

## World

## Seven held as £5m jewels stolen in scam are found

Madrid Police said they had recovered jewels worth €6 million (£5.4 million) stolen in an elaborate scam in 2009 by a seven-strong gang from the former Yugoslavia.

One of the thieves, posing as an Arab sheikh, paid for the jewels with stacks of euro notes, which a businesswoman placed in a drawer. However, an accomplice, described as being "of small size", was hiding beneath the desk and switched the stacks with others in which only the top and bottom banknotes were genuine. Among the items of jewellery recovered, from a safe deposit box in a Milan hotel, was a tiara that once belonged to Eva Peron. Spanish police made seven arrests. (AP)

## Concern for Chávez as summit is cancelled

Caracas The Venezuelan government cancelled an important state summit last night, adding fuel to rumours that President Hugo Chávez is more seriously ill than has been made out (Girish Gupta writes).

Mr Chávez was admitted to hospital in Cuba on June 10 and despite images on state television of the President recovering from illness, rumours persist that the socialist leader's health is worsening and that he is suffering from prostate cancer. The cancellation of next week's Latin America summit gave further credence to the speculation. It is also unlikely that Mr Chávez will be present for Tuesday's huge 200th anniversary independence celebrations in Caracas.



Digit, a 120kg gorilla, poses with Lyons zoo owners Pierre and Elaine Thivillon, who take her home with them every night

# MUSIC ON THE ROOF

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## Women plan further mass protest over right to drive

Dubai Women in Saudi Arabia campaigning for the right to drive are planning another nationwide protest to mark the first day of Ramadan on August 1 (Hugh Tomlinson writes).

Two weeks ago more than 50 women flouted the ban and, as the world's media watched, Saudi police were instructed not to intervene.

However, on Tuesday in an apparent departure from the leniency shown by the authorities, five women were arrested in the Red Sea port of Jeddah. Four women aged 22 and 21, driving together in one car, were arrested by the feared religious police,

the Mutaween. A fifth woman was driving with her brother when she was pulled over by four police cars.

Eman al-Nafjan, a women's rights activist who drove in the protest, said: "I don't think anyone here believed the Government would turn around and say, 'OK, you can drive now,' but this does seem like an escalation."

The Women2Drive campaign shot to prominence in May when Manal al-Sharif, a 32-year-old mother, posted a video online of herself driving in the eastern city of al-Khobar and spoke of the problems caused by the ban. Ms al-Sharif was detained for ten days.

## Troops stay in tune for party's 90th anniversary

Beijing Soldiers of China's People's Liberation Army Navy, right, sing revolutionary songs as they take part in a celebration in Qingdao city, Shandong province, to mark the 90th anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party tomorrow.

Meanwhile, Ai Weiwei, the dissident artist who was released after three months in detention for alleged tax evasion, has challenged a \$1.85 million (£1.1 million) tax bill. The appeal was filed by his wife, Lu Qing, the legal representative of his design company. His family deny he evaded taxes and activists say the charge is a pretext for detaining him. (AP)



## Remix of Putin's Blueberry Hill a hit on the dance floor

Moscow Vladimir Putin, the Russian Prime Minister, caused a sensation when he sang *Blueberry Hill* in English at a charity gala and now he is a hit on the dance floor (Tony Halpin writes).

Mr Putin's vocals have been mixed into the latest track by DJ Smash, who made the recording, after seeing Mr Putin's "cool" rendition of the song popularised by Fats Domino. DJ Smash, aka Andrei Shirman, 29, said: "I made a remix of it to play in clubs. People immediately recognise this song and smile."

Mr Putin's disco debut will help to

boost his ratings among the young before parliamentary elections in December and presidential elections next March. However, DJ Smash said that the track was not a show of support for Mr Putin and told the newspaper *Komsomolskaya Pravda*: "It's an accidental coincidence."

Mr Putin has made no comment on the track and might be keen to avoid drawing attention to his involvement in the gala concert in St Petersburg in December. It was embroiled in a scandal after funds raised to help children with cancer went missing.

## Grateful tribute to President 'who changed the world'

Budapest A statue of the former US President Ronald Reagan, right, revered for the role he played in ending communism in Hungary, is unveiled in the nation's capital yesterday.

The bronze, 7ft-tall likeness of the 40th President was erected at Freedom Square, near the American Embassy and a Second World War memorial to Soviet soldiers killed during the ousting of the Nazis from

Hungary. The Prime Minister, Viktor Orban, and the former US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice were present for the unveiling. President Reagan was praised for the aid and encouragement he gave to Hungary and other former Soviet states in Eastern Europe in their efforts to win freedom. Mr Orban said Mr Reagan had "changed the world and created a new world for Central Europe." (AP)

