

● GERMANY

Deutsche Bank bosses resign

THE two co-chief executives of scandal-hit Deutsche Bank have resigned.

Juergen Fitschen and Anshu Jain offered their resignations to an emergency meeting of the bank's board yesterday, and they were accepted. The planned resignations come after the bank was hit with a £1.7 billion fine over the Libor rate-rigging affair.

Deutsche Bank is also paying £35.7 million to settle civil charges for allegedly misstating financial reports. The US Securities and Exchange Commission said the bank overvalued assets and did not have sufficient collateral to cover potential losses. Deutsche Bank is settling without admitting or denying the charges.

● CHINA

Tribute to victims of capsized ship

NEARBY ships yesterday blared their horns for three minutes to honour the victims of the Yangtze River capsizing at a ceremony presided over by transport minister Yang Chuantang.

The toll from last Monday's overturning of the Eastern Star cruise ship rose to 431 dead with 11 people still missing. Fourteen survived, including three pulled by divers from the overturned hull on Tuesday.

Authorities attributed the sinking to a freak storm, but placed the captain and his first engineer in police custody.

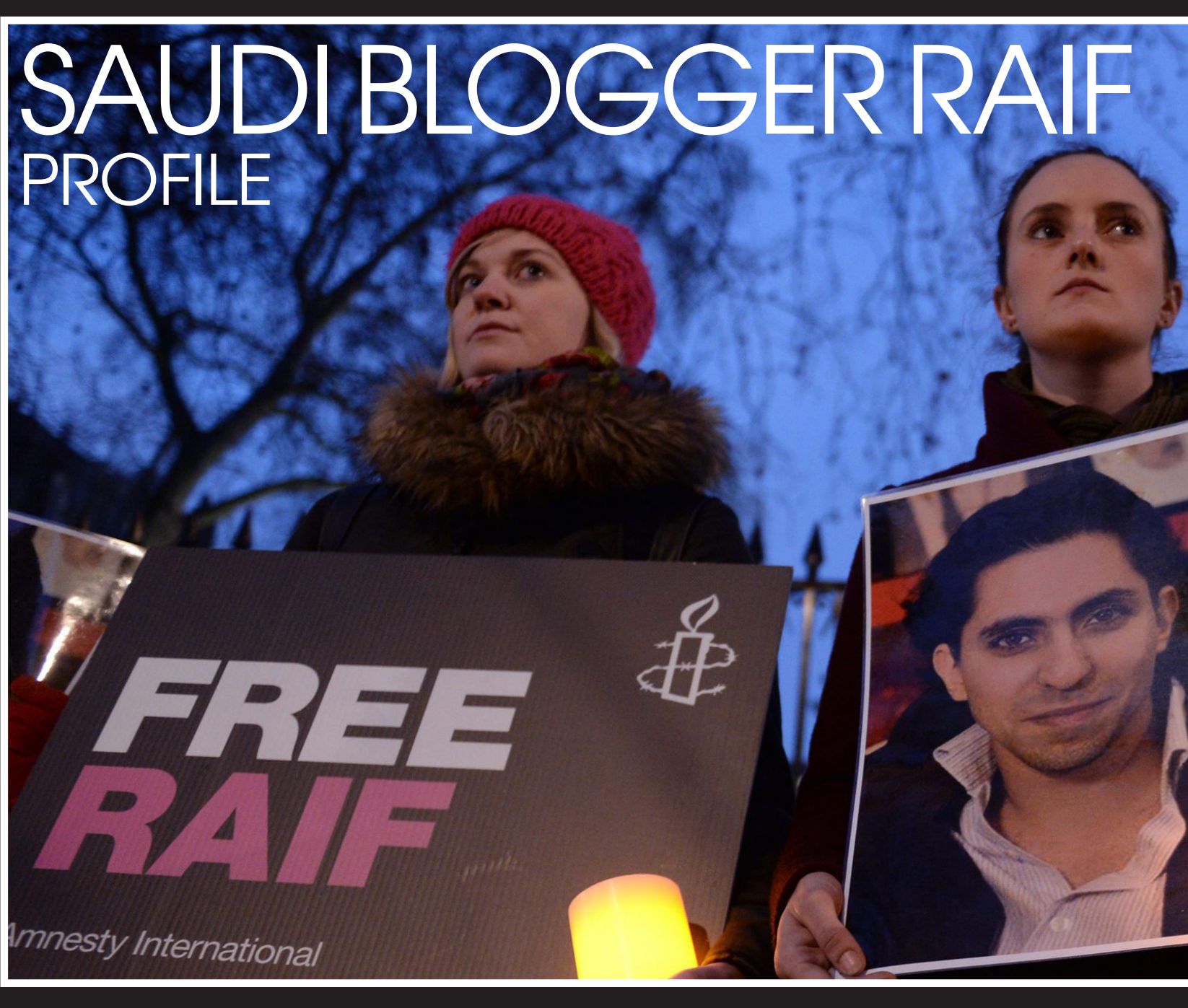
● YEMEN

Air strikes on army HQ kill at least 44

SAUDI-LED air strikes killed at least 44 people during a raid on the main headquarters of the Yemeni army in central Sanaa.

More than 100 people were also wounded in the attack, which destroyed private houses in the Tahrir district adjacent to the compound.

Saudi-led forces have been pounding Houthi forces as well as allied troops loyal to former long-time president Ali Abdullah Saleh in an attempt to restore President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi to power. Despite the fighting, Hadi's exiled Yemeni government in Riyadh and the Houthis have agreed to attend UN-sponsored peace talks in Geneva on June 14.

SAUDI BLOGGER RAIF
PROFILE

WHAT'S THE STORY?

PUBLIC floggings of a freedom of speech blogger are to continue until he has been lashed 1,000 times, a court in Saudi Arabia has ruled.

Yesterday, the country's supreme court upheld its sentence of ten years in prison, a £175,000 fine and 1,000 lashes on 31-year-old Raif Badawi.

