

Good Morning News[®]

United Kingdom

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World

SYRIA: Syrian troops backed by tanks entered a border zone on Thursday, sending hundreds of people fleeing into Turkey as protests against President Bashar al-Assad's rule hit the 100-day mark. The so-called Local Coordinating Committees organising the protests vowed in a statement to keep the heat on the Damascus regime.

USA: The top US military officer said on Thursday that he endorsed President Barack Obama's Afghan withdrawal plan despite initial worries about the risks of "sacrificing fighting power in the middle of a war."

EU: EU leaders opened a pivotal summit on Thursday, demanding Greece adopt contested austerity measures after coming under pressure from the US to prevent the euro crisis rocking the global economy.

INDIA: India and Pakistan held talks on peace and security issues in Islamabad on Thursday, part of efforts to stabilise South Asia as the United States prepares to draw down troops from Afghanistan.

CHINA: Chinese artist Ai Weiwei is not permitted to leave Beijing "without permission", authorities said on Thursday after his release from nearly three months of detention that triggered an international outcry.

NETHERLANDS: Dutch far-right lawmaker Geert Wilders walked away from hate speech and discrimination charges on Thursday for statements made attacking Islam, calling his acquittal a victory for freedom of speech.

Single mothers 'hardest hit by cuts': study

Single mothers will be hit harder than any other group by the government's programme of benefit cuts and tax rises, losing an average 8.5% of their income after tax by 2015, according to new research. Cuts to public services will also hit lone parents harder than other households, costing them the equivalent of 18.5% of their net income - more than double the impact on couples with children, says the report by the Fawcett Society and the Institute of Fiscal Studies. "The

results are clear: women are bearing the brunt of cuts," said Anna Bird, acting chief executive of the Fawcett Society, which campaigns for gender equality. "Lone mothers can expect to lose the equivalent of one month's income a year by the time all the cuts are implemented. Some of the least well off in our society are being forced to act as shock absorbers for the cuts, with women - in particular single mothers - faring worse," Bird said. The study, entitled Single Mothers: Singled Out, ana-

lyses the impact of changes announced in Chancellor George Osborne's emergency budget in June 2010, last autumn's Comprehensive Spending Review and the March Budget. Single mothers will be hit by changes including reductions on housing benefit, the restriction of maternity grants to the first child, a three-year freeze on child benefit and a cut in the childcare element of the working tax credit. Lone mothers will lose around 8.5% of their net income, compared to 7.5%

for single fathers, 6.5% for couples with children, and about 2.5% for couples without children, the research found. Bird said: "Women make up the vast majority of lone parents - and it is this group that are set to lose most under the reforms. The Fawcett Society last year failed in a bid to trigger a judicial review of the legality of the government's economic policies on the grounds that they did not comply with the duty to have regard to their impact on equality."

Bellfield found guilty of Milly Dowler murder

Convicted double killer Levi Bellfield was found guilty at the Old Bailey on Thursday of murdering schoolgirl Milly Dowler in 2002. An Old Bailey jury found Bellfield guilty of abducting and murdering the 13-year-old after she walked past the killer's home. Bellfield was also accused of attempting to abduct 11-year-old Rachel Cowles the day before in March 2002. No verdict has been reached on that charge. It took Milly's parents Bob and

Sally nine years to get justice, even though her killer had been living 50 yards from where she was last seen in Station Avenue, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey. Police knocked on the door of Bellfield's flat in Collingwood Place, off Station Avenue, 11 times, but did not try to contact the letting agent to trace him. Bellfield went on to kill Marsha McDonnell, 19, and Amelie Delagrang, 22, and to attempt to murder Kate Sheedy, 18, in 2004.

Harry Potter goes digital with e-books

Harry Potter creator JK Rowling on Thursday took her lucrative boy wizard into the digital age, revealing that his adventures will now be sold as e-books through a website that contains new material. After years of restricting the phenomenally successful series to print form, Rowling said that from October she would sell them direct to consumers, bypassing not only bookstores but also online retailers like Amazon and

Apple. The free-to-access website, www.pottermore.com, will also feature an "online reading experience" allowing fans to immerse themselves in the world of Potter and his friends through graphics and videos. "It's a wonderful way to introduce the digital generation to the books," Rowling said at a press conference. "Personally I love printed paper books, but e-books are miraculous, you have several hundred books available at a time".

