Clockwise from below left: police on guard after

raid on drugs bunker in Villa La Lata, Rosario; a memorial mural to the three teenage friends murdered last year in the Villa Moreno area: two people arrested in a drugs bunker raid; eight-year-old Leonardo Pintos, who was shot as

he slept







anuary are etched into Vilma Jaime's memory. The sun had set, but it was still oppressively hot and neighbours were outside in the street, chatting and drinking traditional mate tea. Then the gunshots began

Ms Jaime ran into her house, and watched through the keyhole of the front door as the blood started to spill. Three people were shot that night miraculously, no one was killed. But many others have not been so lucky.

Ms Jaime, 32, lives in the Nuevo Alberdi neighbourhood of Rosario – a city of just over a million inhabitants, some 200 miles north-west of Argentina's capital, Buenos Aires. The caine and selling it in Rosario, they gunshots have become increasingly frequent in the city's poorest quarters, where turf wars for control of a lucrative local cocaine market have caused the murder rate to spiral.

"Here we're used to hearing shots in the morning, at midday, at whatever time really," she said, pointing out the house across the road where the Ferreyra family used to live. They were forced to flee the area after receiving threats from a local drug gang.

Argentina had escaped the worst of the government in Santa Fe blames feddrug-related violence that has plagued eral forces for failing to stop drugs en-South American countries for — tering the country decades. Now, the effects of the drug With the two sides passing the po- are already wandering around with tigation that employed phone taps and ers guarding drugs bunkers and trade are increasingly visible – partic-litical football, residents say too little firearms," Ms Jaime says. ularly in Rosario, which is fast acquiris being done to halt the vicious cycle ing the inauspicious title of Argentina's of drugs and violence that now grips vented their anger on the bunker, raz- Tognoli was forced to step down. "narco" capital. In the first few weeks Rosario and is rapidly spreading across ing it to the ground. But the problem of 2013 alone, there were some 20 kill- other major cities in Argentina, includings in Rosario, mostly of innocent ing Buenos Aires. people caught in the crossfire. The murder rate in the city bordering the Nuevo Alberti was spurred by a dispute 70 per cent of last year's murders were where cocaine is sold to punters. Many and-file gang members enjoy. At the 109 days and is being scrutinised for committed with firearms.

Surrounded by several large ports,

events of that evening in Rosario has long been a transit point for drugs brought across the border from Bolivia and Paraguay headed for European markets.

> According to Mauro Federico, author of Narco Country, cocaine often enters Argentina from Bolivia and is transported in trucks to Rosario via the route 34 highway. He says neither the provincial nor the federal police have the resources to stop the cargo or the gangs which facilitate its journey.

"At the end of the 1990s, local groups who were helping camouflage the in Argentina starting asking to be paid in drugs instead of money," he said. "They saw the growing local demand and realised that, by cutting up cocould multiply their earnings."

In the first few weeks of 2013. there were 20

people

in Rosario grows,

Argentina's President, Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, has Rosario, mostly blamed the provincial police force in Sante Fe-under whose domain

As the death toll

Rosario falls - for failing to tackle the As little more than a through-route, narco gangs. The opposing Socialist

The violence Ms Jaime witnessed in few streets away. of the bunkers employ "soldaditos" end of last year, the PSA, a federal in-illicit gains.

For years the country was largely untouched by the brutal cartels that control the narco trade in Latin America – but eight-year-old Leonardo is proof those days are over. By Ed Stocker in Rosario emn promises to clean up the force, but did not give direct answers to questions

pistols who earn up to AR\$350 (£45) a tween the Santa Fe provincial police to implicate Santa Fe police person-

(little soldiers), teenagers armed with vestigative body, revealed links be-

day as guards. "Kids of only nine or 10" force and the drugs trade, in an inves-After the shooting, the neighbours ing dealers, the then police chief Hugo to narco gangs.

Mr Tognoli, previously head of Santa drug dealers and the police are one and is far from over, Ms Jaime says, ex- Fe's dangerous drugs unit, was subse- the same," said Estela Maris Gomez, plaining that a rival bunker is only a quently arrested and imprisoned. A speaking next to a football pitch in the judge later ordered his release after 15 south-eastern Rosario neighbourhood Perhaps the most concerning aspect days due to "lack of merit", though he of Villa Moreno. muddy-brown Parana river is nearly over a drugs "bunker", breezeblock about Rosario's drug problem is the apcontinues to be investigated. His rethree times the national average, and houses located in slum alleyways parent impunity drug capos and rank-placement, Cristian Sola, lasted just may look like any other community

ruption, and calls for "justice for Mercedes Delgado", a social worker killed by a stray bullet when gangs fought in the western barrio of Ludeuña in January. The same people Ms Delgado helped at a local food shelter were responsible for her death. Dressed in a suit, Mr Odriozola said

Mr Sola's removal was part of "certain changes taking place". He made solemn promises to clean up the force, but on corruption in the Santa Fe police.

The Independent in a government

building in Rosario's centre. Etched in

 $crude\,white\,graffiti\,on\,the\,road\,surface$

outside are the words "narco police".

The writing accuses the force of cor-

As a handful of court cases continue nel. PSA find hidden cameras. Accused of protect- suspected police tip-offs being given

"We've begun to discover that the

playing field, but in the early hours of New Year's Day last year, it became a The new chief, Omar Odriozola, met bloodbath. Her son, Claudio "Mono"

Rodriguez, was with two friends on the field, waiting for some girls.