A sentence of 15 years in prison for his lawyer and brother-in-law, Waleed Abu Al-Khair, was upheld in February.

The rulings have come in defiance of an international outcry over the sentences, which intensified in January after Badawi suffered the first 50 lashes.

Subsequent beatings were postponed after a medical report found he was not fit for the punishment, which his wife, Ensaf Haidar, believes will kill him.

On being told his sentence had been upheld she said: "I am shocked."

Badawi was arrested in 2012 and charged with "insulting Islam through electronic channels".

He had been running the Liberal Saudi Network, an online forum set up to debate political and religious issues.

According to Haidar, Badawi created his blog nine years ago with no other aim than to begin "peaceful" dialogue on issues surrounding secularism, liberalism, women's rights and human rights.

In one post he wrote: "You have the right to express and

think whatever you want as you have the right to declare what you think about it, it is your right to believe or think, have the right to love and to hate, from your right to be a liberal or Islamist."

In another, he said: "What we need in the Arab and Islamic societies is more to uphold the value of the individual and uphold freedom and respect for his

thinking... States which are based on a religious basis confine their people in the circle of faith and fear."

SHACKLED

SENTENCED in 2014, two years after his arrest,

Badawi suffered the first 50 lashes on January 9 this year in a public square in Jeddah in front of hundreds of

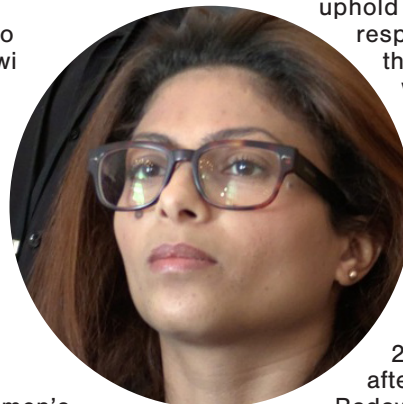
people. He was handcuffed and his feet were shackled.

A video taken secretly by an onlooker and later released on the internet created an international outcry as it showed him being brutally beaten on the back and legs by a member of the security forces.

The beatings were supposed to take place every Friday but a team of doctors who assessed him after the first bout recommended that Badawi, who suffers ill-health, should be allowed to heal before being subjected to any more lashings.

Said Haidar, who was forced to flee to Canada with the couple's three children, said: "Raif told me he is in a lot of pain after his flogging: his health is poor."

