. The study covers 37 different types of mammals and birds that are found in Europe. Fifty years ago all were in danger of becoming extinct, or dying out. The report shows that all but one of the 37 species has made a remarkable comeback.



Iberian lynx

Rewilding Europe is a conservation group. It arranged the review, which was carried out by three organisations: the Zoological Society of London (ZSL), the European Bird **Census** Council (EBCC) and Birdlife International. Each of these organisations works to protect wildlife and habitats, or the places in which wild animals or birds live.

Over the past 200 years the populations of many wild animals and birds in Europe decreased. This was mainly because of hunting, pollution and habitats being used for farmland or buildings.

The study includes 18 types of mammal and 19 bird species. Each lives in certain parts of Europe. Of these the only animal whose numbers have not increased is the Iberian lynx. This is a cat-like animal with a short tail. It is found in Spain and Portugal.



White-tailed eagle

The Iberian lynx mostly feeds on rabbits. In the 1950s a disease that affected rabbits spread across large parts of Europe. In some places, including Spain and Portugal, nearly 95% of the rabbits died. This meant that the Iberian lynx almost became extinct. Even though there are now many rabbits the numbers of Iberian lynx have not recovered.

Several animals in the list are large carnivores, or meat eaters. These, which are sometimes called 'top predators', include bears, wolves and eagles.

There are now thought to be around 11,500 wolves in Europe. In recent years they have returned to countries like France and Greece. In some places they cause problems. This is because they kill and feed on farmer's livestock, such as sheep, goats and cattle. In Greece farmers now receive [compensation](#) if wolves kill any of their animals.

In 1970 there were about 2,500 pairs of white-tailed eagles. These birds of prey live in northern Europe. They catch and eat fish, birds and small mammals. Now there are believed to be around 9,600 breeding pairs of white-tailed eagles.

The biggest animal in the study is the European bison. These are large herbivores, or plant-eaters, which live in forests. In Europe bison are the heaviest land animals living in the wild. By the 1920s European wild bison had been hunted to extinction. The only ones that remained were kept in zoos. A programme to breed them was set up after the end of the Second World War (1939 – 1945). Now about 3,000 wild European bison live in Poland and Belarus.

Officials from Rewilding Europe say that there are several reasons that explain why the numbers of these animals and birds are increasing. One is that more people are now aware of the importance of conservation. Another is that most European countries have become members of the European Union (EU). The EU has rules and [directives](#) about protecting habitats and conservation, which all its members must follow. ■

## ELECTION IN AUSTRIA

A parliamentary election was held in Austria on 29th September. The election was for the 183 seats in the National Council, or the country's lower house of parliament. The Social Democratic Party got just over 27% of the votes. This was more than each of the other parties.

Austria has a president and a chancellor. The president is the head of state but has few powers. The chancellor makes the important decisions and runs the country. Elections

for the National Council take place every five years. The chancellor is usually the leader of the party with the greater number of seats in the lower house of parliament.

Werner Faymann is the leader of the Social Democratic Party. He became Austria's chancellor after the last election in 2008. The latest election results means that he will continue to be the country's chancellor for another five years. The People's Party came second with almost 24% of the votes.

The Social Democratic Party and the People's Party have governed Austria for most of the last 60 years. Each party has either governed alone or agreed to work together. This happens if neither party wins enough seats in parliament to govern the country by itself. After the last election the two parties agreed to form a 'grand coalition'. If a country's two leading parties disagree about certain things, yet agree to work together, it is known as a 'grand coalition'.



Austria's chancellor, Werner Faymann

A coalition must have a total of at least 92 seats in the National Council to be able to outvote all the other parties. The Social Democratic Party and the People's Party are expected to agree to continue to work together. Combined they have 99 seats. However, both parties got fewer seats than last time. The Social Democrats lost four seats and the People's Party five.

The Freedom Party came third with 38 seats. Heinz-Christian Strache leads it. His party's percentage increased to 21%. At the 2005 election it got 34 seats and 17.5% of the votes. The Freedom Party is often described as 'far right'.



Parliament building in Austria

Far right is a term that is used to describe a set of political beliefs. Many people think followers of far right groups are extremists. Members of these parties usually believe that all immigration from other countries should be stopped. Some want people who have recently come to live in the country to be made to leave. Far right supporters usually believe that more powers should be given to the police.

Austria is one of the 28 member countries of the European Union (EU). The Freedom Party is anti-EU. Parties or people that disagree with the EU and how it works are often called 'eurosceptic'.

In Austria a party must get at least 4% of the votes to get any seats in the National Council. A few years ago Frank Stronach set up a new eurosceptic party. Mr Stronach was born in Austria. He went to live in Canada when he was 14. He later became a successful and very wealthy Canadian businessman. This was the first election in which his new party had taken part. Called Team Stronach it got 5.8% of the votes and five seats in the parliament. ■

## GOLDEN DAWN ARRESTS

On 28th and 29th September police in Athens, the capital of Greece, arrested 22 members of an organisation called Golden Dawn. They included four elected members of the Greek parliament. One of the members of parliament, Nikolaos Michaloliakos, is Golden Dawn's leader. Officials said that the men had been arrested for belonging to a criminal organisation.

