

## 4 LOCAL NEWS

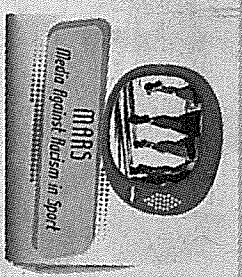
## Mens sana in corpore sano

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*Adapted from a radio programme produced in Bordeaux, France, as part of the final media encounter (November 24-24) of MARS - Media Against in Sport programme, co-funded by the Council of Europe and the European Union.*

In August this year, the long-distance runner Mo Farah won his second of two gold medals at the London Olympics, spreading a wave of euphoria across Great Britain.

In a column in the UK's Daily Mail, Yasmin Ailishai Brown, a respected commentator on issues of diversity, expressed his joyful embrace of Britishness.



Issues of identity and culture had suddenly been catapulted to the forefront of sporting activity.

Farah, born in Somalia in the early 1980s, is a devout Muslim, who in pursuit of his dreams of Olympic glory had to excuse himself from observing Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, and a time when Muslims worldwide observe a month of fasting from sunrise to sunset.

In a western world that is still coming to terms with diversity, the success of sporting figures like Farah is raising the question: How compatible are religious beliefs with modern day sports?

We spoke to two prominent religious figures in the city of Bordeaux to find out what they had to say about the issue.

"In Islamic tradition there are recommendations for people to engage in sporting activities", said Fouad Saahadi, the Director of the Mosque of Canon in Bordeaux. "Sometimes, during Ramadan, people ask if the mosque can provide a certificate to abstain in order to compete in sports."

According to Saahadi however, this is not always necessary. "Muslims are used to Ramadan, they practise it from childhood, so there are no problems to be a professional sportsman and to observe Ramadan. It does not diminish one's performance. Just look at Nicolas Anelka and Franck Ribery! In fact the Great Imam of Bordeaux Tarq Oubrou fasts and runs every day and nobody can compete with him!"

Xavier Melle, Chaplain of the Church of St. Michel in Bordeaux, is slightly more philosophical. "The Catholic Church doesn't have an official position on sports, except that sportsmen and women should not perform sports during Sunday mass", he says with a wry smile. "Sports values are universal and transcend religious differences. They teach people how to respect one another on the field of play. For example, in basketball, when a player commits a foul he has to raise his hand and recognise his mistake. In other collective sports like football children learn how to play with each other. In sports we learn to lose and to congratulate the winner."

Both sport and religion require devotion, hard work and observance of rules to reach a specific goal, be it physical or spiritual. However the two need not be mutually exclusive. It just takes someone to prove it.

For more information on the MARS programme visit: [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/mars/default\\_en.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/mars/default_en.asp)

## Church honours Mitsides

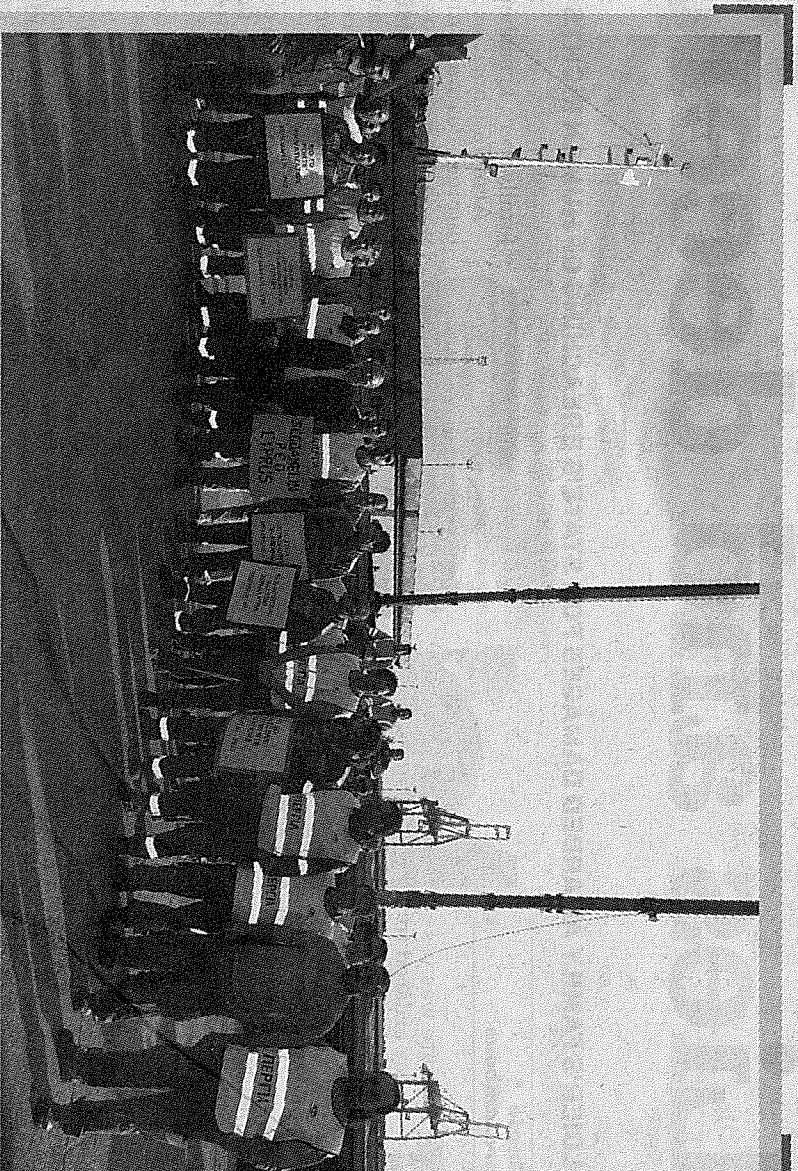
The Holy Synod has unanimously decided to honour Dr. Andreas Mitsides with the golden medal of Apostle Yánnavos, the highest honour of the Church of Cyprus.