She fears he will not survive further beatings and has called on the international community to keep up pressure on Saudi Arabia to revoke the sentence. Some commentators believe

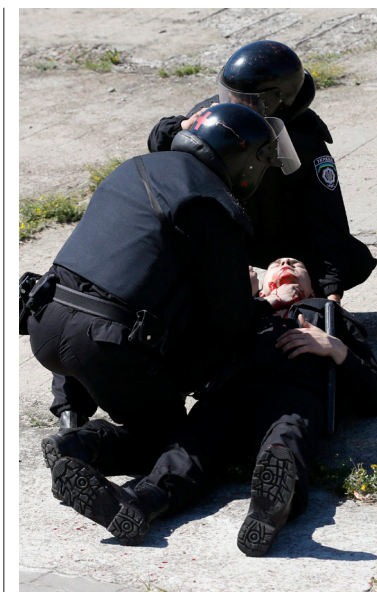


BADAWI



There has been international outrage over Saudi Arabia's ruling to uphold the sentence of Raif Badawi, whose wife Ensaf Haidar, below left, fears more beatings will kill him. In February the sentence of his lawyer and brother-in-law Waleed Abu Al-Khair, below right, was also upheld

Main photograph: PA



Twenty-five people detained

● UKRAINE

Police injured at gay pride march

NINE police officers have been injured during a gay pride march in Ukraine's capital Kiev, officials say, after unidentified attackers threw smoke bombs at the peaceful activists.

Ahead of the LGBT march – the second of its kind in the country's post-Soviet history – a number of Ukrainian politicians, including the radical Right Sector movement, had pledged to disrupt the event.

Kiev Mayor Vitaly Klitschko had called on organisers to cancel the event to "avoid confrontation". Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko said that he fully supported the marchers but would refrain from marching himself.

Kiev police said 25 people had been detained for questioning.

● SOUTH KOREA

Fifth MERS death confirmed

SOUTH Korea has confirmed a fifth person has died of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (Mers) in the country. Health officials say there are 14 new cases, ten at the same hospital in Seoul.

The number of patients has risen to 64, making it the biggest outbreak of Mers outside the Middle East. More than 1,600 people have been quarantined.

Mers, which causes fever, breathing problems, pneumonia and kidney failure, was first identified in humans in 2012 and originated in Saudi Arabia.

The World Health Organisation says it has a death rate of 27 per cent.

Seoul mayor Park Won-soon has accused central government of not providing enough information about the virus.

Saudi Arabia has been taken aback by the strength of the protest, which include an open letter from 18 Nobel laureates.

Prince Charles is also believed to have raised the issue during a royal visit in February. The Prince met the new King Salman who, it was hoped, would be more moderate than his predecessor, King Abdullah, but so far has turned out to be even more conservative. A review into Badawi's case was ordered by the regime's rulers in March but now says it rejects any interference in its affairs.

"The kingdom cannot believe and strongly disapproves what has been addressed in some media outlets about the case of Citizen [Badawi] and

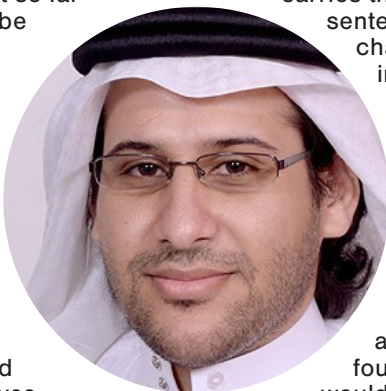
the judicial sentence he has received," said a spokesman for Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

BEHEADED

IT IS now feared that Badawi may be retried for the crime of apostasy (the abandonment of his religious faith) which carries the death

sentence. He was charged with this initially but the charge was thrown out in 2013.

However, his family believes the regime will seek to get rid of him with a retrial. If found guilty he would be beheaded. Haidar believes only international pressure can save him.



A petition begun by Amnesty International has so far collected more than one million signatures and the organisation is behind a book – "1,000 Lashes Because I Dared to Speak Freely" – published to draw attention to the case. All of the profits will be used to help Badawi, who dictated a preface to the book during phone calls to his wife.

A day of action has also been called for June 17, the third anniversary of Badawi's arrest, when a letter will be delivered to UK Prime Minister David Cameron at Downing Street.

The letter, signed by Baroness Glenys Kinnock among others, calls on the government to "make publicly clear your complete opposition to the human rights abuses in Saudi Arabia and demand the immediate release of Raif and Waleed as the EU Parliament has."

The letter states that more needs to be done than simply

expressing disapproval and points out that the UK has around £12 billion invested in Saudi Arabia, while Saudi investment in the UK is encouraged, particularly in the property market. Saudi investment in the UK is currently more than £62.5bn.

"Questions have to be asked about why more cannot be done to promote the human rights of citizens of a country with which there is such extensive business.

"Particularly, questions have to be asked about the morality of providing such a regime with arms, particularly the weaponry and facilities they use in their brutal penal system," says the letter.

Canada, Germany, Norway and the United States have also called for an end to the "brutal" sentence.

Said Badawi: "All this cruel suffering happened to me only because I expressed my opinion."