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Freedom by degrees Robert Mugabe emerged from house arrest yesterday after negotiations with military chiefs to preside at a graduation ceremony in Harare. Page 30

Al Porter sex pest claims

'Brazen' TV host accused of groping and sending explicit Facebook post

Jennifer O'Brien, Catherine Sanz

Al Porter, the television host and Today FM presenter, has been accused by four fellow performers of numerous incidents of sexual misconduct.

The Times can also reveal that a separate complaint was raised with Today FM management regarding unsolicited sexual messages that Mr Porter, a comedian who also hosts *Blind Date*, sent over Facebook to a musician earlier this year. The posts were sent after the performer's Irish band appeared on the station.

A spokesman for the station said last night that it did not comment on staff issues. It is understood that the broad-

caster considers the matter dealt with. Separately, four comedians told *The Times* that they had been touched inappropriately by Mr Porter at shows over the past five years.

Davey Reilly, 27, who has appeared on RTÉ, BBC and MTV, said that Mr Porter's behaviour was an "open secret".

Mr Reilly worked for Mr Porter at a comedy night in The Woolshed Baa and Grill in Dublin. He said the comedian groped him in May 2014. "As he was paying me, he put his hand straight down the front of my jeans," Mr Reilly said.

"He said something along the lines of: 'Oh you're still not single are ya.' I batted him away. I kind of just laughed it off

because it was so uncomfortable." Mr Reilly said a second incident took place in the bathroom of the Gilded Balloon nightclub in Edinburgh in August 2015.

"I ran into him and he went to hug me," he said. "As he did so, he put his hand down the back of my jeans. Both times he touched me was under underwear, straight down.

"This was in the public bathroom. There were other people around, that was how brazen it was. I was like, OK, and pulled away and went straight into a cubicle and locked the door. He shouted: 'Aw, what are you going in there for?'

"I said: 'You just put your hand down my pants in front of people. I'm not

going to stand at a urinal when I'm exposed, effectively.'"

Conor O'Toole, 26, who won the Spirit of Wit Award at this year's Dublin Fringe Festival, said he was groped by Mr Porter in 2014 at the Ha'penny Bridge comedy club in Dublin.

"I was sitting on the stairs backstage as comedians do and I was chatting away to Al and a few of the people," he said. "I was sitting with my legs in the birthing position on the stairs and he grabbed my balls and I was like: 'Hey, don't f**king do that.' He stopped and that was it.

"He grabbed my balls through my jeans, under my jeans, I was talking to Continued on page 2, col 3

My friend Julian Assange Pamela Anderson

Magazine



Travel 20 best winter breaks

Weekend



Eat! Mimi, the French Nigella

Magazine



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Ireland news

TODAY'S EDITION

Tax avoidance hunt back on

Revenue has launched a new investigation to identify people engaged in offshore tax avoidance, months after the deadline for people to admit any undeclared offshore income. **Page 4**

Boy's shooting 'unjustified'

The killing of Francis Rowntree, 11, who was hit by a British Army rubber bullet in Belfast in 1972, was not justified, a coroner has ruled, adding that the soldier had used excessive force. **Page 5**

Border impasse at Brexit talks

Tensions between Dublin and London over the future of the Irish border have emerged as the main barrier to progress in Brexit negotiations during a meeting of EU leaders. **Page 6**

COMMENT

Public anger about homelessness is neither a fad nor an affectation

LIAM FAY, PAGE 23

Mugabe faces mass protests

Tens of thousands are expected on the streets of Harare today calling for Robert Mugabe to step down as Zimbabwe's president, who some fear has convinced the army to let him stay on. **Page 30**

Oliver cooks up equity deal

Jamie Oliver, the celebrity chef, is to underwrite a debt-for-equity swap at his stuttering restaurant empire as part of a wider restructuring aimed at stabilising the business. **Page 37**

Young side told to expect battle

Joe Schmidt's young and experimental Ireland side have been warned to expect a physically gruelling encounter when Fiji take to the field at Aviva Stadium this evening. **Page 48**

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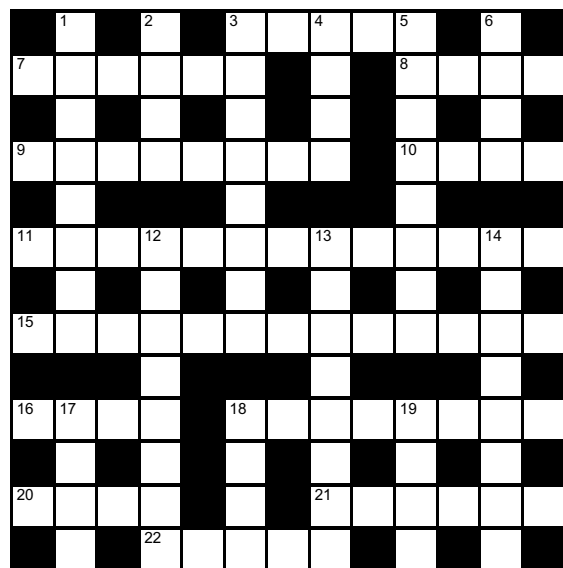
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O Tempora! Crossword CXI by Basil

