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November 15, 2012

American English edition

Issue Number 184

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Barack Obama makes a speech, in the early hours of the morning, on November 7, after winning the election

## AMERICAN PRESIDENT REELECTED

Barack Obama has been reelected as the American president. In the election, which was held on November 6, he easily beat his rival, Mitt Romney. Mr. Obama has been the president of the U.S. since he won the last election in 2008.

Presidential elections in America take place every four years. The U.S.'s constitution, or rules by which the country is governed, says that a person can only serve as president for eight years, or two successive four-year terms. So Mr. Obama will not be able to stand again when the next presidential election is held in 2016.

In America there is a long lead-up to a presidential election. There are two main political parties, the Republicans and the Democrats. First the supporters of the two parties have to choose which person is going to be their nominee, or the person who will represent their party in the presidential election.

Mr. Obama is a member of the Democratic Party. In this election he was what is known as "the incumbent". This means that he had already been elected and was hoping to be reelected for another term. Mr. Obama was the Democrats' nominee, or candidate.

However, the Republicans had to choose their nominee. This process is often called the "primaries". Republican supporters in each of the 50 states of the U.S. held a vote. These votes are called a "caucus" or "primary" depending on how the votes are counted. Different states held their votes on different days. The first took place in January, and the last ones at the beginning of June.

Twelve people contested the Republican primaries. Mr. Romney eventually won. He therefore became the Republican presidential candidate. People from several other very small parties also stood in the presidential election.

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After Mr. Romney was confirmed as the Republican candidate, he and Mr. Obama spent most of their time before the election traveling all over the country. Each made many speeches trying to persuade people to vote for them.

As the date of the election got nearer many people thought that the result would be very close. In American presidential elections an incumbent normally wins. However, in the U.S., people often decide on which person to vote for depending on the country's economy. If the economy is doing well a president, or his party's nominee, will probably win. Yet if it is doing badly the opposite might happen.

One way that people judge the economy is by the number of people who do not have a job or are finding it difficult to get work. For the last four years the American economy has not been doing well. When Mr. Obama was first elected in 2008 around 8% of the working population did not have a job. For the U.S. this is a high figure. Yet by the time of the election this figure was only slightly lower.

Mr. Romney is a former successful businessman. He claimed that he would be able to "fix" the economy. He said that he would make decisions that would create new jobs. This would mean that the number of people looking for work would be greatly reduced. Mr. Obama argued that the economy was beginning to improve and it would be wrong to make any changes.

In the U.S. elections are decided by what are called electoral college votes. Each of the 50 states has a certain number of these votes. The number depends on the size of the state's population. For example, California, the state with the biggest

population, has 55 electoral college votes. Yet Alaska, which has a very small population, has only three. The person who gets the highest number of votes in a state will be awarded all of that state's electoral college votes.

The total number of electoral college votes is 538. The winner therefore has to get at least 270. In the election Mr. Obama got the most votes in 26 states to Mr. Romney's 24. However, there was a big difference in the electoral college votes. When these were added up Mr. Obama got 332 and Mr. Romney 206. So Mr. Obama won quite easily.

Many Republican supporters were surprised by the result. This was because they had predicted that it would be much closer and believed that Mr. Romney had a good chance of winning.

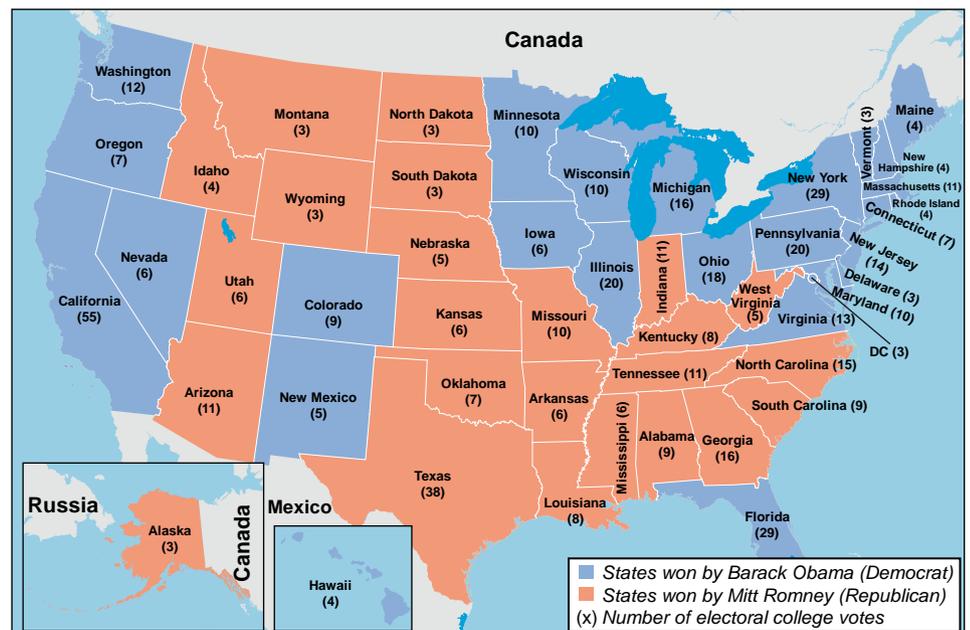
Mr. Obama also beat Mr. Romney in what's known as the popular vote. This is the total number of votes in the whole country. In the popular vote Mr. Obama got 51% and Mr. Romney 48%.

On the same day as the presidential election there were also impor-

tant elections for the United States Congress. Congress (the parliament of the U.S.) has two houses, the Senate and the House of Representatives, which is known as "the House".

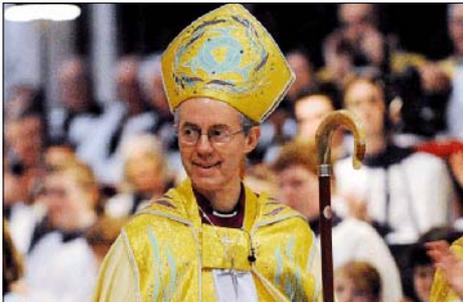
The 435 members, or representatives, of the House are elected every two years. These elections take place at the same time as a presidential election, and half way through a four-year presidential term (known as mid-term elections). The Senate is different. It has 100 members, or senators. There are two for each American state. Members of the Senate are elected for six years. Every two years one third of them are elected for a six-year term.

Before, the Republicans had the majority of members in the House of Representatives and the Democrats had the most in the Senate. This has remained the same after the latest elections on November 7. This means that for at least the next two years Mr. Obama will have to work with a House of Representatives that is controlled by the Republican Party. ■



## NEW ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

On November 9, it was officially announced that Justin Welby would become the next Archbishop of Canterbury. He will take over from Rowan Williams. Archbishop Williams, who has held the position since 2003, recently announced that he planned to retire.



*Justin Welby, Bishop of Durham*

The Archbishop of Canterbury is the leader of the Church of England. He is also the head of the Anglican Communion. This is made up of a large group of churches in other countries. Many have historical links to the Church of England. Some use the word Anglican in their name such as the Anglican Church of Canada, but others don't.

The Anglican Communion is the third biggest group of Christians in the world. The two largest are the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church. The Anglican Communion is thought to have about 85 million members around the world.

Currently Justin Welby is the Bishop of Durham and is one of the Church of England's senior bishops. Bishop Welby will be the 105th Archbishop of Canterbury. The first was Augustine. He came from Rome and became archbishop in 597, or 1,415 years ago. It was Augustine who first began work on the building of a church in Canterbury,

a small city in the south of England. His church eventually became Canterbury Cathedral.

For many years, the English Church was part of the Roman Catholic Church. The archbishop therefore worked with the pope, or leader of the Catholic Church. This changed under the reign of King Henry the Eighth (1491 – 1547). He chose to break away from the Roman Catholic Church. As part of what's known as the "Reformation", or religious changes that were happening in several other northern European countries at that time, the Church of England became a [Protestant](#) Church. This meant that it was no longer under the control of the pope.

Hundreds of years ago, archbishops were selected by the pope or the king or queen of England. Nowadays a group called the Crown Nominations Committee (CNC) meets to select the new archbishop. This group is made up of 16 people. It's thought that this time the CNC considered at least six different candidates. All were Church of England bishops.



*Canterbury Cathedral*

Once the CNC had selected Bishop Welby his name was passed to the prime minister of Britain, David Cameron. Today it would be unusual for a prime minister to reject the person recommended by the CNC, although this has happened in the past.