Golden Dawn is often described as a neo-Nazi or [fascist](#) party. Neo-Nazi is the term used to describe people who have similar beliefs to those of Adolf Hitler, the leader of Nazi Germany. Many believe that people who support these types of organisations have very extreme views.

To some people Golden Dawn's logo or emblem looks like a swastika. This is the symbol that is most associated with Hitler's Nazi Party. At their meetings supporters of Golden Dawn wear black shirts and military style trousers. Like members of the Nazi Party they also use a straight-arm [salute](#).

Greece is a member of the European Union (EU). Around six years ago the country began to have serious financial problems. Its government had borrowed too much money. The country was having difficulty both repaying some of what it had already borrowed as well as borrowing more.

Eventually, three organisations agreed to work together to help Greece with its financial problems: the EU, the European Central Bank (ECB), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Together these

three organisations are nicknamed the 'troika'.

In return for providing Greece with a bailout, or extra money, the troika insisted that the government had to reduce, or cut, the amount it spends. These spending cuts in Greece are unpopular. They have caused many problems. Government workers are now paid much less. Many companies have been forced to close down. Most people have little money to spend. Now, around 24% of adults and over 60% of young people in the country do not have a job.

These problems have helped Golden Dawn to increase its support. Party members often hand out free food to many poorer people in the cities. It has also said it will find immigrants who have entered the country unlawfully and force them to leave. Many people in Greece blame these illegal immigrants for the rise in violent crime.

At the last election in 2012 Golden Dawn won 18 of the parliament's 300 seats. About 7% of those who took part in the election voted for the party. The result meant Golden Dawn is now the third biggest political group in Greece.



Golden Dawn logo

On 18th September a singer, or rapper, called Pavlos Fyssas was murdered. Fyssas often sang anti-fascist songs. The man who killed him was caught. He is a member of Golden Dawn. Fyssas's murder led to several large protests in Athens. Those taking part said the government should ban Golden Dawn. Golden Dawn's leaders insist that their party had nothing to do with the singer's death.

The Golden Dawn members of parliament who were arrested

will now be put on trial. They will only lose their seats in parliament if they are found guilty of a crime. Several police officers, accused of helping Golden Dawn, have been [suspended](#). ▣

## EARTHQUAKES IN PAKISTAN

A powerful earthquake struck south west Pakistan on 24th September. Officials reported that it had a magnitude of 7.7. Four days later there was another large earth tremor in the same area. The magnitude of this earthquake was 6.8. The place worst affected was the province of Balochistan. The first earthquake created a new 'mud' island near the province's coast.

The two earthquakes are believed to have killed around 700 people and injured many others. The first earthquake was the most powerful to have struck Pakistan since 2005. Then, one in the north west of the country, which had a magnitude of 7.6, killed 100,000 people. There were far fewer casualties in Balochistan, as not many people live in this part of the country.



Satellite pictures showing coastline with and without the new 'quake' island

Balochistan is the largest of Pakistan's four provinces. It is also one of the country's poorest regions. Many of the homes in the province are made of mud bricks. These types of houses can be badly affected by earth tremors. Officials estimate

that around 22,000 homes were completely destroyed. Local people say that natural water supplies in the area are now undrinkable.

Parts of Balochistan are lawless. It is home to a militant separatist group. Members of this group believe Balochistan should be a separate, or independent country. It took Pakistani army rescue teams more than four days to reach some of the areas that were badly affected.



The first earthquake was felt in Karachi, one of Pakistan's biggest cities. There, buildings shook and workers rushed out of their offices. Earth tremors were felt as far away as New Delhi, the capital of India.

After the first earthquake people living near the port of Gwadar were surprised to discover that a new island had suddenly appeared. Gwadar is about 400 kilometres (250 miles) from the earthquake's epicentre. The circular-shaped island is about 90 metres (295 feet) wide and 21 metres (70 feet) high.

Local people have called the island Zalzala Jazeera, which means Quake Island. The first people to sail out to it said the island was mostly made of mud, sand and small stones. Some parts were covered in seaweed and there were many dead

fish. Gas could be seen bubbling out of pools. It could also be heard coming out of large cracks in the mud.

Scientists say that the seafloor near this part of Pakistan contains large amounts of methane gas. This comes from rotting, or decaying, dead sea creatures, which have sunk to the seabed over millions of years. The violent shaking of an earthquake can [disturb](#) this pressurised gas. If this happens mud, sand and stones can be forced upwards forming a dome-shaped island.

