

IN BRIEF

Man wins lotto twice – in a week

TALK about lucky – a stunned Sydney man who was celebrating an Australian lottery windfall could not believe it when he won again less than a week later. The unidentified man, in his 40s and from the suburb of Bondi, picked up AS1 020 487 (R9.4-million) on Monday last week and then scooped another AS1 457 834 (R13.4-million) on Saturday. "I just thought this is too good to be true," he told NSW Lotteries yesterday after being informed of his good fortune. "The chances of winning twice in such a short period must be non-existent." He plans to invest in some Sydney real estate, buy a new car and "a holiday to Honolulu goes without saying". – AFP

Aussie sets world record on Everest

EVEREST'S summit season got off to a frantic start yesterday with at least 30 climbers reaching the peak, including a Chinese double amputee and an Australian who set a new world record. Xia Boyu, 69, who was hit by frostbite on Everest more than four decades ago, and Steve Plain, nearly paralysed by an accident four years ago, were among the first to summit the world's highest mountain. Plain also set a new world record with his ascent, becoming the fastest climber to summit each of the highest peaks on Earth's seven continents. The Australian conquered Everest 117 days after a record ascent of Mount Vinson in Antarctica. – AFP

Iran seeks assurances from nuke deal parties

IRAN'S foreign minister, Mohammad Javad Zarif, is seeking assurances from countries that signed the Iran nuclear deal during his diplomatic tour of Beijing, Moscow and Brussels. "The final aim of these negotiations is to seek assurances that the interests of the Iranian nation will be defended," Zarif said at a media conference with his Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov, in Moscow. Lavrov said Russia and Europe should jointly defend their legal interests in terms of the deal. – AFP

Girl, 8, in family suicide bomb attack on Indonesia police station

A FAMILY of five, including a child, carried out the suicide bombing of police station headquarters in Indonesia's second-largest city, Surabaya, yesterday, a day after a deadly wave of attacks on churches staged by another family. The spate of bombings has rocked Indonesia, with the Islamic State group claiming the church attacks and raising fears about its influence in Southeast Asia as its dreams of a Middle Eastern caliphate fizzle. Indonesia has long struggled with Islamist militancy, including the 2002 Bali bombings that killed more than 200 people – mostly foreign tourists – in the country's

worst terror attack yet. Security forces have arrested hundreds of militants during a sustained crackdown that smashed some networks, and most recent attacks have been low-level and targeted domestic security forces. But that changed on Sunday as a family of six, including two young girls, staged suicide bombings of churches during morning services in Surabaya, killing 14. Yesterday, members of another family attacked the police station in Surabaya, wounding 10. "There were five people on two motorbikes. One of them was a little kid," national

police chief Tito Karnavian said. "This is one family." An eight-year-old girl from the family survived the attack and was taken to hospital, while her mother, father and two brothers died in the blast, he said. The father of the church suicide bombers was a local leader in extremist network Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) which supports IS. "It ordered its cells to make a move," Karnavian said of the church attacks. He said the attacks might also have been motivated by the arrest of JAD leadership, including jailed radical Aman Abdurrah-

man, and were linked to a deadly prison riot staged by Islamist prisoners at a high-security jail near Jakarta last week. Abdurrahman has been connected to several deadly incidents, including a 2016 gun and suicide attack in the capital Jakarta that left four attackers and four civilians dead. Despite their apparent allegiance to IS, the church-bombing family were not returnees from Syria, police said yesterday. However, hundreds of Indonesians have flocked in recent years to fight alongside IS in its bid to carve out a caliphate ruled by strict Islamic law. Its efforts have been fizzling quickly as it has lost most of the land it

once occupied in Iraq and Syria. On Sunday evening, just hours after the church bombings, a further three people in another family were killed and two wounded when another bomb exploded at an apartment complex about 30km from Surabaya. Police said the father in the church bombings – Dita Oepriyanto – was a confidante of the man killed in the apartment, who police said had a bomb detonator in his hand when he was shot by authorities. "When we searched the flat, we found pipe bombs, similar to those we found near the churches," Karnavian said. – AFP

Israel kills 41 Gaza protesters



INTENSE ASSAULT: Palestinian demonstrators take cover from Israeli fire and teargas during a protest against the US embassy move to Jerusalem and ahead of the 70th anniversary of Nakba, at the Israel-Gaza border in the Gaza Strip. Picture: REUTERS

Violent clashes on border coincide with opening of US embassy in Jerusalem

Nidal al-Mughrabi and Maayan Lubell

ISRAELI forces killed at least 41 Palestinians along the Gaza border yesterday as angry protesters demonstrated at the frontier on the day the United States opened its embassy in Jerusalem, health officials said. It was the highest Palestinian death toll in a single day since a series of protests dubbed the "Great March of Return" began at the border with Israel on March 30, and since the 2014 Gaza war.