Bishop Welby is 56 years old. He and his wife have five children. Some people were surprised that he had been chosen. This is because Bishop Welby only became a priest about 17 years ago. He went to Cambridge University, where he studied history and law. He then worked for a large international oil company before deciding to study [theology](#) in 1989.

Bishop Welby will officially become the Archbishop of Canterbury during an enthronement ceremony, which will be held in Canterbury Cathedral, next March. ■

## ASTEROID BELTS

Scientists from the U.S. and Britain have recently completed a study on the possible connection between asteroid belts and the existence of life. They believe that for there to be life on a rocky planet the solar system that it's within would probably have to have an asteroid belt similar to the one in our Solar System.

Our asteroid belt is between Mars and Jupiter. It is a region where there are many bits of rock, or rubble. These were "leftover" when the planets in our Solar System were formed billions of years ago. This ring, or belt, of bits of rock stretches all the way around the Sun.

Except for the two largest asteroids, called Ceres and Vesta, most bits of rock in the asteroid belt range from a few hundred kilometers wide to ones that are the same size as a piece of dust. Ceres is about 604 miles (972 kilometers) across. It is really what's known as a dwarf planet and not an asteroid. Vesta is 330 miles (530 kilometers) wide.

It used to be thought that the asteroid belt was the remains of one or two planets that had been smashed

into pieces after a space **collision**. Yet now it's known that this is not true. The reason is that if you merged all the bits in the asteroid belt into one large rock, or planet, its total mass would be only about 4% of that of our Moon. Ceres alone would make up around 30% of the total mass. Scientists are therefore sure that the rocks in the asteroid belt are ones that never became part of larger planets.

For there to be life in a solar system the scientists say that not only does it need an asteroid belt like ours but a large planet also needs to be quite close by. In our Solar System Jupiter, a gas giant, is not far from the edge of the belt. Its gravity sends many of the rocks spinning out into space or down towards the Sun. A number of them collide with Jupiter every year.



Artist's impression of the asteroid belt

If asteroids fall towards the Earth they are called meteors. Most burn up in the atmosphere. When this happens the streaks of light in the night sky are often called shooting stars. Those that reach the surface of the Earth are called meteorites.

Asteroids, the scientists say, can transport useful things. These could include water and certain chemicals that are important for life to form. When asteroids (as meteorites) bring these to rocky planets (like the Earth) by crashing into them, it is known as “seeding”. However, a solar system with a much bigger asteroid belt would probably have many

large asteroids traveling around it. Rocky planets might then be constantly hit by violent impacts, which could prevent life from forming.

Because of the planet Jupiter our asteroid belt is of a certain size, not too “thick” and not too “thin”. This, the scientists say, suggest that life, such as that on the Earth, may only form on rocky planets in solar systems where there is a similar type of asteroid belt as well as a “controlling” planet like Jupiter.

The scientists studied around 500 large planets in other solar systems, many light years away. There are only about 20 that are roughly the same distance from their sun as Jupiter is from our Sun. Of these solar systems only a few have a similar type of asteroid belt close to their Jupiter-like planet. The scientists say that when others are searching for alien life it may therefore be a good idea to look first at any rocky planets in these solar systems. ■

## VENICE AND CRUISE LINERS

Many people who live in Venice, have become angry with the number of huge passenger ships, or cruise liners, that now visit their city. They claim that these large ships are dangerous and are causing damage to the ancient city's canals and waterways.

Venice is thought by many people to be one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Most of its buildings are very old and **intricately** decorated.

There are at least 400 bridges in the city. Today Venice is part of Italy, but between the year 700 and the late 1700s it was an independent “city state”. Venice is now one of the world's most popular tourist destinations. Around 20 million people visit

## NEWSCAST

**EXPENSIVE CAT FOOD** — A woman in Britain recently lost a valuable diamond and opal necklace. She searched her house but was unable to find the 24 inch (61 centimeter) long piece of jewelry. The woman then had an idea. She has several cats and decided to take the largest one to the vet. The cat was X-rayed. The missing necklace could clearly be seen inside its stomach. The woman says that she must have left the necklace on a table close to some treats, which she feeds to her cats. The largest one then ate it. The vet suggested it would be best to wait for the necklace to appear naturally. Yet when this didn't happen an operation was performed to retrieve the valuable necklace.

the city each year. Two million of these arrive on large passenger ships.

Venice was built in a saltwater lagoon at the northern end of the Adriatic Sea. The city's buildings, many of which are hundreds of years old, range across 117 islands. A lot of the buildings were constructed on large pieces of wood sunk into the lagoon. Venice has few streets and no cars. Instead the “roadways” are canals, and most transport is done by boat.

Recently, an increasing number of large cruise ships have been sailing to Venice. Last year over 650 arrived. The cruise ships stay in the lagoon for a few days before sailing back out to the Adriatic Sea. Some have as many as 5,000 people on board.

The population of Venice is now about 58,000. Many people who live in the city say that these large passenger ships are too big. Some have as many as 13 decks. This means that they are much taller than the

ancient churches and other famous buildings in the city.

Those who dislike them say that the large ships pollute the air and damage the sides of the canals. When ships of this size enter the lagoon, they explain, the water they displace is pushed against the sides of the canals, which can damage them. These people also worry that there might be an accident. There is little room for ships of this size in the lagoon and if one made a steering error it could destroy some of Venice's ancient buildings.



*Passenger cruise ship in Venice*

The companies that own the cruise ships disagree. They say that there are special procedures that the ships have to follow when entering Venice's lagoon. This, they insist, means that an accident is very unlikely. The ships' owners also claim that their passengers spend around €50 million (\$63.5 million) in Venice's shops, restaurants and cafés each year. This, they say, is good for the local economy. Yet those who are unhappy with the passenger ships don't believe this. They argue that most cruise liner passengers, who visit Venice, only buy ice creams. They claim that many don't even get off the ships.

The cruise ships are not the only problem that Venice has. In recent years, flooding has become more frequent. The water of the lagoon now floods the city at least four or five times a year. On November 11,

after days of heavy rain and strong winds, there was a record flood. Many parts of the city were underwater. The level of the lagoon was 60 inches (1.5 meters) higher than normal.

In the past, it was discovered that Venice was sinking. It was thought that this problem had been fixed. Scientists therefore believed that rising sea levels in the Adriatic Sea were the cause of the flooding. Yet recent scientific studies seem to suggest the reason for the floods is that Venice's buildings are still slowly sinking into the lagoon. ■

## CHINA'S NEW LEADERS

The 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC National Congress) took place between November 8 and 15. The meeting was held in the Great Hall of the People, in Beijing, the capital of China. Over 2,270 officials, or delegates, who represent different regions of the country, attended.

China is a one party state. Apart from the Communist Party no other political parties are allowed. The country's leaders are therefore not democratically elected, as they are in many other countries. Instead senior members of the Communist Party choose the country's leaders.

CPC National Congress meetings are important. These meetings have been held every five years since the death of Mao Zedong in 1977. Mao Zedong (known as Chairman Mao) ruled China for over 30 years. After he died the Communist Party organized a way by which future leaders of the country would be selected.

Hu Jintao is the country's current president. He became president ten

years ago at the 2002 16th CPC National Congress. The second most important person in the country is Wen Jiabao. His title is "premier". Similar to Mr. Hu, Mr. Wen became premier at the same CPC National Congress ten years ago.

As both men have held their position for ten years they now have to retire, or stand down. Therefore, one of the main events of this year's National Congress was the official appointment of those who will be China's new president and premier. These people will be China's main leaders for the next ten years.

Future leaders are "introduced" at every other one of these five yearly meetings. For example, at the meeting in 2007 the people who were chosen to be members of the Politburo Standing Committee (PSC) lined up on the stage. (The PSC is a group of between seven and nine people. It makes many of the important decisions in China.)



*The next president of China, Xi Jinping*

President Hu then introduced each member of the PSC one by one. The first was Xi Jinping. This meant that Mr. Xi was the person who had been chosen to become the president in five years time. The second person to be introduced was Li Keqiang. So he would become the new premier in 2012.

Therefore, during odd numbered National Congress meetings (such as the 17th, in 2007) likely future leaders are introduced. Then, in five

years time, during even numbered meetings (like this year's one), they are officially appointed.



*The Great Hall of the People, in Beijing*

On November 15, the last day of the 18th National Congress, it was confirmed that Mr. Xi would take over as president from Mr. Hu and Mr. Li will succeed Mr. Wen, as premier. The official handover will take place next March.