Other 'earthquake islands' are known to have appeared in this area many years ago. These islands do not last for long, as they are eroded, or washed, away by the sea. ▣

## IRAN OFFERS NUCLEAR TALKS

At the end of September Hassan Rouhani, the new president of Iran, visited New York City, in the USA. He took part in the United Nations (UN) General Assembly. Leaders of all the UN's 193 member countries are invited to this annual meeting. At the assembly Mr Rouhani announced that he wanted to arrange talks about Iran's nuclear programme.

For many years the USA, the UK, France, and Germany have suspected that Iran has been planning to develop nuclear weapons. In the past Iran's leaders have always said this is untrue. They have insisted that the country's nuclear programme was set up for peaceful reasons. This includes generating electricity from nuclear power.

The USA, the UK, France, Russia, China, India, Pakistan, and North Korea have all developed nuclear weapons. Israel is believed to have nuclear weapons too, even though it has never admitted this.

The spread of nuclear weapons is known as ‘proliferation’.

In the 1950s, after some of these countries had built the first nuclear weapons, the UN decided it would be best if all other countries were not allowed to make them. People thought if every country had nuclear weapons, a nuclear war would be more likely to start.



*Iran's new president, Hassan Rouhani*

In 1957 the UN set up the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Its headquarters are in Vienna, the capital of Austria. One of the IAEA's main jobs is to check on all countries that use nuclear power to make electricity. This is to make sure they are not developing nuclear weapons. For this reason the IAEA is often called the UN's ‘nuclear watchdog’.

In recent years Iran has refused to let the IAEA inspect all of its nuclear facilities. In 2011 the IAEA said that it was almost certain Iran was planning to make nuclear weapons.

Before Mr Rouhani, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was the president of Iran for eight years. Many people thought that Mr Ahmadinejad was a ‘hardliner’. This means he is a politician who has extreme ideas and refuses to compromise or listen to others who think differently. While Mr Ahmadinejad was president, Iran had many disagreements with both the USA and most European countries. During this time many Arab nations in the Middle East also became distrustful of Iran.

Several years ago, because of the nuclear disagreements, the UN voted to impose **sanctions** on Iran. This means that other countries are restricted in what can be sold to, or bought from, Iran. These sanctions are now causing many problems for Iranian people. The country's currency has been losing its value and certain items, such as petrol, have become much more expensive.

Mr Rouhani said that, within the next three to six months, he would like to find a solution to the nuclear disagreement. He also insisted that Israel must get rid of its nuclear weapons. While Mr Ahmadinejad was president, Iran and Israel became enemies.

On 26th September John Kerry, the American secretary of state, met with Mohammad Javad Zarif, Iran's foreign minister. Their meeting took place in New York City. They agreed that the nuclear talks would be held in Geneva, in Switzerland. They are expected to start on 15th October.

On 27th September Barack Obama, the president of the USA, and Mr Rouhani spoke on the telephone for 15 minutes. This was the first time that the leaders of the USA and Iran had spoken to each other for more than 30 years. ■

## UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The largest meeting of member countries of the United Nations (UN) is called the General Assembly. This annual meeting usually starts in the third week of September and lasts for two weeks.

The leaders of all the 193 UN member countries are invited to the General Assembly. It takes place at the UN's headquarters in New York City, in the USA.

During each General Assembly a ‘general debate’ is held. This is when each leader can make a speech. This year's general debate ran from 24th to 27th September and then continued on 30th September and 1st October.

Each UN General Assembly is given a number. This year it was the sixty-eighth session, or the 68th Assembly since the UN was founded. Each session lasts for 12 months.

The UN was set up in 1945, just after the Second World War ended. It replaced the League of Nations, which was formed after the end of the First World War (1914 – 1918). The main purpose of the League of Nations was to stop any future wars from happening. Yet it failed to prevent the start of the Second World War in 1939. Towards the end of the war it was decided to replace the League with a new organisation, called the United Nations.



*UN General Assembly meeting*

A secretary-general leads the UN. Its current leader is Ban Ki-moon. He is a former diplomat from South Korea. The General Assembly has a president. He or she holds this position for 12 months, or until the next Assembly takes place. UN member countries are divided into five geographical groups: African, Asian, Latin American and Caribbean, Western European and other States, and Eastern European.

The five groups take turns to choose who is going to be the next

president of the General Assembly. This year it was the turn of the Latin American and Caribbean Group. The 33 members within this group chose John Ashe. He is a diplomat from Antigua and Barbuda. The president for the previous, or sixty-seventh, session was from Serbia.

During the general debate the leaders speeches happen one after the other. They are supposed to be no longer than 15 minutes. These speeches are often reported in the news. This is because they are a chance, or opportunity, for leaders to complain about other countries if they don't agree with them.

This year the first world leader to speak in the general debate was the president of Brazil, Dilma Rousseff. She used her speech to complain about an American organisation called the National Security Agency (NSA).