The health officials said 900 Palestinians were wounded, about 450 of them by bullets. Tens of thousands streamed to the coastal enclave's land border yesterday, some approaching the Israeli fence – a line Israeli leaders said Palestinians would not be allowed to breach. Clouds of black smoke from tyres set alight by demonstrators rose in the air. Demonstrators, some armed with slingshots, hurled stones at the Israeli security forces, who fired volleys of teargas and intense rounds of gunfire. "Today is the big day when we will cross the fence and tell Israel and the world we will not accept being occupied forever," Gaza science teacher Ali, who declined to give his last name, said. "Many may get martyred today, so many, but the world will hear our message. Occupation must end," he said. Israeli leaders and a US delegation including Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and President Donald Trump's daughter and son-in-law, Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner, were due to attend the opening of the embassy, moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in a controversial decision. "A great day for Israel," the US president, who stoked Arab anger by recognising disputed Jerusalem as Israel's capital in December, said in a tweet. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in lockstep with Trump over fulfilling a long-standing US promise to move the embassy to the holy city and over Washington's withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal last week, echoed the sentiment. "What a moving day for the people of Israel and the State of Israel," Netanyahu said. The Palestinians, who seek their own future state with its capital in East Jerusalem, have been outraged by Trump's shift from previous administrations' preference for keeping the US Embassy in Tel Aviv pending progress in peace efforts. The 41 Palestinian dead yesterday included a 14-year-old boy, a medic and a man in a wheelchair who had been pictured on social



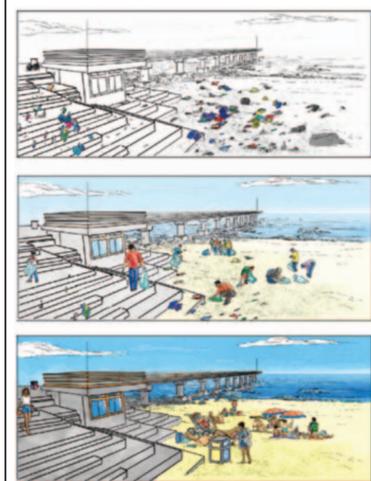
SOLEMN MOMENT: Palestinians pray during clashes with Israeli forces near the border between the Gaza strip and Israel east of Gaza City. Picture: AFP

media using a slingshot. The Israeli military identified three of those killed as armed militants whom it said tried to place explosives near the fence in the southern Gaza Strip. The latest casualties raised the Palestinian death toll to 86 since the protests started six weeks ago. No Israeli casualties have been reported. At the protest sites, families sat in the shade of tents nearly 800m from the border fence. Hundreds of protesters ventured to within several hundred metres of the barrier, while others moved even closer, rolling burning tyres and hurling stones. Some flew flaming kites to try to torch bushes on the other side of the frontier and distract Israeli marksmen. Hundreds of Palestinians were treated for teargas inhalation. "The IDF [Israel Defence Forces] will act forcefully against any terrorist activity and will operate to prevent attacks against Israelis," the military said. The killings have drawn international criticism, but the United States has echoed Israel in accusing Gaza's ruling Hamas movement of instigating violence, an allegation it denies. More than two million people are crammed into the narrow strip, which is blockaded by Egypt and Israel. Palestinian Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah accused the US of blatant violations of international law. The protests are scheduled to culminate today, the day Palestinians mourn as the "Nakba" or "Catastrophe" when, in 1948, hundreds of thousands of them were driven out of their homes or fled the fighting around Israel's creation. "Choosing a tragic day in Palestinian history [to open the Jerusalem embassy] shows great insensitivity and disrespect for the core principles of the peace process," Hamdallah wrote. – Reuters

LET'S TEAM UP TO CLEAN UP

"It is the worst of times, but it is the best of times, because we still have a chance." – These are the words of world renowned Oceanographer and Patron to the Sustainable Seas Trust, Sylvia Earle.