A weekly crossword for the classically minded



Clues, which may be straight or mildly cryptic, always lead to answers in Latin

Across

- 3 Non multi (5)
7 Moneo, suadeo (deponent verb) (6)
8 Vides ut alta 2 ___ candidum | Soracte a sign of winter in Horace Odes 1.9 (4)
9 Praetor maximus, one man in charge for an emergency in Rome (8)
10 Flower planted in pulchro saltu (4)
11 Laughing sweetly ___ Lalagen amabo (Horace Odes 1.22.23) (5,8)
15 17 is sunlit: I muddle likenesses (13)
16 Unless (4)
18 Let me turn round and come back, redeem, regrediar (8)
20 I love running to contain spit (ferro factum, non sputo!) (4)
21 Have a shave, you lot! (6)
22 Diseases, qui a medicis sanari debent (5)

Down

- 1 One thousand men about to rise, or all about to die? (8)
2 Take note, printer; this should stand as it is (4)
3 Randy, like Horace's iuvenes (Odes 1.25.2) or satyrs (8)
4 I m on fire, with passion or jealousy (4)
5 In urbem ineunti, Romam ___ (8)
6 You are keen on the birds (4)
12 Charges (gen pl), non pecunia solutorum sed in iudiciis auditorum (8)
13 A team of two officers with a particular responsibility (8)
14 Urbano (dat or abl sing), tasteful, fine, chic (8)
17 It's the same thing, or the same chap (4)
18 Arbitror, puto, existimo (4)
19 Roar something coarse (4)

Last Saturday's O Tempora! solution is on page 13 of Weekend

Measles link to communities with lower uptake of vaccine

Catherine Sanz Ireland Reporter

The five cases of measles reported in Co Meath occurred among the Irish Traveller and Roma communities, a HSE public health director confirmed. Kevin Kelleher said it was unfortunate that uptake of the MMR vaccine among those communities had historically been lower than the national average.

"I think it is a mixture of a failure on our behalf to reach these communities as well as them not engaging with the services," he said.

Dr Kelleher also said that an investigation had been launched into the outbreak in north Dublin, where 12 cases of measles have been confirmed. He said that there was no evidence to link those cases with the ones in Co Meath.

"The cases in north Dublin are among a general population of children, with a few adults, and we are still trying to assess where it started. This area is where a lot of movement goes on in Dublin, a lot of transient families, so it can be hard to link them up with a dedicated GP and keep them with that doctor as the child grows up."

The Health Protection Surveillance

Centre, which collates data on vaccine uptake rates, noted that the largest recent reduction in uptake of the MMR vaccine was reported in Dublin North. In a report published this year the centre said that uptake fell by seven percentage points between 2014 and 2016 in the region.

The area also has a GP to patient ratio of about 1:2,500 compared with 1:1,600 across the country, according to HSE research.

The Dublin North region includes Swords, Balbriggan, Coolock, Lusk, Artane, Howth and Rush.

Dr Kelleher said that a number of the measles cases confirmed in Dublin were teenagers, which he said would align with them being among the group of children born in the late 1990s and early 2000s, when the MMR uptake rate plummeted to less than 70 per cent. This has been attributed to the discredited former doctor Andrew Wakefield, who falsely claimed that the vaccine caused autism.

"This is despite the fact that we have run a number of catch-up campaigns for these children," Dr Kelleher said.

"It shows the long-term effects of people not being vaccinated because if

the disease emerges again they are still vulnerable. We need the minimum 95 per cent 'herd immunity' to ensure that the disease doesn't happen."

The HSE is looking at a number of options to contain the outbreak and identify the source, which could have been brought in from outside the country.

It is also examining the possibility of future outbreaks due to the present low rate of uptake of the vaccine. Dr Kelleher said that at the moment just over 15 per cent of children were not receiving the MMR jab.

"I would suspect that Dublin North represents up to 8,000 births every year, so that means you still have a significant number of children who have not been vaccinated this year," he said.

Complications from measles can cause chest infections, fits, ear infections, swelling of the brain and brain damage. People with the illness are contagious from four days before a rash appears.

