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SUNDAY JANUARY 16, 2011

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BPA Audited

CLEAN UP! YOU'RE ON CAMERA

Bosses put maids under surveillance

SUSPICIOUS employers are turning to Big Brother-style CCTV cameras to keep an eye on their domestic staff.

Security expert Fady Bran, currently the sole importer of Super NannyCam, says more than 100 households have already snapped up the surveillance technology to make sure housemaids are kept under close watch.

Bran, the chief executive of Bur Dubai-based Maxcom Technologies, told 7DAYS: "Europeans love it but all nationalities are buying it. They need to leave their children at home and they want the peace of mind - this gives it to them."

However, the technology has raised concerns over whether surveillance is an invasion of privacy.

Angelina, a live-in maid at a house in Arabian Ranches, said she thought filming was a breach of a worker's rights.

By Nichola Jones

"I would not like it," said the Filipina. "You should have privacy in your day. If your employer thinks something bad is happening, they should ask, not spy on you."

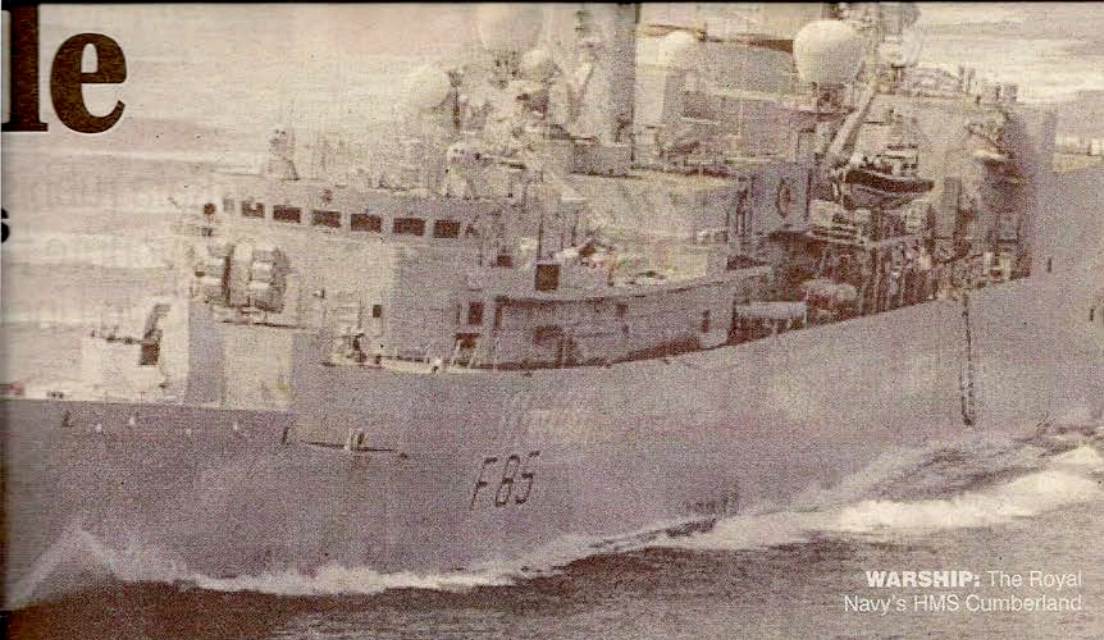
But Bran claims there is nothing secretive about the cameras, as they are in clear view. He has even installed one in his own home. He said: "We hear many stories about nannies who have abused children. You can't be at home all the time, but you might like to know what is happening."

Cameras can be fitted in any room and footage, complete with sound, is broadcast direct to a client's computer or mobile phone. The package costs about Dhs2,000.

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WARSHIP: The Royal Navy's HMS Cumberland

By Nichola Jones

frigate charged with fighting piracy, drug trafficking and maintaining energy security, will be axed, along with three other frigates that regularly patrol the region.

The ships will be taken out of service this year under plans by the UK's Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition that were tabled in October but only recently made official.

Security analysts have expressed concern, saying the cuts will leave the British Navy stretched and jeopardise safety in the areas it has been patrolling.

The latest pirate attack adds to the unease, as it comes three days after a Danish cargo ship was boarded by a gang in the Arabian Sea and a week since an Indian dhow was hijacked by Somalis off the coast of Oman.

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PAKISTAN: A young man has died after apparently falling from the wheel well of a plane as it flew out of the eastern city of Lahore on its way to Dubai. The unidentified stowaway's shattered body was found on the roof of a house in Lahore late on Thursday. An Airblue flight, heading to Dubai, was in the sky at the time, said Civil Aviation Authority spokesman Kamran Malik. Authorities believe that the young man may have hidden in that plane's landing gear, although the investigation is ongoing.

School talent to be put on show

DUBAI: Students who are mad about maths, loopy about languages or stuck on science could be up for an award as part of an education project in Dubai.

The Knowledge and Human Development Authority is encouraging children with a talent for a particular subject to enter excellence awards. Dubai School Agency, part of the KHDA, is coordinating the contest. Agency boss Fatma Al Marri said: "If we can instill the idea of excellence in the hearts of the younger generation, this is the key to quality education and to improving our schools."

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Nannycam plan unnerves maid firm

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Hidden cameras are illegal in the UAE and all security firms are strictly licensed, trained and checked by Dubai Police.

"This system is not hidden and people should know they are being filmed. I believe in deterrent," Bran said. "One man asked me to install a camera in his bathroom - I refused." One resident who welcomed the scheme is Daksha Bhudia, whose maid absconded with Dhs15,000 of her personal belongings. She said: "It's a fantastic idea. It's not an invasion of privacy at all... People want to protect their homes and their children and they have every right to do that."

But domestic worker agency Right Maids said it would not want staff to be filmed. "We don't believe there is a need for it with our staff," a spokesman said. "We employ more than 100 women and if any family has a



HI-TECH: Fady Bran demonstrates the device

problem they can talk to us, we get very good feedback. Our staff are doing their jobs, they don't need to have cameras watching them." Dubai Mums Club founder Jenny Haddad added: "I know mums are worried about leaving their kids, so, if you're not doing anything wrong, then I suppose there's no problem. But if this system is being used, people must be told they're being filmed."

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7DAYS is published by Al Sidra Media, PO Box 35207, Dubai. 7DAYS is distributed from Sunday to Thursday free of charge. Should you have any problems receiving your daily copy, please e-mail: distribution@7days.ae

7DAYS material is provided by AP, Reuters and gettyimages/galloimages unless otherwise stated

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