Mr. Xi's promotion as president of the country is an example of how sons and daughters of previous Chinese leaders are often picked for top jobs. Chinese people nickname them "princelings". Mr. Xi is a "princeling" as his father took part in the Chinese revolution under Chairman Mao. His father was also a vice premier in the Communist Party. Mr. Xi's wife is a very popular folk singer. ■

## "HOTEL OF DOOM" TO OPEN

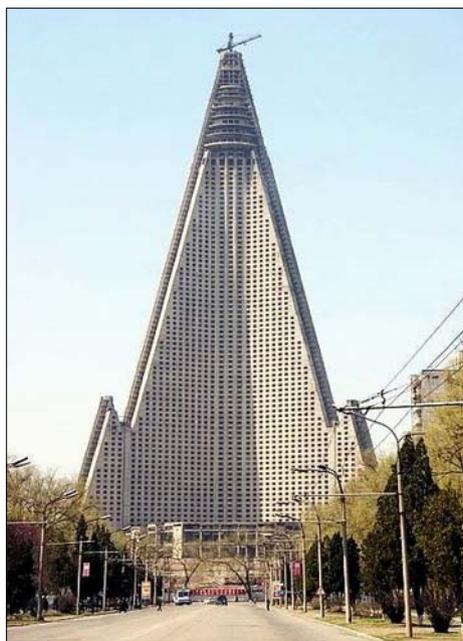
At the beginning of November, the boss of Kempinski, a company that runs international hotels, said that the Ryugyong Hotel, in North Korea, is likely to open next year. The large hotel was supposed to open over 20 years ago. It has been nicknamed the "Hotel of Doom". Some people believe that the unfinished hotel building has become a symbol of North Korea's economic problems.

Building work on the huge pyramid-shaped hotel, which is in

Pyongyang, the capital of North Korea, began in 1987. At the time the 105 story building would have been one of the tallest in the world. (Today the unfinished building is the 47th highest.)

North Korea is a very secretive country. It is often described as the world's last remaining Stalinist state. The word Stalinist comes from the former Russian leader Joseph Stalin (1878 – 1953). He became a dictator who controlled Russia under very strict rules. People who criticized him were often sent to prison, or sentenced to death.

Even though North and South Korea share the same language they are very different countries.



*Ryugyong Hotel in Pyongyang*

South Korea holds democratic elections for its politicians and president. Several of its larger companies are world leaders in computer technology, shipbuilding, and industrial design. It also has the world's fastest internet connections and network.

Since its formation in 1948, one family has ruled North Korea. Today

Kim Jong-un is in charge. He is believed to be about 30 years old. He took over after his father, Kim Jong-Il, died at the end of 2011. Before that Kim Il-sung, who was Kim Jong-Il's father, controlled the country. North Korea has therefore become what some describe as a [hereditary](#) dictatorship.

Some people suspect that North Koreans have been "brainwashed", or persuaded to believe that their leaders never do anything wrong. This is what is known as a "personality cult". This happens when a leader, with his or her supporters, uses newspapers, movies, and radio and television broadcasts to create a god-like image. No opposition parties are allowed, so nobody criticizes or questions the leader.

It's thought that thousands of people do not have enough to eat in North Korea. There is limited electricity. Only those who hold senior positions in the government or the army have enough food and supplies. Most of the country's money is spent on weapons and its army, which is the fifth largest in the world.

In the 1980's, the Russian led Soviet Union supported North Korea. Yet when the Soviet Union broke up and collapsed in 1990 this support ended. Work on the Ryugyong Hotel, which is by far the tallest building in Pyongyang, was halted because of a lack of money. In recent years an Egyptian company has completed some of the building work.

Kempinski's headquarters is in Germany. Its boss said that North Korea has asked his company to operate the hotel when it opens next year. However, he thinks it will have only 150 rooms. These will be on the top floors. When first started the

hotel was supposed to have 3,000 rooms. Other parts of the building may become shops, restaurants and offices. Yet much of it is expected to remain unused.

Many people say that the Ryugyong Hotel in Pyongyang is one of the ugliest buildings in the world. In 2008, readers of an American magazine voted the hotel as the “worst building in the history of mankind”. ■

## NEW SYRIAN OPPOSITION

On November 11, several organizations opposed to the president of Syria, Bashar al-Assad, and his government, announced that they had agreed to set up a new united group. The negotiations, or talks, to form the new opposition group took place in Doha, the capital of Qatar. They lasted for four days.

The new group’s official name is the Syrian National Coalition for Opposition and Revolutionary Forces. Many people hope that the formation of this “National Coalition” will help to end the fighting in Syria.



Moaz al-Khatib, leader of the National Coalition

It was decided that the leadership of the National Coalition would be made up of 60 people. Moaz al-Khatib was chosen to be its president. He is a former imam, or Muslim priest, from a mosque in Damascus, Syria’s capital city. He

left Syria last July after being de-tained for the fourth time.

The violence in Syria first began over 18 months ago. It started after the government ordered the army to use weapons to stop street protests. The demonstrators want Mr. al-Assad to step down. He and his family have controlled Syria for the past 40 years. Mr. al-Assad’s opponents also claim that many government officials in Syria are corrupt, or dishonest, and that the police have too many powers.

As the violence spread, some members of the Syrian army changed sides and joined the protesters. Yet many people in certain parts of the country still support Mr. al-Assad and his government. Recently, fighting has been taking place in Syria’s two largest cities, Damascus and Aleppo. So far it’s thought that the violence has been the cause of over 40,000 deaths. Tens of thousands of Syrians have crossed the borders into Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon to get away from the fighting.

Some of the anti-government fighters, or rebels, have set up an organization called the Free Syrian Army (FSA). Another opposition organization, the Syrian National Council (SNC) is based in Egypt. It is made up of people who were forced to leave Syria many years ago. Now there are also many other smaller armed groups, which have their own leaders, fighting against the Syrian government forces.

Other countries such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar say that they want to help the anti-government groups in Syria. Yet they claimed that this was difficult, as there were so many separate opposition groups. What’s more, many of these groups seemed to disagree with each other most of the time.

Countries that want to support the rebels insisted that Mr. al-Assad and his government could only be defeated if there was one united opposition group. In addition a united group would be needed to take over the running of the country if Mr. al-Assad and his family were forced to leave.

In Syria there are many different religious and ethnic groups. These include Sunni and Shia Muslims, Alawites, Christians, Druze, Assyrians and Kurds. Mr. al-Khatib said that among the 60 members of the National Council there were people who represented all of these groups. The new National Council also includes members of the SFA and SNC.

As the National Coalition has now been set up Mr. al-Khatib hopes that many countries from all around the world will support it. He

## NEWSCAST

**CROCODILE CAPTURE** — Police in Gaza have announced that a runaway crocodile has finally been captured. It escaped from a local zoo 18 months ago. The crocodile, which is six foot (1.8 meters) long, was discovered living in a large sewage pond two months ago. Local people had been complaining that their goats and ducks were going missing. However, even though it was known where the crocodile was nobody was able to catch it. Eventually, a decision was made to drain the pond. After this had been done the crocodile was caught with the use of shark nets. The crocodile, which has been nicknamed “Rock” has been re-



turned to the zoo.

explained that opposition forces in Syria would need better and more modern weapons if they were to defeat the Syrian army.



The day after the National Coalition was officially formed the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) announced that it would support it. The GCC has six member countries, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). On November 13, France said that it too would support the National Council. It was the first European country to do so. ■

## FINDING BIGFOOT

Jeffrey Meldrum, professor of anthropology in the U.S., has announced that he is planning to search for “Bigfoot” using a remote controlled balloon, or blimp. Anthropology is the study of human origins and human societies, customs, and beliefs.

Bigfoot is the name of a large, mysterious ape-like creature, which a few people claim to have seen in remote western parts of the U.S. However, most people and nearly all scientists say that Bigfoot is a myth and does not exist.

Yet there are people, in other parts of the world, who say that they too have seen similar tall ape-like creatures. These are known as the Yeren (in China), Sasquatch (in Canada),

Yowie (in Australia), Mapinquiry (in Brazil), Sjarang Gigi (in Indonesia), Mande Barung (in India) and perhaps most famously, the Yeti, or Abominable Snowman, (in the Himalayan Mountains).