BRIEF

United Kingdom in

GADHAFI: Time is running out for Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, Prime Minister David Cameron said on Thursday after the strongman said he had his "back to the wall" but vowed to battle "to the beyond."

TALIBAN TALKS: Britain is involved in talks with the Taliban, Foreign Secretary William Hague said on Thursday, days after the United States revealed it was in negotiations to end the Afghan war.

BURGLAR: A Manchester householder, his son and his son's girlfriend have reportedly been arrested after a suspected burglar was stabbed to death while trying to break into the man's home.

CIRCUSES: Wild animals could be banned from circuses in Britain if a cross-party alliance of MPs succeeds with a call for government action. MPs will vote on a motion brought forward by backbenchers from the three main parties proposing a ban.

FTSE: Share prices in London closed sharply lower on Thursday on poor US jobs data and continued eurozone debt worries. The benchmark FTSE 100 index fell 1.71 per cent to close at 5,674.38 points.

CLEGG: Every adult in Britain could be given shares worth hundreds of pounds in state-owned under plans revealed by Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg,

according to reports. He has urged Treasury to adopt his plan to let voters benefit from the selloff the Royal Bank of Scotland and Lloyds Banking Group, which came under government control in the 2009 credit crunch.

AVIVA: Insurer Aviva on Thursday announced the sale of its roadside rescue division RAC to private equity firm Carlyle for £1 billion, as the group seeks to focus on insurance products.

GLASTONBURY: Rain failed to dampen spirits of music fans arriving at Glastonbury on Thursday as the 900-acre festival site threatened to turn into a muddy quagmire.

FIREARMS AUCTION: A revolver belonging to notorious US gangster "Al" Capone sold at a London firearms auction Wednesday for £67,250. The 1929 .38 "Police Positive" gun was used by the mobster during his reign as king of the Chicago underworld in the prohibition era.

ART SHOW: They share little in terms of style and quality but the works in a new London art exhibition have one thing in common - they were all left in taxis, buses or on the train and never claimed. "The Lost Collection" is drawn from the Ali Baba-style store rooms of the Transport for London, which runs the capital's transport network and can be seen in the KK Outlet gallery in the trendy east London district of Hoxton.

Sports

TENNIS: Novak Djokovic continued his red-hot form with a 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 victory over South Africa's Kevin Anderson in the second round at Wimbledon. Meanwhile, six-time champion Roger Federer cruised past France's Adrian Panatta 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 to reach the third round. Federer will face David Nalbandian for a place in the last 16.

SERENA: Serena Williams accused Wimbledon officials of giving special treatment to male stars like Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic after she was shunted out to Court Two for her 3-6, 6-2, 6-1 win over Simona Halep on Thursday. Despite being the defending champion, tournament chiefs decided that the four-time winner's second round match against Romania's Halep was only worthy of a place out in the far reaches of the All England Club.

SODERLING: Swedish fifth seed Robin Soderling came from two sets down to defeat Australia's Lleyton Hewitt and reach the third round at Wimbledon. Soderling looked to be heading for an upset defeat after losing the opening two sets before digging out a

gutsy 6-7 (5-7), 3-6, 7-5, 6-4, 6-4 victory before an enthralled Centre Court.

FOOTBALL: England international Ashley Young has joined Premier League champions Manchester United on a five-year contract, his former club Aston Villa announced on Thursday. Young, capped 15 times by his country, underwent a medical on Wednesday and the transfer, worth in the region of £16-20 million, was completed on Thursday.

SCOTLAND: Former Southampton manager Mark Wotte was named as the

Scottish Football Association's first performance director on Thursday. The 50-year-old Dutchman will be in charge of overseeing elite player development at every level.

N.IRELAND: Northern Ireland manager Nigel Worthington has broken ranks with his own association by saying he has no issues with his players appearing in a combined British team at next year's London Olympics. The British team has proved highly contentious with officials in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, who fear it will end with them ceasing to be independent football nations.

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Newspaper

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