By Liezl Cronjé



to change our behaviour before the devastating penny finally drops? Do we realise that we won't be able to take nature to a repair shop once our destructive actions have 'litter-ally' pushed us in an irreversible messy corner?

We have the power to redesign this bleak, trashy future. We can start by discerning right from wrong, increase our levels of individual and collective responsibility, and opt to let our individual, consumer and commercial actions resonate in closer harmony with the purity of nature. A frog certainly does not drink up the pond in which it lives.

15 September sees the 33rd International Coastal Clean-up Day, and the African Marine Waste Network (AMWN) under the auspices of the Sustainable Seas Trust (SST) needs your support. This annual coastal clean-up event is the largest of its sort in the world, relying on volunteers such as you reading this article (and your network of family and friends) to assist. We're calling on everyone in the greater Nelson Mandela Bay metropole, Swartkops and the surrounding estuary to participate in removing litter and debris from our treasured coastline and inland areas on this day. It is a simple yet superbly efficient way to take a stand and say, "let's clean up our act."

Knowing that even the mightiest whale could potentially drown when it gets entangled in old rope or fishing nets, and many fish, birds and mammals could be saved from eating litter that they mistake for food, you'll be making a very real difference to the sustainability of ocean life, and the earth's conservation. The AMWN will measure the waste collected and provide feedback about the successes of the day.

We're living on this planet as if we had another one to go to. We experiment, produce, invent, build, and waste. But our planet is vulnerable. Its fate lies in our hands. Conservation of the planet should be the most important issue facing humans.

Plastic waste is a major problem. We all need to respond. Don't miss the chance to be one of hundreds of thousands of caring individuals across the world contributing in a meaningful way to conserve our ocean and our planet. More information about the logistics of the Coastal Clean-up Day will follow in a next article. Those interested could contact Liezl Cronjé at 064 921 0273, or send an email to liezl@africanwastenet.org.za.

Liezl is the Events Manager for the African Marine Waste Network, a collaborative effort to address the issue of marine waste at a pan-African level. The Network is an initiative of the Sustainable Seas Trust, a Kenton-based charitable trust dedicated to harnessing the power of people everywhere to promote conservation, sustainability and habitat restoration. Find out how you can play a part at https://africanwastenet.org.za

The World Bank predicts that seven years from now, humans will produce about two and a half trillion kgs of trash every year. This is one 34th of the earth's entire biomass. A staggering portion of it will likely end up in landfills or entering the sea to float on a giant garbage patch in the ocean, or simply end up as litter on earth. As trash continues to flood every corner of the world, it has a most dire effect on our lives, our future, and the ultimate survival of the soil and waters that sustain us. But do we notice? Do we care, at least care enough

19 dead in Ebola outbreak in DRC

THE Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) reported 39 suspected, probable or confirmed cases of Ebola between April 4 and May 13, including 19 deaths, the World Health Organisation said yesterday. The head of the WHO said on Sunday there had been another reported case of Ebola in the DRC and that an experimental vaccine to fight the disease was expected to become available in the country this week.

Doctor Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, on a two-visit to DRC, said the suspected new case was in Bikoro, at the centre of the latest Ebola outbreak in the country's north-west, where 18 people have died so far. It brings to 35 the number of reported cases, including two confirmed, according to the WHO tally.

The WHO is planning to begin a vaccination campaign in the area, near the border with the Republic of Congo, using an available stockpile of an experimental vaccine. "The vaccines are going to arrive on Wednesday or Thursday. We have enough of them," Ghebreyesus said, without specifying the number of doses.