Sightings of these creatures are nearly always in remote forest or mountain areas. Those who insist that they have seen them describe the creatures as taller than an average man, about ten feet (three meters) in height, and covered in red-brown fur.

A few photographs have been taken of them and footprints have been recorded. Yet the pictures are not clear. Most are of large dark man-like shapes hidden among trees or rocks. Yet scientists say that these photographs and footprints are easy to fake. They argue that there is no evidence to prove the large ape-like animals are real. For example, no bodies or bones of these creatures have ever been discovered.



*Is this a real or fake picture of a Yeti?*

However, a few scientists think that people really have seen strange ape-like creatures and want to prove they exist. These scientists are known as cryptozoologists. The word “crypto” comes from an Ancient Greek word meaning “hidden”, and zoology is the study of animals. Cryptozoologists therefore study “hidden animals”, or animals whose existence has not been proven.

In recent years, there have been expeditions to search for these

creatures in remote parts of Russia and China. Yet, so far, no proof that they exist has ever been found.

An American man called William Barnes came up with the idea of a balloon, or blimp, search. He claims to have seen a Bigfoot in northern California in 1997. Professor Meldrum had written a book about Bigfoot so Mr. Barnes thought that he would tell him about his idea.

The blimp search has been given the name “Project Falcon”. The blimp will carry a special thermal-imaging camera. This will be able to detect the body heat of any large animal on the ground. The balloon will be able to cover large remote areas of the western U.S.

If the camera picks up, or detects, any unusual large animals the balloon should be able to “follow” or track them. Teams on the ground will then be told exactly where these creatures are so they can go and look for them. Even if the animals have disappeared Professor Meldrum and Mr. Barnes say that they may have left footprints or other possible evidence such as strands of hair. ■

## FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

Many people all around the world celebrated Diwali, which is also known as the Festival of Lights, on November 13.

Diwali, which is the biggest festival in India, lasts for five days. The date of the festival is calculated according to the Hindu calendar. This is a lunar calendar so it is based on the cycles of the Moon. This means that the date of Diwali in the international, or Gregorian, calendar differs each year. However, it is always sometime between mid October and

mid November. Last year, for example, Diwali was on October 26.

Diwali is the beginning of the Hindu New Year. In countries where many Hindus live, such as India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar (also known as Burma), Malaysia and Singapore Diwali is a national holiday. Large celebrations take place in these countries. In some places, big melas, or fairs, are held. They often include markets and music performances.



*Diyas*

Hindus, Sikhs and Jains all celebrate Diwali. Many of the stories and traditions linked to the festival celebrate the victory of good, or light, over evil, or darkness. People decorate their homes with electric lights and small traditional lamps called diyas. The diyas are made of clay and contain oil with a wick that burns like a candle.

For Hindus, the third day of Diwali is Lakshmi-puja. People offer prayers to Lakshmi. She is the goddess of [prosperity](#) and wealth. Small gifts and sweets are exchanged. People's houses are often decorated with rangoli, patterned decorations made with brightly-colored powders. Some people decorate their hands with a red dye called henna. The dye is drawn on the skin in detailed designs, called mehndi.

Sikhism was founded and developed over hundreds of years by people known as gurus. Diwali gained a special meaning for Sikhs in the

early 1600s. At that time his enemies imprisoned Guru Har Gobind, one of the Sikh gurus. He was released from prison after a year. When he was released, people lit lamps to celebrate. For Sikhs, Diwali commemorates the guru's release from imprisonment.

Diwali is also celebrated with big firework displays and firecrackers. However, firecrackers have become a problem in some large Indian cities. Many people used to buy these types of fireworks for the festival. The main problem, officials say, is safety. Hospitals often have to treat people suffering from burns caused by firecrackers. Another problem is pollution. The firecrackers create a lot of smoke and [particles](#) in the air. This year firecracker sellers in Delhi, the capital of India, said that fewer people were now buying these types of firework.

This year, all Hindus around the world received an unusual "happy Diwali message". It came from space. Sunita Williams is currently high above the Earth on the International Space Station (ISS). She is an Indian-American astronaut. When giving her Diwali message Mrs. Williams was shown on live television floating upside down in zero gravity in the ISS. ■

## REMEMBRANCE DAY

Many people around the world attended special memorial services on November 11. This date is known as Remembrance Day in many countries. On this day people think about those who fought and died in previous and current wars, or conflicts.

Remembrance Day, or November 11, is the anniversary of the end of the First World War (1914

– 1918). At 11 o'clock in the morning on this day in 1918 the countries involved in the war agreed to stop fighting. This type of ceasefire agreement is known as an armistice. Therefore, Remembrance Day is also known as Armistice Day. In the U.S. November 11, is called Veterans Day. A veteran is someone who has served in the armed forces. In some countries, such as France and Belgium, Armistice Day is a national holiday.

Originally, Remembrance Day was held to remember everyone who died during the First World War. Later it became the official day to remember all soldiers, sailors, airmen and others who lost their lives serving their country since 1914.



*Poppies growing on First World War battlefield*

It is estimated that 20 million people were killed during the First World War. The first Remembrance Day ceremony was held in Britain in 1919 on the first anniversary of the end of the war.

Originally, a two-minute silence was held at exactly 11 o'clock on November 11. Cars, trucks and buses in the streets, workers in offices and factories and people walking along the road all stopped and remained silent. This year November 11, was a Sunday. In years when this date is on a different day of the week Remembrance Day ceremonies, in churches and around war memorials, take place on the second Sunday in November.

The poppy flower has become a symbol of Remembrance Day. This is because of a poem that was written during the First World War called *In Flanders Fields*. The poem describes the battlefields in Flanders, a part of Belgium and northern France, where fierce fighting took place. John McCrae, a Canadian soldier, wrote the poem.

In Flanders, during the summer months, millions of red poppies grow wild in the fields. For many people, the Flanders poppies represent the hundreds of thousands of soldiers who died in this part of Belgium during the war. This explains why many people wear a red paper poppy on the days leading up to Remembrance Day.



*The Cenotaph, in London*

A special Remembrance Day ceremony and parade is held each year at the Cenotaph, a war memorial in London, the capital of Britain. This year Queen Elizabeth the Second together with members of her family, David Cameron, Britain's prime minister, and senior politicians, attended the ceremony. Each placed a **wreath** of poppies at the Cenotaph. Military bands played while people

who have served in the armed forces marched past the war memorial.

This year, François Hollande, the president of France, attended a military parade at the Arc de Triomphe, in Paris, the capital city. During the parade he placed a wreath on the tomb of the unknown soldier.

In the town of Ypres, in Belgium, a large crowd gathered to watch a military parade. Prince Philippe of Belgium attended. Ypres is where some of the biggest battles of the First World War took place.

Barack Obama, the American president, placed a wreath during a special ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery. This cemetery, which is close to Washington DC, the capital of the U.S., is where many American servicemen are buried.

Stephen Harper, the prime minister of Canada, was visiting Hong Kong. There he attended a special service at a cemetery where nearly 300 Canadian soldiers are buried. These men were killed in the fighting against the Japanese that took place in Hong Kong during the Second World War (1939 – 1945). ■

## BIRD PASSWORD

Scientists in Australia have discovered that female superb fairy-wrens are able to teach their chicks a special password before they have hatched. The researchers believe that this behavior is a way of preventing them from feeding cuckoo chicks if one is in their nest.

Superb fairy-wrens are found in parts of Australia. There are several types of fairy-wrens. The small birds mostly live off insects but also eat some seeds. Superb fairy-wrens are grey-brown in color. However,

## NEWSCAST

**TWIN CANDIDATES** — On November 7, a woman in Kenya gave birth to twins in a hospital. The father of Barack Obama, the American president, came from Kenya. He is buried in a village that is not far from the hospital. The day before the twins were born Mr. Obama was reelected as president for another four year-term. He is a member of the Democratic Party. His Republican rival in the election was Mitt Romney. When people in Kenya heard the news that Mr. Obama had won, many celebrated. The mother of the twins said that she had decided to name her twins “Barack Obama” and “Mitt Romney”. By doing this, she explained, she would always remember the 2012 American election.

during the breeding season the feathers on the male's head and tail becomes black and different shades of blue.

Only a few species of birds in the world, such as some types of cuckoos, are what's known as brood parasites. These birds lay an egg in another bird's nest. The bird that built the nest then sits on, or incubates, it as well as its own eggs, not realizing that a different bird laid the egg. When the chicks hatch, the parent birds raise the cuckoo chick that doesn't belong to them. The “parasite” chick soon becomes bigger and stronger than the birds' natural chicks. Often it will push the others out of the nest so it gets all the food.