*Ban Ki-moon and John Ashe shake hands*

The NSA has recently been in the news. It has been secretly collecting and recording communications, such as telephone calls and emails from other countries. Ms Rousseff accused the NSA of listening to phone calls made by her and members of her government. She also claimed that the NSA had been accessing their emails. This type of 'spying' is known as surveillance.

During the two weeks of the General Assembly special rooms are set up in the UN building. Member

countries use these to hold their own smaller meetings. For example, on 29th September the prime minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif, and the prime minister of India, Manmohan Singh, met with each other for the first time.

For many years India and Pakistan have been rivals. There are frequent disagreements about where the border should be between the two countries in a region called Kashmir. Both men agreed to work together to solve these problems. ■

## BLACKBERRY TO BE SOLD

On 23rd September a [consortium](#), or group, lead by a company called Fairfax Financial, announced that it had offered to buy BlackBerry.

Fairfax already owns about 10% of the mobile phone company's shares. It now plans to buy the remaining 90%. This is expected to cost about US\$4.7 billion (£2.9 billion). BlackBerry has lost much of its value over a short time. In 2008, only five years ago, the company was worth about US\$80 billion (£50 billion).

In recent years BlackBerry has had many problems. Soon after its sale was announced company bosses declared that they planned to get rid of 4,500 workers to save money. This is about 40% of BlackBerry's workforce. Large companies often announce how much money they have made or lost in periods of three months, or quarters. Over the last quarter BlackBerry admitted that it had lost US\$950 million (£590 million).

The BlackBerry Company was formally called Research in Motion (RIM). It was founded in 1984 and is based in Canada. As recently as

the end of 2010 BlackBerry was doing well. For many years the company's phones were very popular, especially with businesspeople. They liked the BlackBerry phone because it had a keyboard. It could therefore be easily used to type, send and receive emails. What's more email messages sent from one BlackBerry to another were encrypted.



BlackBerries became so popular with businesspeople that some seemed unable to leave them alone. Critics said they were always checking them for email messages. For this reason some joked the phone should be called the 'CrackBerry' after crack cocaine, a highly addictive illegal drug.

Later BlackBerries also became very popular with young people. They liked the BlackBerry Messenger (BBM) system. This meant you could send free messages to friends who also owned BlackBerries. At this time, about 70 million people, all around the world, used BlackBerry phones.

In 2007 Apple began selling its first iPhone. Within a few years other companies such as Samsung, from South Korea, and HTC, from Taiwan, also began making touch-screen smartphones.

Bosses at BlackBerry were slow to understand that phones that could connect to the internet and 'apps' were quickly becoming more popular. Businesspeople realised that touch-screen phones could do everything that BlackBerries could and more.

BlackBerry decided to create its own new operating system. Yet many think it was too late. By this time Apple's iOS and Google's

Android operating systems were too far ahead. Most thought that BlackBerry would not be able to catch up.

At the beginning of 2011 BlackBerry launched its PlayBook tablet. This was supposed to become as popular as Apple's iPad. Yet few people bought them. This year the company launched its latest smartphone, but not many have been sold. This is very different to what has happened to Apple. Recently people formed long overnight queues to buy the latest iPhone. All of Apple's new phones quickly sold out.

Fairfax Financial is a private equity company. These companies raise large amounts of money, which is then used to buy large businesses. Companies like Fairfax then try to improve the firms they buy to increase their value. If they succeed then the businesses are often sold to others for a much higher price. ▣

## PINK DIAMOND SALE

Sotheby's has announced that a large diamond, called the Pink Star, will be put up for sale in November. Sotheby's is a well-known international auction house company. Its headquarters are in New York City, in the USA. The auction of the unusual diamond will take place in Geneva, in Switzerland.

The De Beers Company discovered the diamond in 1999, in southern Africa. Much of the world's diamond trade is handled by De Beers. The company was founded in 1888 in South Africa, where it owns several diamond mines. De Beers is involved in all parts of the diamond industry – mining, cutting, polishing, valuing and trading.

Gemstones, including diamonds, are measured in units called carats. A carat is 0.2 grams (0.007 ounces).

When diamonds are first dug up, they are called 'rough' diamonds. Experts study the rough diamond to look for any flaws. They also look at the shape of the rough diamond to decide how best to cut and polish it.

A polished diamond is usually much smaller than the rough diamond from which it is made. This is because it is ground down to make a symmetrical shape. Different shapes of diamond are worth different amounts of money.

Diamonds are not always clear. Some have a colour such as pink, yellow, and blue. This can affect how much they are worth.

When it was dug up, as a rough diamond, the Pink Star weighed 132.5 carats (26.5 grams). The stone was cut and polished by a company called the Steinmetz Group. For this reason the Pink Star has also been called the 'Steinmetz Pink'. It took



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 team of eight experts at the company 20 months to cut and polish it. The finished oval-shaped diamond is 59.6 carats (11.92 grams).