The time between exposure and developing the rash is usually 14 days. People can remain contagious for four days after the rash recedes.

Half of non-EU residence permits given to students

Seán McCárthaigh

More than half of all residence permits granted to non-EU citizens in 2015 were given to students.

Figures compiled by the EU showed that education was the main factor in the issuing of 57 per cent of residence permits in Ireland, the highest proportion of any member state.

They revealed that 38,433 non-EU migrants were given permission to stay in the country in 2015 for a fixed period, a record high in the past decade. Of these, more than 22,000 cases were linked to the person's studies.

More than 3,400 permits were issued for family reasons and another 6,000 for employment purposes. More than 6,800 were granted for "other reasons" including compassionate and humanitarian grounds.

Brazilians got the most permits of any nationality, receiving 10,955 or 28.5 per cent of the total. Indian nationals received the second largest proportion with 2,883, followed by people from the United States with 2,690.

On a per capita basis, Ireland granted 8.1 residence permits per 1,000 inhabitants compared with the EU average of 6.5. Overall, the EU member states

granted residence permits to a record 3.4 million non-EU migrants last year, an annual increase of almost 735,000 or 28 per cent. Ireland was the only EU country not to provide figures for 2016.

The main beneficiaries were citizens from Ukraine, Syria, the US, India and China, who accounted for half of all new residence permits last year.

Most Ukrainians were granted residence permits by Poland, while Germany was responsible for two thirds of all permits issued to Syrians. A majority of all permits given to American, Indian and Chinese citizens were from the UK.

The large increase was attributed to people being granted permits on humanitarian and international protection grounds and to a lesser extent for employment reasons. More than a quarter of all new permits issued by member states last year were granted by the UK, a total of 865,900.

The other main countries to grant a large number were Poland, Germany, France, Italy, Spain and Sweden.

Proportionate to population, Malta granted the most permits with 20.6 issued per 1,000 inhabitants, followed by Cyprus, Poland, Sweden and the UK. Romania granted the least, with 0.6 permits per 1,000.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Al Porter claims

him, we were having a conversation, I don't remember what it was about. But he put his hand between my legs and I told him not to and he stopped."

George Fox, 33, accused Mr Porter of groping him at a bar during an Inn Jokes comedy event at the Patriots Inn in Kilmainham, Dublin, in 2012.

"We were doing a show and that was the first time," he said. "He walked up to the bar to say hello and grabbed me by the crotch. I said not to do it and laughed like it was a hilarious joke but made it very clear that it wasn't."

Mr Fox said he saw the comedian again in March 2014 in a Dublin bar when he was with his girlfriend. "She

said that's the guy from the panto," he said. "He walked over and saw me and saw my arm was around her and he put his hand straight down and put it on my penis and said: 'How come you don't get hard for me?'"

Eoin O'Faogain, 26, a musician and writer, claimed that he had a similar experience with Mr Porter in October 2015. He said he was talking with him when the incident occurred.

"It was routine chit chat and then he put his hand down my trousers from the back," Mr O'Faogain said. "He pinched me and I froze. Everyone talks about why people don't scream from the rooftops but the experience I have had is that your experience is shock and silence. My inclination was not to scream: 'What did you do?' He whis-

Thieves target cars that are left to defrost

Michael Cogley Ireland Reporter

Motorists have been warned against defrosting their windscreens by leaving their cars running unattended during cold weather after two vehicles were stolen yesterday.

Gardaí said that the two cars were reported stolen yesterday morning as temperatures dipped to zero degrees celsius in some parts of the country. Drivers were urged to use an ice scraper to remove ice from their windscreen or to remain in their car until it had defrosted.

The Road Safety Authority has also advised motorists to carry de-icer to defrost their windscreens. The authority warned against using hot water to defrost the screen because it may crack the glass. Drivers were also encouraged to ensure that their windshield wiper system was working and that it contained anti-icing fluid.

Cold weather is expected to hit the east coast and the north of the country over the weekend with temperatures dipping below freezing. The RSA also said that drivers should be alert to black ice and other adverse road conditions.

pered to me, in his flamboyant style: 'Oh, I've awfully busy hands don't I?'"

Mr O'Faogain said that he had laughed off the experience because of the social standing Mr Porter had as a well-known comedian. He said that he was encouraged to talk about his experience having seen other comics alluding to contacts with Mr Porter online.

Numerous attempts to contact Mr Porter, his manager and his publicist went unanswered yesterday.

Today FM last night issued a statement regarding the allegations. "Today FM has spoken with Al Porter and his management team concerning these allegations. We take any comments of this nature extremely seriously. Likewise, we take the welfare of our presenters and staff extremely seriously."