The scientists were studying animals that attack nests, or nest predators, and the alarm calls that birds make. While they were

doing this they noticed something unusual about the female superb fairy-wrens. The mother birds seemed to be singing to their eggs. The birds began singing the song roughly ten days after the eggs were laid. The mother birds then stopped singing it after the first eggs hatched.



Superb fairy-wrens, female (left) male (right)

The scientists suspected that the mother bird was teaching its chicks a password before they hatched. The song contained a note that after hatching the chicks had to use as a begging-call to be fed. If any chick in the nest was not using the correct begging-call, or password, the mother bird would know it was a cuckoo chick. If this happened the nest would be abandoned. Then the fairy-wrens would go and build another nest and start again. The males also seemed to know the correct password.

If a cuckoo lays an egg in a fairy-wren nest then the developing chick inside the egg would also hear the mother's song. Yet the scientists think that the unhatched cuckoo chick does not have enough time to learn the password, as it would not have been in the nest for as long as the other eggs.

What's more, each mother fairy-wren seemed to use a different password. To test this idea the scientists made a recording of the correct begging-call used by chicks in one

nest. They then played this recording close to another nest after the chicks had hatched. When they did this both parents stopped feeding the recently hatched chicks.

In another experiment the scientists took some recently laid fairy-wren eggs and switched them with eggs from another nest. When the chicks hatched in these nests both sets of parents fed the chicks. Therefore, the chicks in each nest must have been using the correct password. This, the scientists say, shows that the superb fairy-wren chicks must have learned the correct passwords before they hatched. ■

## MALALA DAY

At the beginning of November, the United Nations (U.N.) declared that November 10, would be "Malala Day". The U.N. asked people all around the world to organize events on this day to honor Malala Yousafzai.

Ms. Yousafzai is a 14 year old schoolgirl from northern Pakistan. She lives in an area called the Swat Valley. When Ms. Yousafzai was 11 years old the Taliban took over this part of Pakistan.

The Taliban believe that people should live according to strict Islamic laws. For example, their beliefs mean that music should be banned and that girls are not allowed to go to school or have any form of education. After the Taliban had taken over the Swat Valley it ordered all the girls schools to shut down.

While the girls schools were closed Ms. Yousafzai wrote an [anonymous](#) internet blog. In it she described how many young girls lived in fear of the Taliban. She also wrote about the cruel ways in which

the Taliban treat people who do not agree with their beliefs.

In 2009, the Pakistani government sent troops to the Swat Valley. After fierce fighting the Taliban withdrew and the girls schools were reopened. Ms. Yousafzai wrote about the fighting in her blog and more and more people began to read it.

After the Taliban was forced out of the Swat Valley Ms. Yousafzai started a special campaign. She wants more girls to be able to go to school. Recently, she has become well-known and agreed to be interviewed by some news companies.

On October 9, Ms. Yousafzai was traveling home on a school bus. A Taliban gunman got on to the bus and shot her in the head. Several of her friends were also injured in the attack. Taliban leaders admitted that they had planned the shooting. Many people in Pakistan and other parts of the world were shocked by what had happened.



Malala Yousafzai

Ms. Yousafzai was taken to the hospital. Later a special air ambulance took her to Britain where she was given special medical treatment. Recently, doctors from the hospital in Britain, where she is now staying, have said that she should make a good recovery.

Over the past month, thousands of people in Pakistan, the U.S., and

Britain have held demonstrations in support of Ms. Yousafzai. All agree that every girl and woman, in every country, should be given the chance to get a good education.

On Malala Day events were held in around 100 countries. These included Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, the U.S., Britain, Mexico, Canada, Australia and Sierra Leone. Many people have signed [petitions](#). Some of these were handed to Ali Asif Zardari, the president of Pakistan. The petitions said that the Pakistani government should provide some money to all families who send their girls to school in honor of Malala.

Other petitions were signed. These state that Ms. Yousafzai should be awarded next year’s Nobel Peace Prize. This important annual award is given to a person or organization that is thought to have made the greatest contribution to world peace. ■

## ECOWAS TO SEND TROOPS TO MALI

On November 11, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) announced that it had decided to send a military force to Mali. ECOWAS is a group of 15 countries in West Africa. Mali is one of them.

The announcement was made at the end of a summit, or large meeting, which was held in Abuja, the capital of Nigeria. Military experts from the United Nations (U.N.) and several European countries took part in the meeting. A government official from Algeria, which has a long border with Mali, also attended.

The military force of around 3,300 troops will be mostly made up

of soldiers from Niger, Nigeria and Burkina Faso. Their job will be to regain control of northern Mali. Two militant, or rebel, groups seized this part of the country about six months ago. This area, which some of the rebels call Azawad, is mostly desert. It is about the same size as France.

For several years the Malian army has been fighting the Tuaregs (often called the Tuareg rebels). The Tuareg is a [nomadic](#) tribe. Its members mainly live in the north of Mali and in parts of Niger, Algeria, and Libya. The Tuareg rebels want Azawad to become a separate country.

In March, a group of army officers forced Mali’s president to leave the country. They then took control of Bamako, the capital city. The Tuareg rebels took advantage of the confusion and managed to force the army to withdraw from the north of the country. A militant Islamic group called Ansar Dine (which means “Defenders of the Faith”) helped the Tuareg rebels to force the army to leave Azawad.



Ansar Dine, which is a militant Islamic group, has now taken over the three main cities in northern Mali, Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal. Ansar Dine supporters believe in a very strict interpretation, or version, of Islam. For example, all women in northern Mali have been ordered to cover their faces. Ansar

### Member countries of the Economic Community of West African States

Benin	Liberia
Burkina Faso	Mali
Cape Verde	Niger
Ivory Coast	Nigeria
Gambia	Senegal
Ghana	Sierra Leone
Guinea	Togo
Guinea-Bissau	

Dine followers are reported to have badly damaged some of Timbuktu’s ancient buildings and tombs. They have also banned people from worshipping at the tombs, as they claim that it is un-Islamic.

Around 500 years ago Timbuktu was an important center for Islamic learning. It contains many ancient buildings, including mosques and tombs, made from mud bricks and wood. Islamic books and manuscripts, many hundreds of years old, are kept in libraries in some of these buildings.

The Ansar Dine leaders say that they do not want northern Mali to become an independent country. Instead, they plan to take over the whole of Mali and govern it under very strict Islamic laws.

After the group of army officers took control of Bamako ECOWAS leaders became alarmed at what was happening in Mali. At first they insisted that the Army officers hand power back to a new president. After this was done ECOWAS began discussing ways of defeating the rebels in the north of the country. Many ECOWAS countries worry that if the militant groups are successful in Mali these problems may then spread to their own countries.

Some people are concerned that what is taking place in this part of

Mali is similar to what happened in Afghanistan around ten years ago. Then the Taliban controlled the country. It too follows a very strict version of Islam.

A few months ago, the U.N. told ECOWAS to draw up a military plan to regain control of northern Mali. Yet before ECOWAS sends the troops, it will need the U.N.'s permission to do so. The U.N. is expected to agree to ECOWAS's military plan within the next four weeks. ■

## EUROPE'S OLDEST TOWN UNCOVERED

Archaeologists in Bulgaria have recently announced that they have discovered or unearthed the remains of Europe's oldest town. The town, or urban settlement, is in the east of the country. It is believed to

have been occupied between 4700 and 4200 BCE. This means that it was built more than a thousand years before the start of the Ancient Greek civilization.

The prehistoric town, which is not far from the city of Varna, was discovered in 2005. This was when archaeologists first began to dig into a large **isolated** hill. It now seems that the remains of the town that are underneath it formed the hill. Working during the summer months it has taken the archaeologists a number of years to uncover part of the town.