After meeting DRC President Joseph Kabila in Kinshasa, the WHO chief praised the government's very strong leadership in responding to the health crisis and its good coordination with partners like Unicef and Doctors without Borders. On Friday the UN health agency had announced that it was preparing for all scenarios, including the worst-case scenario, in the latest Ebola outbreak in DRC. Tedros said he hoped for a better result in this ninth Ebola outbreak in the vast central African country since 1976, when the deadly viral disease was first identified by a Belgian-led team. Ebola is one of the world's most notorious diseases, being both highly infectious and extremely lethal. The worst Ebola outbreak yet started in December 2013 in southern Guinea, before spreading to two neighbouring West African countries, Liberia and Sierra Leone, killing more than 11 300 people out of nearly 29 000 registered cases. – AFP

Arab League set to hold crisis talks

THE Arab League will hold emergency talks tomorrow to discuss Washington's decision to move the US embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, a senior official said. The meeting will focus on "ways of countering the illegal decision by the United States", the organisation's deputy secretary-general for Palestinian affairs, Saeed Abu Ali, said. He said the permanent representatives of members of the Cairo-based Arab League would meet at the request of the state of Palestine. Jordan denounced the embassy move as a clear violation of the UN charter.

In a statement, it also condemned a unilateral decision by US President Donald Trump to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, despite Palestinian claims to part of the disputed city. Jordan is the only other Arab country besides Egypt to have ties with Israel, and it is also the custodian of Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem. The status of the holy city – home also to Christian and Jewish shrines – is perhaps the thorniest issue in the decades-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict. – AFP

EU warns Brexit Britain 'clock is ticking'

THE European Union (EU) warned Britain yesterday that time was running out to seal a Brexit deal this autumn and ensure London does not crash out of the bloc next March, adding to pressure on Prime Minister Theresa May. But May's spokesman said the focus was on getting the exit right, rather than meeting a deadline. Diplomats and officials in Brussels note little progress in Brexit negotiations since the EU leaders last met, raising doubt about whether the bloc and London would be able to mark another milestone at the next top-level summit on June 28 to 29.

"We are concerned that there is no clear stance, no clear position from the British. The clock is ticking," German EU Minister Michael Roth told his EU peers at a meeting in Brussels. "We need now to be making substantial progress, but that is not happening. What is worrying us in particular is the Northern Ireland question where we expect a substantial accommodation from the British side." At home, May is stuck between a rock and a hard place with staunch Brexit supporters pushing to sever ties with the EU and others advocating keeping close customs cooperation with the bloc to reduce frictions

in future trade. May's spokesman said London was working on two options for post-Brexit customs cooperation. Under a customs partnership, Britain could collect tariffs on goods entering the country on the EU's behalf. Under a second idea, for a streamlined customs arrangement, traders on an approved list would be able to cross borders freely with the aid of automated technology. But the EU has said London must come up with a solution for the Irish border conundrum and highlights that this has not happened. Both sides worry that reinstating a physical border between EU member

Ireland and Britain's province of Northern Ireland, and managing customs, could revive violence there. France's top diplomat, foreign minister Jean-Yves Le Drian, on Sunday called on the EU to set a final deadline of next month for Britain to resolve the conundrum of its border with Ireland after Brexit. Other outstanding issues include guarantees for expatriate rights, agreeing on security cooperation and trade rules after Brexit, to ensure a deal is in place when Britain leaves in March next year, and an adaptation period ending at the end of 2020. – Reuters, AFP

'Kickbacks' trial of oil giants Eni, Shell delayed in Nigeria

A TRIAL for oil giants Eni and Shell over alleged kickbacks paid during the purchase of an offshore oil field in Nigeria was pushed back to June 20 yesterday pending a ruling on an appeal made by Shell. Eni chief executive Claudio Descalzi, his predecessor, Paolo Scaroni, and several managers from Eni and Shell are among those to go on trial,

as is Nigeria's former oil minister, Dan Etete. Eni and Shell are accused of handing out bribes during the 2011 purchase of OPL245, an offshore oil block estimated to hold nine billion barrels of crude, for \$1.3-billion (about R16-billion). The agreement allegedly saw Nigeria's then president, Goodluck Jonathan, and Etete pocket bribes, according to corruption watchdog Global Witness.

Global Witness said the deal resulted in \$1.1-billion (R13.5-billion) being paid into an account in London opened by Nigerian government officials that went directly to Etete. The Nigerian government received only \$210-million (R2.6-billion). The 2011 deal aimed to end years of

litigation over the OPL245 block between Shell and Etete's Oil and Gas Malabu company. Both companies deny paying bribes. The trial had originally been set to start in a Milan court in March. The second delay comes pending a ruling on an appeal by Shell set for June 12 concerning the legality of a decision regarding its defendants. – AFP

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