

Dogs attack boy in Cyprus

A 9-YEAR-OLD boy was savagely attacked by two dogs on Sunday at around 3.30pm in Limassol, police said. According to reports, the two dogs, a Rottweiler and a Pitbull terrier, were in a fenced off enclosure when, under circumstances that are being looked into, the child managed to enter.

The child was taken to a private clinic after the attack, where he underwent surgery and was kept for observation.

Police arrested the 42-year-old owner of the dogs to aid their investigations but he was later released. Yermasoyia police station is investigating the case.



House prices fall in Thessaloniki

Home prices continued to slide significantly in cities outside Athens, as Thessaloniki saw an estimated drop of between 7 and 18 percent last year on a yearly basis, according to the conclusions of the annual conference of the Hellenic Valuation Institute (ELIE) conducted in the northern port city last Saturday.

In other Macedonian cities the price decline amounted to 15-20 percent, while the drop since the start of the crisis adds up to about 40 percent. Ioannina has seen an

average decline of 25 percent, although in the Epirus capital's historic center the drop was no more than 15 percent year-on-year.

Thessaly in central Greece observed a smaller reduction in prices, amounting to 14 percent on average, and just 12 percent for newly built homes.

In Larissa the drop came to 25 percent, in Trikala from 9 to 15 percent, in Karditsa from 9 to 18 percent, while Volos has witnessed the greatest drop, from 12 to 33 percent.



A FINANCIAL rescue package for Cyprus must be accompanied by close and continuous monitoring of its progress in implementing anti-money-laundering policies, the European Central Bank chief said. Mario Draghi told European lawmakers that it was not sufficient to put all relevant laws on the books, adding the crucial part was implementing them.

A final deal should provide for "close monitoring" of anti-money laundering mechanisms on the island, he said. Draghi said it was imperative for the next Cyprus government to emerge from elections to commit to a financial assistance programme. "It is very important that a programme be agreed," Draghi told the European Parliament's Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs. "We have to make sure

we don't create financial instability."

And a spokesman for the German finance ministry yesterday mooted March as the earliest date at which possible aid for Cyprus would be discussed at the Eurogroup. "It now depends on how quickly Cyprus will be in a position for talks," spokesman Martin Kotthaus said at a press briefing in Berlin. The topic will be on the table of the March Eurogroup at the earliest," he said.

The government here has said it can cover the state's financing up to April. Cyprus' request for a full bailout has apparently been caught in limbo due to disagreements between EU members, but also over allegations the island is a hub for money laundering. Nicosia denies the allegations, but is wary of a proposal that its banking sector be audited by a private company.



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