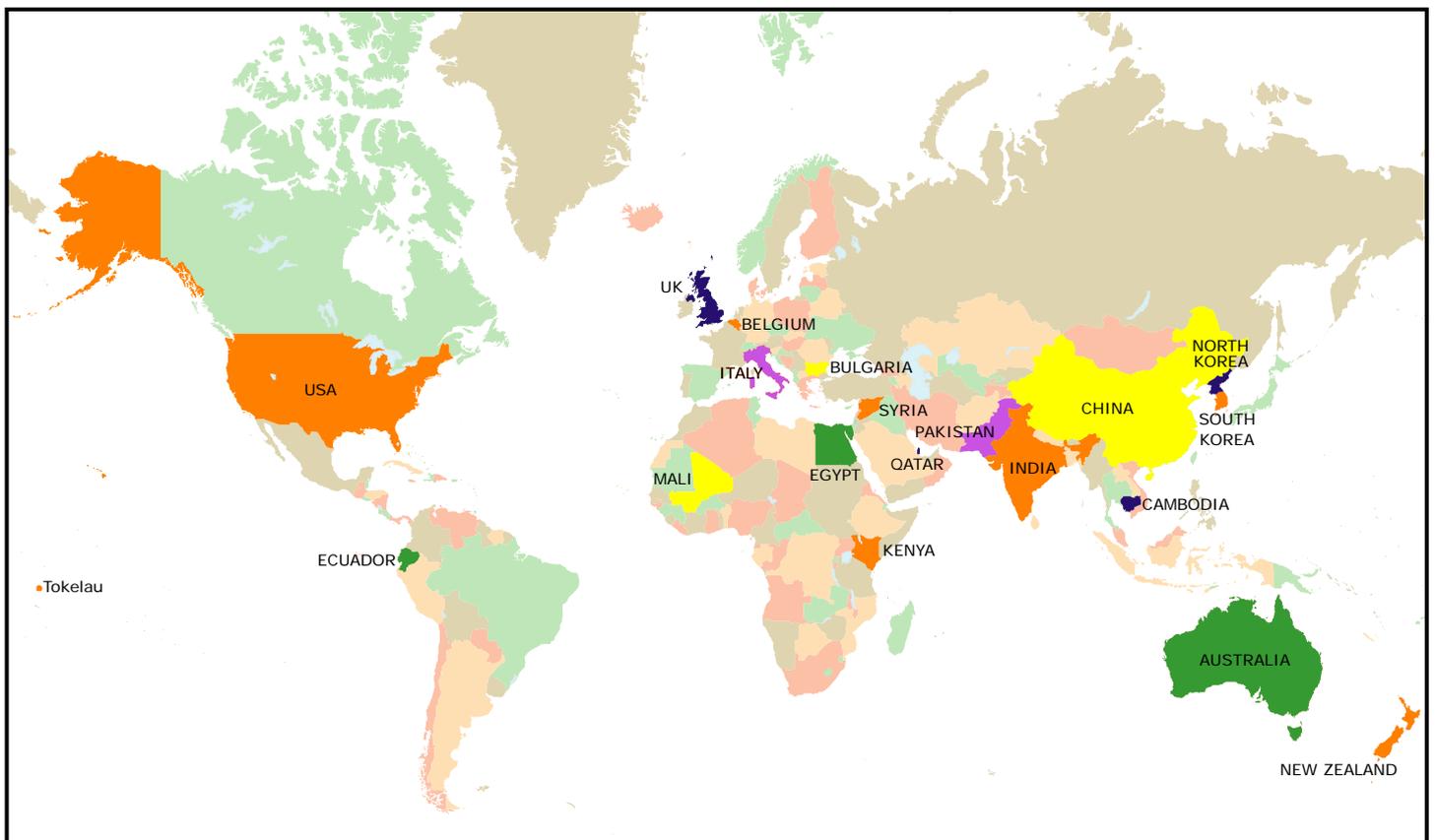
The archaeologists say that they have found the remains of several two-story houses, a burial ground, a gate and surrounding walls. The walls, which are made of large stone blocks, are ten feet (three meters) high and 6.6 feet (two meters) thick. They believe that around 350 people lived in the town.

The archaeologists believe that it was a wealthy settlement, which explains why it was protected by thick walls. The wealth, they explain, came from salt. At the time that people were living in the town salt was very valuable. It was like gold and used as a type of currency, or money, when trading with other groups or tribes.



Hill under which the ancient town was discovered

In this part of Bulgaria there are large rock-salt deposits. The archaeologists think that the people who lived in the town would take the



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.

salty water from nearby springs. This would then be boiled in special [kilns](#). Some of these kilns have been found inside the town. Once all the water had boiled away the salt remained. After baking, the salt was then made into bricks.

In the past, gold objects have been discovered in several graves in the surrounding area. One grave near Varna, which was excavated about 40 years ago, contained as many as 3,000 pieces of gold jewelry. This is thought to be the oldest gold treasure ever found anywhere in the world.

The archaeologists say that the discovery that the people in the town were making salt probably explains why these valuable objects have been found nearby. This was because the salt trade made those who lived in this part of Europe around 7,000 years ago very wealthy. ■

## RARE WHALES ACCIDENTALLY DISCOVERED

Scientists from New Zealand and the U.S. have recently discovered that a type of whale that no one has ever seen alive, still exists. They accidentally found out that two whales, a female adult and child, or calf, which were discovered on a beach in New Zealand in 2010 were very rare spade-toothed beaked whales.

The adult, which was 17.4 foot (5.3 meters) long, and calf had beached themselves. Some types of smaller whales and dolphins are known to occasionally swim onto beaches, sometimes in large groups. This is known as “beaching”. It is not known why they do this. Some scientists believe that it may have something to do with them being ill

or losing their sense of direction. If they cannot get back into the water they die.

There are several types of “beaked” whale. Some examples are Sowerby’s beaked whale, Gray’s beaked whale and Cuvier’s beaked whale. All look quite similar. These types of whales are very different from the much larger whales such as the humpback and blue whale. Beaked whales have a long “nose” or beak and look more like dolphins. Not much is known about them. This is because they live in very deep waters in the Southern Pacific Ocean. Beaked whales feed on squid and are rarely seen on the surface.

Spade-toothed whales have broad, very wide teeth from which they get their name. In the past only three pieces, or fragments, of skulls of a spade-toothed whale, have been found. Two were discovered in New Zealand, one in the 1870s the other in the 1950s. The third piece was found in Chile just over 25 years ago. One of the fragments was a jawbone.



*Adult spade-toothed whale found dead on a beach in 2010. (New Zealand Department of Conservation)*

When the bodies of the two whales were found on a beach two years ago researchers thought that they were Gray’s beaked whales. This type of beaked whale is much more common. The researchers took some samples and then buried the two bodies in the sand.

## NEWSCAST

**TOILET PARK** — An unusual theme park has opened in the city of Suwon, in South Korea. The park was built in memory of a former mayor. He was nicknamed “Mr. Toilet”. In the 1980s the mayor said that he was embarrassed by how bad the toilets were in his city. The mayor then spent many years working to improve them. He insisted that toilets were important for people’s health. His former house, which is shaped like a toilet, is now part of the theme park. Inside are examples of old toilets, such as those used by the Romans. There is also a display of “Washroom” signs from all around the world.

The samples were sent to a university in New Zealand. Later when some DNA tests were done the scientists were surprised to discover that the samples were not from Gray’s beaked whales. Instead they showed that they came from spade-toothed whales, which had never been seen before. The scientists then tested samples taken from over 100 other Gray’s beaked whales, which had been found on beaches in the past. Yet none of these were discovered to be spade-toothed ones.

Recently, the scientists went to the beach to dig up the two whales that were buried two years ago. They found the bones, but the adult’s skull was missing. It is thought that this must have been uncovered and then washed out to sea. Now scientists say that they hope to be able to find out more about these rare creatures as, for the first time, they will be able to study a complete skeleton of a spade-toothed whale. ■

## NEW COPTIC POPE

On November 4, Bishop Tawadros was chosen as the new leader, or pope, of Egypt's Coptic Church. The previous pope, Shenouda the Third, died last March. He had been the leader of the Coptic Church for the last 40 years.



*Coptic Cathedral, in Cairo*

The Coptic Orthodox Church is based in Egypt. The population of Egypt is about 80 million. Roughly 10% of those living in the country are Coptic Christians. Followers of the Coptic Church are known as Copts. They are the biggest Christian group in the Middle East where the majority of people follow the Islamic faith. There are thought to be about four million Coptic Christians living in other countries.

The Coptic Church was founded in Alexandria, now the second largest city in Egypt, just over 1,900 years ago. Although Copts are Christians their church has a number of different traditions to other Christian groups. It also uses a different calendar. For example, Copts celebrate Christmas Day on January 7, and not December 25.

The last time a new leader of the Coptic Church was selected was in 1971. Then Shenouda the Third became the church's leader.