Pink diamonds are rare. In smaller ones it is difficult to see the colour. The pink colour is more noticeable in larger diamonds. Coloured diamonds are graded. The colour of the Pink Star is known as 'Fancy Vivid Pink'. This is the highest possible colour grade.



*Pink Star diamond*

Pink diamonds are some of the most expensive jewels in the world. For every one million carats of rough diamonds found about one carat is 'fancy pink'. Only between 50 and 60 carats of pink diamonds are mined every year. Most are found in Australia.

Currently the Pink Star is the biggest 'Fancy Vivid Pink' diamond in the world. The largest pink diamond is 186 carats. Called the Darya-ye Noor, this diamond is part of the Iranian crown jewels.

In Persian, Darya-ye Noor means the Sea of Light. A shah, or 'king' of Iran **acquired** the diamond after his army invaded the northern part of India nearly 300 years ago. Before this the diamond belonged to one of the Mughal emperors who, at that time, ruled much of India. It had been dug up in an Indian diamond mine. Today Iran no longer has a royal family. The Darya-ye Noor diamond and the other Iranian crown jewels are kept in a

museum in Tehran, the country's capital city.

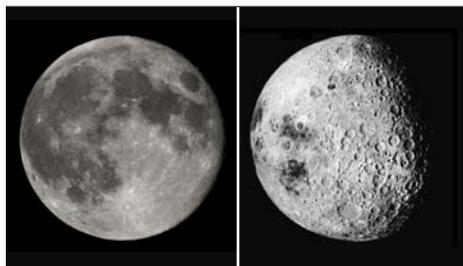
Officials at Sotheby's believe the Pink Star will sell for a record price. This is expected to be at least US\$60 million (£37 million). ■

## MOON THEORIES

On 23rd and 24th September the Royal Society organised an event called the Origin of the Moon. Many leading scientists took part in the talks and discussions about how the Moon was formed.

The Royal Society is based in London, the capital of the UK. Founded in 1660 it is the world's oldest academy of science. Many of the world's most important scientists are members of the Royal Society.

The Moon is almost one-third of the size of the Earth. Other planets in the Solar System have many moons. Jupiter has 67. Saturn has even more, but most are very small. When compared to the size of the Earth our Moon is much bigger than the moons, or natural satellites, of the other planets.



*(Left) Moon's near side; (Right) Moon's far side*

The shape of our Moon has puzzled scientists for many years. It's not round like a ball. One side seems to bulge outwards. The other side is much flatter.

The side of the Moon with the bulge – often called the 'dark side' or the 'far side' – cannot be seen from the Earth. This is because the

time taken for the Moon to orbit, or go around, the Earth is about the same time as our planet takes to spin once on its own axis. This is called synchronous rotation. So it is the near, or flatter, side of the Moon we see in the night sky.

A Russian unmanned spacecraft was the first to fly around the far side of the Moon in 1959. Later, when scientists were able to study photographs of this side they were surprised by what they saw.

The far side has many more craters, a thicker crust, and is much more mountainous than the near side. The near side has large flat darker areas called basins. They are often called 'seas' or 'mare' (the Latin word for sea). Scientists believe magma, or very hot liquid rock, coming up from below the Moon's surface, many millions of years ago, formed the basins.

No one is sure how the Moon was formed or created. There are many theories explaining why a planet as small as Earth has such a large satellite. Most scientists think, in the Earth's very early history, another planet about the size of Mars crashed into it. This is thought to have happened about 4.5 billion years ago. At that time the Earth had nearly formed. The Mars-sized planet broke up. Then, over millions of years, bits of this debris joined together, or coalesced, to form the Moon.

This collision is also believed to have given the Earth its tilt, or list. This tilt is the reason for our seasons: winter, spring, summer, and autumn.

Some think that the impact with the other planet created two moons. One was three times larger than the other. After about 50 million more years these two moons collided. Yet

this was not at very high-speed. Instead the smaller of the two moons merged or ‘splattered’ into the larger one. This happened on what we now call the dark side of the Moon. The force pushed much of the magma from the far side to the near side. This could be the reason for the ‘bulge’ on the Moon’s far side.

At the Royal Society event a new theory, or idea, was discussed. This was that the Moon used to orbit the planet Venus. Yet billions of years ago something caused it to break away. Eventually, it was captured by the Earth’s gravity and has been orbiting our planet ever since. ■

## GREENPEACE ARRESTS

On 19th September, coastguards from Russia took control of, or seized, a Greenpeace ship called the *Arctic Sunrise*. The 30 people on board were then taken to the port city of Murmansk to be questioned.

The *Arctic Sunrise* had been sailing close to a Russian oilrig in the Barents Sea. As a protest a number of Greenpeace **activists** approached the large offshore drilling platform in small boats. Several tried to climb up and tie themselves to the oilrig to stop it from working. The drilling platform belongs to Gazprom, a large Russian oil and gas company.

