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Saif comforts hero's family



Sheikh Saif bin Zayed, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, yesterday offers comfort to the family members of Emirati hero Hamoud Ali Saleh Al Ameri, who died in the line of duty while serving with Operation Restoring Hope in Yemen. Full report, a2. Wam

Coalition surrounds Houthis in Taez city

Pro-government forces arrest advance by rebels and rogue military, and drive them back into main stronghold in city

Mohammed Al Qalisi Foreign Correspondent

ADEN // Pro-government fighters forced Houthis and allied soldiers to retreat to their main camp in Taez city yesterday, as rebel shelling of civilian areas claimed at least 11 more lives. The rebels and renegade members of the Yemeni military had been advancing in the central Kilabah area when they were driven back to the special security forces camp. Resistance fighters seized several guard posts on the camp's perimeter after the sentries fled inside, said Moa'ath Al Yaseri, of the Popular Resistance. "Clashes are ongoing near the camp," said Mr Al Yaseri. "The Houthis are still fighting fiercely." The special security forces are among the renegade units of the military loyal to ousted president Ali Abdullah Saleh, who have allied with the Houthis. Their camp in Kilabah is the rebels' main stronghold in the city, control of which is divided between pro-government forces and the Houthis. Mr Al Yaseri said the Houthis had suffered casualties but he did not know how many. "We are trying to drive the Houthis from the camp but it will take more time as the Houthis have different kinds of weapons and they also have food in the camp," he said. Mr Al Yaseri said landmines planted by the Houthis were another obstacle to storming the camp. "We will besiege the Houthis and hope that air strikes target them inside the camp," he said. Air strikes are being carried out by the Arab coalition led by the UAE and Saudi Arabia, formed to restore the government of internationally recognised president Abdrabu Mansur Hadi. Coalition and pro-government forces have driven the rebels from several areas of Yemen, mainly in the south, and are now fighting their way towards the capital Sanaa, which has been under rebel control since September last year. The rebels continued shelling civilians areas of Taez city yesterday, killing at least 11 people and leaving dozens injured, said Mohammed Al Yemeni, a pro-government activist. "Some of the injured could not get to hospital as they feared being targeted by further shelling," Mr Al Yemeni said. The UN warned on Friday of a rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in Taez, with hospitals near collapse and rebels stopping the entry of food and water. Taz, continued on 2 →

Asbestos found in new buildings despite being banned for a decade

Hazardous matter found in projects including schools

Vesela Todorova

DUBAI // Asbestos is being used in new buildings almost a decade after a nationwide ban on the dangerous construction material was imposed. Companies specialising in its safe removal say their core business is getting rid of asbestos from old buildings, but they also extract it from new projects. Charles Faulkner, who has worked in the UAE for seven years, said he had seen asbestos in new office towers, power stations, homes and even schools. "I have come across around 20 projects," said Mr Faulkner, head of environment, health and safety at Anthesis, a consultancy. "These were brand-new construction projects that have had asbestos installed in them." They include a residential building in Abu Dhabi, completed in December 2013, and a Jebel Ali warehouse that was finished this year. Insulation and gaskets are the most common problems. Once a popular building material, asbestos is banned in more than 60 countries. When disturbed it releases small airborne fibres that penetrate deep into the lungs. Breathing them in can lead to an acute reaction with pneumonia-like symptoms. Chronic exposure can lead to lung scarring, pleural disease and even lung cancer. "It would appear that asbestos materials can be bought with relative ease from suppliers here in the Middle East and from places like Satwa and Mussaffah – even online," said Mr Faulkner. Asbestos, continued on 2 →

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Up to 80% of residents from the former flashpoint city return across the border from Turkey, a4

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Xi put in the picture

One for the album: Xi, Agüero and Cameron. AP Photo

The National staff

ABU DHABI // No world leader can resist a selfie with a football superstar, and Chinese president Xi Jinping and British prime minister David Cameron are no exceptions. The two men posed with Sergio Agüero when Mr Xi concluded his state visit to the UK with a tour of the new football academy at Manchester City. "It is an immense honour for the City Football Academy here in Manchester to be included in the itinerary of president Xi's state visit," City's chairman Khaldoon Al Mubarak said. The club this month reported its first profit in the seven years since it was bought by Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed. newsdesk@thenational.ae Full story, a6

Aid where it's most needed

The National helping hands

ABU DHABI // Charitable giving is a hallmark of UAE society, from zakat at Ramadan to appeals by the Emirates Red Crescent and other agencies. Sometimes, however, people who need and deserve our kindness stay below the radar: we can't help, because we don't know that they need it. Now The National has joined forces with Dar Al Ber Society, established in Dubai in 1978 and one of the UAE's oldest charities, to launch Helping Hands. Each week we will spotlight a deserving case. Today we tell the story of Ahmed Yousif and his wife, hit with a hospital bill for Dh240,000 after their baby was born three months premature. On Mr Yousif's pay as an electrical engineer, that is impossible. Can you help? Helping hands, a7

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