Copts have a special way of choosing their popes. Last month a group of around 2,000 people

selected three possible candidates. Their names were written on three pieces of paper and placed inside a large glass, or chalice. On November 4, a special service was held in the Coptic Cathedral in Cairo, the capital of Egypt.

During the service an altar, or choir, boy wearing a blindfold picked out one of the pieces of paper in the chalice. The name written on it was then read out to all the people in the cathedral. As the piece of paper had Bishop Tawadros's name on it he will now become the new Coptic leader. The altar boy's selection was also shown on live television. Copts believe that this method of choosing a new pope means that God makes the final selection.

Bishop Tawadros studied pharmacy, or the use of medical drugs, at university. He later managed a factory where medical drugs were made. In 1986, he decided to leave his job. After spending three years as a monk he became a Coptic Church priest.



*Bishop Tawadros*

Recently, there have been many political changes in Egypt. Just over a year and a half ago there were violent street protests in the country. Soon afterwards, Hosni Mubarak, who had been president for 40 years, announced that he would step down. The army took control of the country while arrangements were made to hold proper elections for a new parliament and president.

The presidential election took place last June. Mohamed Morsi won. Mr. Morsi is a member of the Muslim Brotherhood. This is both a religious and political group in Egypt, which also exists in other Arab countries.

Bishop Tawadros will be the Coptic Church's 118th leader. As the country's president Mr. Morsi will formally appoint him as Pope Tawadros the Second. This will be the first time that a member of the Muslim Brotherhood has appointed the leader of the Coptic Church. After hearing that Bishop Tawadros had been selected Mr. Morsi sent him a message of congratulations.

Many Copts say that since Mr. Mubarak stepped down they have been worried about their safety. Many claim that they are now being [persecuted](#). However, Mr. Morsi insists that their church and their freedoms will be protected. ■

## BANANA WARS END

On November 8, the European Union (EU) and ten countries from South and Central America signed a trade agreement. The agreement is expected to end what has become known as the "banana wars". These have lasted for over 20 years.

The 27 member countries of the European Union (EU) import many bananas from countries in Africa, the Caribbean, and from island nations in the Pacific Ocean.

All these places were former colonies of several different European countries. Many of these colonies became independent in the 1950s and 1960s. To help them the European countries then made special trading agreements with their ex-colonies. The European countries

promised to buy fixed amounts of fruit and other crops grown in their former colonies.

However, since this time these European countries have joined the EU. It was then decided that these different trading arrangements would be included in one agreement. This agreement is known as the EU-ACP. ACP stands for Africa, Caribbean and Pacific.



*Bananas from Ecuador*

All EU and South and Central American countries are members of the World Trade Organization (WTO). The WTO was set up in 1995. Its job is to act as a referee when countries argue about buying and selling, or trading the goods they need. It also tries to make sure that WTO members don't charge tariffs and are better able to trade with each other.

Many countries in South and Central America grow bananas but are not part of the EU-ACP. Countries such as Ecuador (the biggest grower of bananas in the world) have been angry about the ACP trade arrangements. They have been complaining for many years. This is because non-ACP countries have to pay a tariff, or import tax, of €176 (\$225) on every ton of bananas they sell to EU countries. Yet ACP countries do not have to pay any import taxes. Their bananas can therefore be sold to people living in the EU for lower prices.

Several South and Central American countries claimed that by

making them pay an import tax on bananas EU countries were breaking WTO rules.

Bananas in South and Central America cost less to grow. This is because large companies grow them on big farms, or plantations. In Caribbean countries the farms are smaller. South and Central American bananas can therefore be produced much cheaper than those from the Caribbean.

If there were no import taxes fewer bananas grown in the Caribbean would be sold in the EU, as they would be more expensive. This could mean that banana growers in Caribbean countries would go out of business. If this happened it might have a serious effect on the economies of these countries. This is why many people, especially in Caribbean countries, argued that the import tax was important.

The agreement, which has been arranged by the WTO, means that South and Central American countries will still have to pay a banana import tax, but the amount will go down. Both sides agreed that the tax will gradually be reduced, over a seven year period, to €14 (\$145) a ton.

The end of the banana wars means that, in the future, it should be cheaper to buy bananas in EU countries. ■

## BUILDING ANGKOR WAT

For many years people have wondered how the huge temple of Angkor Wat was built during the reign of just one king. Two researchers from Japan now believe that they have found the answer. They say that it's likely that the millions of large stone blocks from which the temple was

made were brought to the site by a network of canals that have since been filled in.

Angkor Wat is now in Cambodia. King Suryavarman the Second started work on the temple in the early 12th century. It's believed that it was completed around 1150, shortly after the king's death. The temple is surrounded by a large **moat** and covers an area of about 0.8 square miles (two square kilometers). At first Angkor Wat was a Hindu temple. It was dedicated to Vishnu, the popular Hindu god. However, in the 14th century other rulers turned it into a Buddhist temple.

When the temple was built Angkor was the capital of the powerful Khmer Empire. This included parts of modern day Vietnam, Laos and Thailand. However, by the 1350s the empire had declined.



*Angkor Wat (Michel Petrotchenko)*

As the Khmer Empire faded the surrounding areas of rice fields became covered in forest. Experts think that one reason why many of the temple buildings of Angkor Wat are still standing is that its moat protected them from the **encroaching** jungle.

The temple buildings, or complex, were made from large sandstone blocks. Some weigh as much as 1.5 tons. Around 7.5 million blocks were used to build the whole complex. These blocks of stone are thought to have come from Mount Kulen, which is to the north of Angkor Wat.

It has always been thought that, after being quarried, the sandstone blocks were transported to Angkor on specially made boats. First they were taken down a long river on these boats to the Tonlé Sap Lake. Here they were placed on rafts and floated along the lake to another river. The blocks were then rowed up this river to Angkor. The total distance would have been around 52.5 miles (85 kilometers). Yet the last part of the journey would have been very difficult. This is because the river flows in the opposite direction.



Quarry at Mount Kulen (Michel Petrotchenko)

The two Japanese researchers thought that this route would have been too difficult and that there must have been an easier way. They studied satellite pictures of the area around the base of Mount Kulen. They say that these pictures show the remains of a network of canals. If the Khmers did build canals from Mount Kulen to Angkor then they would have been roughly 21 miles (34 kilometers) long. The researchers say that this would have been much easier than the other 52.5 mile (85 kilometer) route.

After visiting the area around the base of Mount Kulen the researchers claimed to have found about 50 **quarries** where the stones were cut. These, they say, are close to where the canals would have been.

The Khmers are known to have been good canal builders so others say that the researchers new idea may be correct. What would prove it, they suggest, would be to find blocks of stone at the bottom of where the canals used to be. As so many blocks had to be transported there must have been some accidents. When these happened the blocks would have sunk to the bottom of the canals.

Today many people from all around the world travel to Cambodia to visit Angkor Wat. The temple is a national symbol for the country and an outline of it is on Cambodia's flag. ■

## PACIFIC ISLANDS RENEWABLE ENERGY

Tokelau, a small group of islands in the Pacific Ocean, has become the first **territory** in the world to make all the electricity it needs from solar power.

Tokelau is made up of three coral islands, or atolls. All are only about six feet (two meters) above the level of the sea. Tokelau is not a separate country but a "territory" of New Zealand. The islands, which are very remote, are about halfway between New Zealand and Hawaii. Tokelau doesn't have an airport, and can only be reached by boat. The nearest group of larger islands is Samoa. It takes 26 hours to reach Tokelau from Samoa.

Around 1,400 people live on the islands. Breadfruit, papayas, bananas and coconuts are grown on Tokelau. Yet people living on the islands are dependent on New Zealand for many things. Younger people often go to live and work in New Zealand. They then send some

of the money they earn back to their families.

In the past, people living on the islands have used generators to make electricity. These use diesel fuel. This fuel has to be shipped to the islands from New Zealand. It is expensive and costs Tokelau around NZ\$1 million (\$812,000) each year.

The government of New Zealand paid for the solar power project. It cost NZ\$8.4 million (\$6.8 million). Solar grids were built on each of Tokelau's coral atolls. They included just over 4,000 solar panels. To make way for the grids some of the island's coconut trees had to be cut down. Now these solar grids are producing enough electricity for everyone who lives on the islands.



Aerial photograph of one of Tokelau's atolls

As the diesel fuel is no longer needed the money saved can be spent on other important things. These, local officials say, include healthcare and education.