The activists were arrested. Russian coastguards then climbed down ropes from helicopters to land on the Greenpeace ship. After taking control, a Russian coastguard ship towed the *Arctic Sunrise* to Murmansk. In the following days most of the Greenpeace crew were kept in jail. A court accused them of piracy, or a serious crime committed on board a ship or an aircraft.

Greenpeace is an environmental protection organisation that was first set up over 40 years ago. The organisation’s first protest was to try to stop an American nuclear bomb test on an Alaskan island called Amchitka, in the northern part of the Pacific Ocean. A group of people decided to sail a ship to Amchitka from Vancouver, in Canada. They hoped that if they got close enough the nuclear test would be cancelled.

An American navy ship forced the protesters’ ship to turn back and the nuclear test took place on the island. Yet news of the voyage was reported around the world. Many people agreed with what they were trying to do. Soon afterwards the American government announced it would no longer test nuclear weapons in this part of the Pacific Ocean.



*Arctic Sunrise*

By the early 1980s Greenpeace had become an international organisation. It arranged many other protests against things that it claimed damaged the environment. These included cutting down rainforests, hunting and killing whales, and dumping toxic, or poisonous, waste into the sea.

In recent years Greenpeace has organised several protests in the Arctic. This, its members say, is because a number of countries, including Russia, are planning to search for oil and gas under the Arctic Ocean.

Greenpeace protesters claim that drilling work in Arctic waters is dangerous. They worry an accident might happen. This could be a serious leak or big oil spill. Greenpeace says it would be difficult to stop a leak or clean up a spill because of the freezing temperatures. Accidents like these, it claims, would destroy local **ecosystems**. The protesters insist that drilling for oil and gas in this part of the world is too big a risk.



*Floating oil platform in Barents Sea*

The people who were on board the *Arctic Sunrise* come from 18 different countries, including France, Sweden, Canada, the USA and the UK. By 29th September all were told that they would be held for a further two months. During this time an investigation of what happened would be completed.

Vladimir Putin, the president of Russia, said he did not believe the Greenpeace activists were guilty of piracy. However, he declared that, as they did not know who the activists were, the coastguards had done the right thing. Greenpeace disagrees. It says the coastguard ship had been following the *Arctic Sunrise* for 24 hours before the protest. In addition the protester’s ship has two large rainbows, two peace doves and the name Greenpeace painted on each side.

Greenpeace officials are now demanding that the Russian authorities free its activists and the others who were on board its ship. ■

## UN SYRIA VOTE

On 27th September the United Nations (UN) Security Council held a vote on Syria and its chemical weapons. The vote was unanimous. This means that each of the Council's 15 members agreed on a new [resolution](#), or formal proposal.

The war in Syria began two and a half years ago. Many people believe that agreements made at the UN would be the best way to stop the fighting. However, until the latest vote, the Security Council has not been able to agree on what should be done in Syria. Most of these disagreements have been between the USA and Russia.

The UN Security Council has 15 members. Five, the USA, the UK, Russia, France, and China, are permanent members. Apart from China, the permanent members were the victors in the Second World War (1939 – 1945). China became a permanent member in 1971.



*UN Security Council meeting*

The other ten members of the Security Council change. Each country remains a member for two years before being replaced by another. These ten members represent different parts, or regions, of the world. The five permanent members have the power to veto resolutions. This means that they can block any votes with which they don't agree.

In Syria, on one side is the country's army. It supports President Bashar al-



### UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL (2013)

Permanent member countries:

France    Russia    China    USA    UK

Current non-permanent member countries:

<p><b>Asia-Pacific</b></p> <p>Republic of Korea Pakistan</p>	<p><b>Western Europe and Other</b></p> <p>Australia Luxembourg</p>
<p><b>Latin America and Caribbean</b></p> <p>Argentina Guatemala</p>	<p><b>Africa and Arab Group</b></p> <p>Rwanda Togo Morocco</p>
<p><b>Eastern Europe</b></p> <p>Azerbaijan</p>	

Assad, his family and the government. The other side is made up of several opposition groups. These groups are often called the 'rebels'. Mr al-Assad and his family have controlled Syria for over 40 years.

Traditionally Russia has been an ally of Syria and a supporter of its government. Over the last two years a number of countries have declared that they want the rebels to win. These include the USA, the UK and France together with several Arab nations, such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

The UN Security Council has held several previous votes on what should be done about the war in Syria. Each time Russia and China have voted against them. Normally China disagrees with any country sending troops, or supplying military equipment, to opposition groups in other nations.

In recent months there has been at least one attack in Syria where chemical weapons have been used. Syria is known to have these types of weapons, which include poisonous gases. These weapons are very

dangerous. They can kill thousands of people very quickly. International laws and agreements mean that the use of chemical weapons is illegal.