What the trio didn't realise was that three other people broadly fitting their description had been in the area 15 minutes earlier, celebrating after having shot the son of an infamous drug dealer known as "el Quemado" (the burnt one). The dealer allegedly decided to exact revenge on the assailants with a machine gun - but instead mowed down Mono and his two companions

"We arrived at the pitch and Mono was there on the floor, in a puddle of filthy water, and he couldn't breathe," said his brother Chicho, fighting back tears, "We grabbed his hand, talked to him and told him to hang on. He was with us for another half an hour."

trade; three police officers are due to murder spree.

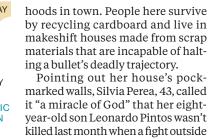
survived his shooting that day – but the police themselves?" not for long. At the beginning of As in many other South American be better than that? "But I now realise February this year he was murdered countries, poverty fuels Argentina's that drug trafficking is a trick and a in the centre of Rosario with a gundrug trade. Empalme Graneros is one lie that destroys people. Sometimes, shot to the temple.



During a police raid in Villa La Lata witnessed by The Independent, two voung sellers were arrested – and drugs, money and a handgun were dis-The Villa Moreno triple murder — covered. But locals complain not — thrills that gang amiation brings, i shocked Argentina, highlighting the enough is done to arrest the top-rank-remains easy for drug gangs to recruit destructive nature of drug-related vi- ing drug leaders, and Mono's mother, new members. With it the vicious olence in Rosario. It also lifted the lid Ms Gomez, claimed similar raids she cycle of drugs and violence looks unon police involvement in the drug has witnessed have been ineffective. likely to end soon.

"Whenever there's a raid on a drugs stand trial later this year for allegedly bunker, neighbours complain that the always used to say there was a better helping to facilitate el Quemado's dealers grab their bags and leave an life for me," said Jeremia Encia, 28, a hour before the police arrive. Who's former drug seller who spent time be-El Quemado's son, Maximiliano, letting them know in advance if it isn't hind bars. "I had women, brand new

of the most desperate neighbour- too, it destroys families."



morning ended in gunshots. A bullet entered Leonardo's right arm and exited through his right leg as he was curled up asleep. "The child is still afraid," Ms Perea said. "Because there isn't security here in the neighbourhood."

her house in the early hours of the

As poor, young people in Rosario are lured by the money and quick

"My family are religious and they cars and piles of cash. So what could

Love's labour: the man who translated all Shakespeare's plays into Punjabi

By ANDREW BUNCOMBE

Surjit Hans' interest in the works of William Shakespeare was first sparked when he was a student, but it was not until he had retired from academia that he started on the labour of love in which he would lose himself and which took two decades to complete.

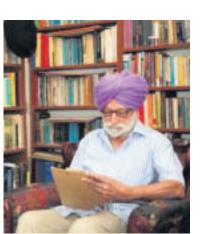
Now, the 82-year-old has finally completed his translation of Shakespeare's rarely performed Henry VIII into Punjabi, marking the 38th and last of the Stratford Bard's plays to be made available in the South Asian language. An estimated 100 million people speak Punjabi, mainly in India, Pakistan, Britain and Canada.

"It started in my college days when I played a minor part in Macbeth," Mr Hans, who studied at Punjab University in Hoshiarpur, told *The Independent*. "And then I played the role of Laertes in Hamlet.

Mr Hans began translating the plays in 1993 when he retired as head of the department of history at the Guru Nanak Dev University in the Puniab city of Amritsar. The first work he translated was Othello. For each translation, he received 8,000 rupees (£100), which he reckoned worked out as around 40 rupees a day. He averaged two plays a year.

The retired academic said he hoped performances of his translations would be staged and he said he believed Punjabi audiences would respond well to Shakespeare's stories because of the "commonality of themes". He believes it is unfair that Shakespeare's works should only be available to those who speak

No north Indian aware of the story of the emperor Aurangzeb, a conservative Mughal ruler of the 17th century who imprisoned his father and murmoved by the intrigues contained in Nations.



Surjit Hans, 82, has just finished translating Henry VIII, Shakespeare's last play

King John, Mr Hans says. At the same time, The Two Noble Kinsmen, with its tale of two cousins fighting to the death over the affections of the same woman has parallels with the plots of many Bollywood films.

"Take for example the treatment of the elderly in King Lear - well, we leave thousands of old people at the Kumbh Mela [Hindu festival] because we cannot afford to keep them," he said. "Also, there is the issue of arranged marriage in The Taming of the Shrew."

Mr Hans, who spent six years in the late 1960s in London, where he was a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company, devoted much of his academic work to the study of Sikh literary sources. These included the Janamsakhis, the tales that surround the birth and life of Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh faith

Having completed the works of Shakespeare, he said he is now keen to expand his repertoire and translate into Punjabi some of the "basic" texts of biology and economics. He added: "There is nothing left for me from Shakespeare. I am thinking about The dered his brother, could fail to be Origin of Species and The Wealth of

Senate investigation into Zero Dark Thirty dropped

By **SAM MASTERS**

the CIA hunt for Osama Bin Laden – were granted "inappropriate access" to classified material has

been quietly dropped. The news comes a day after director Katherine Bigelow's film fell flat at the Oscars where many blamed its lack of awards – it picked up just a single technical prize out offive nominations, including for best actress, Jessica Chastain, right – on the

Senate Intelligence Committee investigation and controversy over its depic-A high-profile Senate investigation into tion of the CIA's alleged use of torture in whether the makers of Zero Dark Thirty the search for the al-Oa'ida leader. The - the critically-acclaimed film charting committee's Democratic chair Dianne Feinstein and Republican member John

> the torture scenes in January. "Depiction is not endorsement" said Bigelow as she defended the film against Academy member

> McCain had raised concerns about

David Clennon's calls for a boycott. A congressional aide, speaking anonymously, said the committee closed its inquiry on Monday. Studio Sony, which produced the film, did not comment.