New Zealand officials say that Tokelau's solar power project is a **milestone**. Many larger Pacific Island countries also have problems with electricity and getting the fuel for diesel generators. Some are not able to make all the electric power they need. The project on Tokelau shows that these places could also make extra or all of their electricity from solar power. An official from the government of New Zealand

said that his country was already working with other Pacific nations, such as Tonga and the Cook Islands, on similar projects for this type of renewable energy. ■

## CEILING PAINTINGS ANNIVERSARY

Pope Benedict the Sixteenth, the leader of the Roman Catholic Church, took part in a special evening prayer, or vespers, service in the Sistine Chapel on October 31. The service marked the 500th anniversary of the completion of the chapel's famous ceiling paintings, or frescoes. Many people describe these frescoes as "one of the wonders of the art world".



*Sistine Chapel*

The Sistine Chapel is in Vatican City, the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church. The Vatican is a separate city state within Rome, the capital of Italy. The chapel is part of the Pope's private **residence**.

In 1508, Pope Julius the Second asked Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475 – 1564), usually known as

Michelangelo, to repaint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Many of the chapel's walls already had frescoes painted on them. Other well-known **Renaissance** artists such as Botticelli and Perugino did these. However, the curved ceiling had only been painted blue with small gold stars.



*The Creation of Adam, on Sistine Chapel ceiling*

At the time, Michelangelo was better known as a sculptor. He had become famous for his marble statue of David, a hero from a story in the Bible. This statue, which can now be seen in the city of Florence, was completed in 1504.

It took Michelangelo just over four years to finish painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Several assistants helped him. The central panels of the ceiling were painted so they showed nine scenes from the story of Genesis, the first book of the Bible. Michelangelo worked from small drawings he had done. Afterwards he destroyed all these drawings so people would not know how he had created the frescoes.

The panels include over 300 figures. Perhaps the most famous part of the ceiling is the picture of God and Adam. In the story of Genesis God creates the first man, or Adam, from dust and then puts him in the Garden of Eden. The picture on the Sistine Chapel's ceiling shows the fingers of "God" and "man" only a few inches apart.

Called *The Creation of Adam*, it is one of the most famous paintings in the world.

Twenty-four years after finishing the ceiling frescoes Michelangelo was asked to return to paint the large wall behind the altar. This painting, which is called *The Last Judgement*, took Michelangelo five years to complete. It shows Jesus Christ, who Christians believe is the son of God, together with a number of saints judging the souls of humans after they die. Some are rising to heaven while others are going down to the underworld, or hell.

Today, the Sistine Chapel is one of the most popular places for tourists to visit in the world. On some days in the year it is not unusual for as many as 20,000 visitors to line up to see the chapel's paintings.

However, on the ceiling frescoes 500th anniversary Vatican officials announced that they might have to reduce the number of visitors in the future. This, they explained, is because the heat and breath of so many people, together with the dust and dirt that they bring, is damaging the frescoes. ■

## Newsademic.com

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### Acknowledgements:

News story photographs by gettyimages

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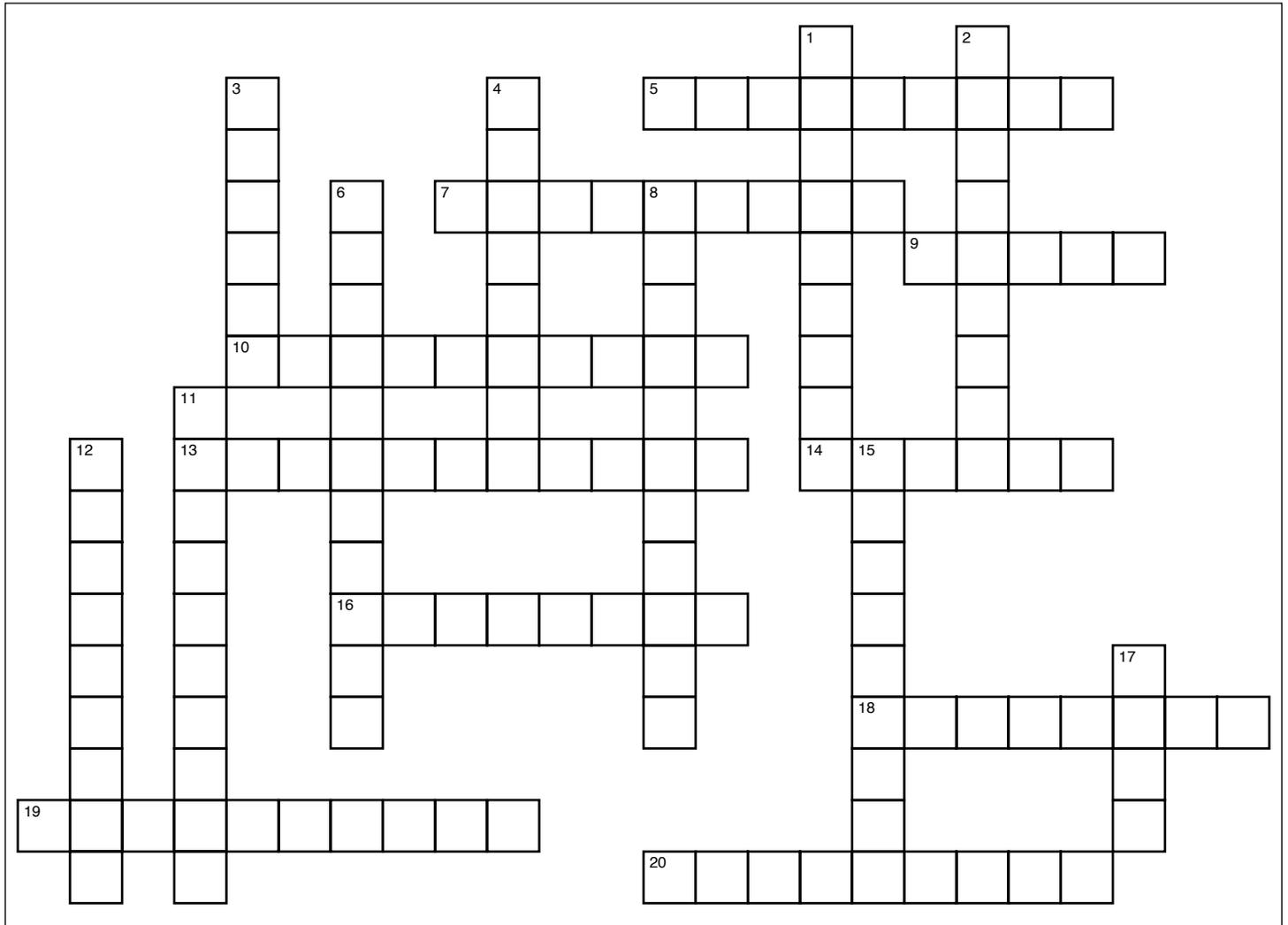
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# ISSUE 184

## 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**

- 5 *Noun (Plural)* Formal written requests signed by many people
- 7 *Noun (Plural)* Very small pieces or parts of something larger
- 9 *Noun (Plural)* Large ovens used for making bricks or pottery
- 10 *Adjective* Describes something taken on or inherited from the previous generation
- 13 *Noun* A period in European history between the 14th and 17th centuries during which there was a great revival of art, literature, and learning
- 14 *Adjective* Relating to a group that shares a religious, cultural or racial background
- 16 *Adjective* Separate or far away from other places or people
- 18 *Noun* The study of religion
- 19 *Noun* A member of any Christian sect which is not part of the Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox churches
- 20 *Adjective* With the name of the person responsible being unknown

**Down**

- 1 *Noun* An important event in history or in someone's life
- 2 *Noun* Violent impact of two or more objects
- 3 *Noun* An arrangement of flowers and leaves in a circular shape, often used as a sign of respect and remembrance for people who have died
- 4 *Noun (Plural)* Large holes in the ground from which stone or sand is dug up for use in building
- 6 *Verb* Advancing beyond a boundary or beyond agreed limits
- 8 *Adverb* Describes making something using a lot of small parts or details arranged in a complicated way
- 11 *Noun* Having wealth and success
- 12 *Noun* Main government group in a Communist country
- 15 *Noun* An area of land that belongs to, or is connected with, a particular person or country
- 17 *Noun* A ditch usually filled with water surrounding a building, such as a castle

# ISSUE 184

## 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.

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

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

ISSUE 183 ANSWERS

DEDICATED