There have been arguments about who organised the chemical attacks in Syria. Most believe it was the Syrian army. However, the Syrian government insists this is not true. It blames the rebels. Russia says it is unsure.

The leaders of the USA and France threatened to launch missile strikes at Syrian army bases. These, they said, would be a punishment for using chemical weapons.

In September the USA and Russia agreed on a plan about what should be done with Syria's chemical weapons. A team of weapons inspectors would travel to Syria. All the chemical weapons would be given to them. Then, by the start of next year, the weapons would be taken out of the country and destroyed. Russia made sure that the Syrian leaders agreed with this plan.

The UN Security Council vote was held to make sure that all 15 members agreed with the Russian and

American plan. The chemical weapons resolution is the first vote on Syria that the UN Security Council's five permanent members have all agreed to. On 1st October, four days after the vote, the first team of chemical weapons inspectors arrived in Syria.

Many people hope that as the first UN resolution on Syria has now been passed others will follow, which will help to end the war. ■

## SHOPPING MALL ATTACK IN KENYA

On 24th September Uhuru Kenyatta, the president of Kenya, spoke on live television. He announced that the four-day [siege](#) of the Westgate shopping centre, or mall, in Nairobi, the country's capital city, had ended. The president said soldiers from Kenya's army had defeated the group of fighters that had shot and killed many people in the shopping mall.



Westgate shopping centre, in Nairobi

The people who carried out the attack were members a militant Islamic group called al-Shabaab. Al-Shabaab means 'the youth', or 'the boys'. This group is based in Somalia. Its supporters believe that people should obey a very strict version of Islamic law.

For many years Somalia was what's known as a 'failed state'. It was a lawless country with no effective government. Militant groups, such as al-Shabaab, controlled large parts of southern Somalia. These

included areas next to Somalia's border with Kenya.

Around three years ago the African Union (AU) with help from the United Nations (UN) decided to [intervene](#) in Somalia. They wanted Somalia to have a proper elected government. The AU and the UN hoped that once Somalia had elected its own officials they could then start to solve the country's many problems.

Around 9,000 AU soldiers, mainly from Kenya, Ethiopia, Uganda, Burundi, and Djibouti, were sent to Somalia. By the beginning of 2012 they had managed to force all the al-Shabaab fighters to leave Mogadishu, the capital city. Now Somalia has an elected president and a parliament. Yet al-Shabaab has not been defeated. It continues to control some areas of southern Somalia. There are still about 4,000 Kenyan troops in the country.

It's thought that al-Shabaab has between 7,000 and 9,000 fighters.

The group's leaders have demanded that Kenya withdraw its troops from Somalia. They said the attack on the shopping centre was carried out because the Kenyan government refused to do this.

Officials in Kenya are now investigating what happened. It seems that some time ago members of al-Shabaab, pretending to be Kenyans, rented a shop in the mall. Then, over time, they smuggled automatic weapons, bullets and grenades into the shopping centre. These were hidden in the rented shop.

On 21st September a group of al-Shabaab fighters picked up the stored weapons. They then immediately began shooting at people in the shopping centre. As it was a Saturday the mall was crowded.

When the shooting started many people tried to get out of the

building. Police surrounded the mall. Specially trained soldiers then arrived. For the next two days explosions and gunfire could be heard coming from inside the shopping centre. Many people, who had been trapped inside the building, were rescued. Eventually, a fire broke out. Three floors in part of the building collapsed.

It's known that 67 people, including several children, were killed in the attack. Over 200 were injured. Some reports say that as many as 39 people are missing. More bodies are likely to be found when the debris from the collapsed floors is cleared. It is not yet known how many attackers there were. At least five of them were killed. Others may have escaped. Some people suspected of being involved in the attack have been arrested.

Most of those who died were Kenyans. Yet about 20 were from other countries such as Canada, France, China and the UK. President Kenyatta's nephew and his fiancé were among the dead.

During his television address Mr Kenyatta announced that there would be three days of national [mourning](#). He said 'we have been badly hurt, but we have been brave, united and strong'. ■