The ceremony will take place today at the Archbishopric in Nicosia.

"The medal is practical recognition on the part of the Church of Cyprus for Mitsides' work and services to the church," an announcement said yesterday.

Mitsides is a graduate of the Halki seminary and became a doctor of philosophy of Cologne University and the Athens University Theological School.

The late Archbishop Makarios III appointed him director of the Archbishop's office in 1959 and he represented the Church of Cyprus in Orthodox meetings and international conferences. He has published a number of articles and studies in various magazines and newspapers and more than 30 religious, historical and educational books.



**WORK STOPPAGE:** Port workers yesterday staged a two-hour work stoppage at Limassol and Larnaca ports, joining a Europe-wide protest in support of colleagues in Portugal. The pan-European strike was organised by the International Dockworkers Council (IDC) member organisations.

*The Portuguese port workers gathered outside Parliament protesting against the new ports law pushed by their government. IDC member organisations also expressed their opposition to efforts by the EU and national governments to privatize ports, to abolish collective agreements and the replacement of professional port workers and mariners with unskilled staff. They are also voicing their opposition against working conditions without protection for the safety and health of port workers.*

## Labour Institute urges export drive

Cyprus urgently needs an export-oriented growth policy to ride out the economic crisis, says the Cyprus Labour Institute of Peo-

In its 2012 report on the economy and employment, the Institute suggested the Troika's recipe of low salaries and little protection for employees, along with the absence of a social state, leads to cycles of recession and unemployment.

This may sentence the economy to up to a decade of stagnation before cheaper prices help stimulate growth through exports. Fiscal consolidation in crisis-struck Eurozone has pushed them into a recession while unemployment

has spiralled.

"The most suitable strategy to tackle these problems is for the economy to look outward through the restructuring of Cyprus tourism so that it can meet modern demands and through the development of other export sectors," the report said.

"Higher exports can be the driving force of economic growth and reduce unemployment, while at the same narrowing the trade deficit," it added.

Cyprus is now going through an adaptation process which is keeping GDP and employment stagnant or at lower levels than in 2008.

But this adaptation process

## Local businesses shun e-commerce

Cypriot firms are still lagging behind in e-commerce, an official survey showed yesterday.

Only 3.4% of the enterprises covered in the survey said they accepted orders through the Internet while only 18.6% placed orders via the Internet.

The survey covered 1431 enterprises with 10 or more employees in specific categories of economic activity.

According to the results of the survey, 49.2% of businesses provide their employees with portable devices that allow a mobile connection to the

Internet for work use. Furthermore, 63.4% of companies have a website and 96.7% of them offer access to product catalogues and price lists.

Some 84.6% use the Internet to interact with public authorities and 30.3% use the Electronic Procurement Systems (e-Procurement) of the Finance Ministry.

A total of 21.8% of the enterprises which participated in the survey have an Enterprise Resource Planning System and 25% have a Customer Relationship Management System.

## Manadoob self-esteem seminar for kids

The Manadoob self-esteem programme for successful childhood development is organising a conference on Wednesday in the UNESCO Amphitheatre at the University of Nicosia at 6.30pm to discuss the challenges that are presented during childhood and the significance of early intervention.

The conference will be addressed by Dr. Constantinos Fellas from the University of Nicosia, primary school teacher Kyriacos Pasterides and school psychologist Andriia Christodoulou.

There will also be a presentation of the Manadoob Secret Connection Programme to Enhance Self-Esteem for children between the ages of seven and 12 by Manadoob educators Tatiana Shukurglou-Chryssostomou and Tania Masia, as well as an open discussion with the audience at the end.

For more information and reservations please contact 99693171 or 99259285.