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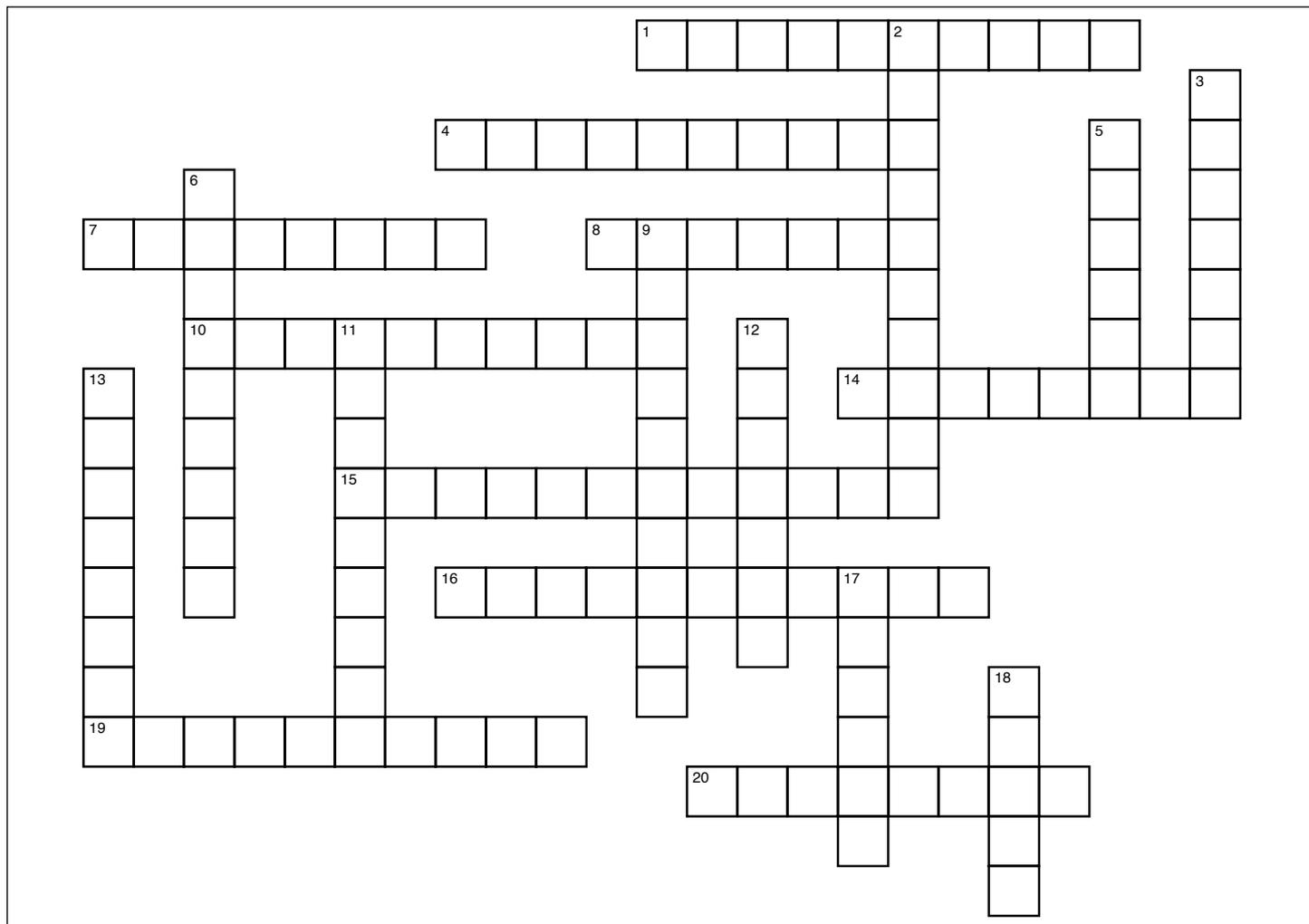
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# ISSUE 207

## 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 *Noun* A group of organisations that work on a project together
- 4 *Noun (Plural)* Instruction, or orders, which encourage or ban activities
- 7 *Noun* Sadness felt because someone has died, or the official acts done or time set aside to express this sadness
- 8 *Adjective* Not complete
- 10 *Adjective* Financially successful
- 14 *Noun* A cream-like substance that is put on the skin to protect or heal it
- 15 *Noun* Something, usually money, given to make up for loss, suffering, or injury
- 16 *Adjective* Describes having parts that match or mirror each other
- 19 *Noun (Plural)* Communities of living things and the environments in which they live
- 20 *Verb* Got or obtained something so you now own it

**Down**

- 2 *Noun* An official decision to do something
- 3 *Adjective* Describes someone who supports a political system based on a very powerful leader who allows no opposition
- 5 *Noun* A formal gesture used in the military to show respect
- 6 *Verb* Temporarily forbidden or barred from being a member of an organisation, school or political party
- 9 *Noun* The act of working out or judging if something is correct
- 11 *Noun (Plural)* Measures applied to force a country to stop doing something
- 12 *Verb* To change or disarrange the position of something
- 13 *Verb* Happened at or near the same time
- 17 *Noun* An official count of a population
- 18 *Noun* The surrounding of a place by a military force to defeat those who are defending it

# ISSUE 207

## 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.

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

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If you wish to earn additional Demics log in to [www.newsademic.com](http://www.newsademic.com), go to the Prize Competitions area and submit the missing word. Puzzle entries must be submitted by 10 pm on 16th October 2013 (GMT/UTC).\*

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

ISSUE 206 ANSWERS

SCENARIO