

James Patterson on finishing the last novel by Michael Crichton

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Tory alarm as Farage takes control of Reform UK

Conservative fears of 'existential' threat as ex-Ukip leader returns and says he will stand as MP

Ben Quinn Pippa Crerar Eleni Courea

The Conservative Party's faltering general election campaign suffered a potentially damaging new blow yesterday when Nigel Farage announced he intended to stand as an election candidate and lead the Reform party for the next five years.

The former Ukip and Brexit party leader said he would stand in Clacton, Essex, next month after changing his mind while spending time on the campaign trail. He claimed that he did not want to let his supporters down.

Farage will also take over as leader of Reform UK from Richard Tice, pledging to stay in post for a full parliamentary term. While his

announcement poses an immediate threat to the Tory candidate for the Clacton seat, it may also energise Reform UK's national campaign, splitting the rightwing vote in other constituencies.

It also raises the spectre of Farage antagonising the Tories as they descend into a post-election battle for the soul of their party.

Farage's candidacy in Clacton, which was the first to elect a Ukip MP in 2014 and has a Tory majority of 24,702, will be his eighth attempt to enter parliament. He has failed every time so far.

In a further blow to Rishi Sunak, YouGov's first MRP constituency projection - before Farage's announcement - showed Keir Starmer could win a 194 majority, bigger than Tony Blair's 179 in 1997.

It put Labour on 422 seats (+222 from the 2019 election, based on new constituency boundaries), the Tories on 140 (-232), the Lib Dems on 48 (+40) and the SNP on 17 (-31). A senior Tory said Farage's return was an "existential" risk.



'Presidenta': Sheinbaum makes history in Mexico

First for NHS as man, 91, is given artificial cornea

Nicola Davis

Science correspondent

A 91-year-old man who became the first patient in England to have his sight saved by an artificial layer in his cornea has praised the procedure for allowing him to still see his wife.

Cecil Farley, from Chobham in
Surrey, had problems with his right
eye for about 15 years before losing

his vision. He required a cornea transplant to save his sight but his previous surgery - a graft with a human cornea - failed and doctors warned the next might too. The shortage of human corneas from deceased donors also meant Farley faced a year-long wait.

But a first for the NHS allowed him to bypass the queue: the implantation of an artificial cornea. While still early days for such implants, experts say the approach

Thomas Graham

Mexico City

Claudia Sheinbaum seems poised to cement her historic victory as Mexico's first female president with a supermajority in congress that would let her party pass legislation and budgets unopposed - and perhaps even change the constitution without need for compromise.

Sheinbaum, a 61-year-old climate scientist and former mayor of Mexico City, won the presidency with 59.5% of the vote, according to a rapid sample count by Mexico's electoral authority.

During the campaign Sheinbaum portrayed herself as a continuity candidate, vowing to keep the policies of her populist predecessor, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, known popularly as Amlo, who founded the

▲ Claudia Sheinbaum celebrates her landslide election win in Mexico City photograph: RAQUEL CUNHA/REUTERS

Morena party in 2014 and forged a bond with voters disenchanted with democracy.

López Obrador was constitutionally unable to run again but chose Sheinbaum as his successor, and she appears to have won 5m votes more than he did six years ago.

"In the 200 years of the republic, I will become the first woman president of Mexico," Sheinbaum told supporters in a victory speech late on Sunday, to loud cheers of "presidenta, presidenta" - the feminine form of the country's top

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Breast cancer drug blow

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I welcome a victory for the Labour party, but this is a sorry contest **Polly Toynbee**

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News

Labour promises inquiry into plight of migrant care workers

Kiran Stacey

Political correspondent

Labour will launch an investigation into the treatment of migrant workers in the British social care sector if it wins the election, the party has announced, after dozens of cases of alleged exploitation were uncovered.

Yvette Cooper, the shadow home secretary, called the allegations revealed by the Guardian "a disgrace", accusing the government of turning a blind eye to the problem.

She said Labour would back calls by the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) for a full investigation into the experience of people who say they have been left trapped in the UK with debts of up to £20,000 and little or none of the work they were promised.

Cooper said: "The government has turned a blind eye to widespread exploitation of migrant care workers, putting vulnerable people at risk and undermining our immigration system and standards.

"Stories of people being unfairly charged thousands of pounds by agencies and employers who are profiting from overseas recruitment are a total disgrace.

"There must be a full investigation into these reports to ensure standards are upheld and exploitative employers are prosecuted."

She added that the crackdown on

exploitation in the care sector would be led by the enforcement body Labour plans to introduce to oversee new employment rights.

The Liberal Democrats' health spokesperson, Daisy Cooper, said: "Cases like these show that the Conservatives have made a mess of our immigration system and have made little effort to clamp down on exploitation in the sector. This now needs to be investigated with urgency."

A Downing Street spokesperson said: "The Home Office will always take action against any sponsor found to be failing in their responsibilities to ensure workers are paid appropriately for the work they do."

The Conservatives did not respond to a request to comment about whether they would also hold an investigation if re-elected.

The Guardian this week reported the experiences of more than 30 people who have arrived from India in the past two years to work in the British care sector.

All of them paid thousands of pounds to immigration agents, and in one case to a UK care provider itself, to secure visas to come to the country. But almost all were told when they arrived that there was not enough work to provide the full-time employment they had been promised.

As a result most remain stuck in the UK, struggling to pay off the debts they have incurred. Many have



▲ Labour's Yvette Cooper says the government has turned a blind eye to exploitation in the care sector

appealed to the Home Office, police and the care regulator, but none have been fully reimbursed.

One said he paid two agents the equivalent of £17,000 for a visa on the promise that he would work for the Wolverhampton-based agency Swan Care Solutions on a salary of £22,880.

He said he was not given a single hour of work, and when he asked how he should earn a living, a Swan Care employee told him to find a food bank, adding: "This is life in the UK. We all have to struggle."

Elizabeth Chengeta, Swan Care's only director, said: "We have never engaged the assistance of an agent outside of the UK to help with our recruitment needs.

"We have been in existence since 2019 and have got a few contracts with different councils to provide care and we do get work coming through regularly. However, sometimes the volumes can be seasonal. We do have periods when volumes of work are high and sometimes it can reduce."

She added: "We cannot comment on an individual case where we are not privy to their circumstances and interactions with our office staff."

Another worker said his employer, the Colchester-based Ace 24 Healthcare, told him he would have to secure his own clients to get work, despite having signed a sponsorship certificate promising 40 hours a week at £10.10 an hour.

Ace 24 did not respond to these allegations directly but said: "We are proud to welcome migrant workers into our team, appreciating the unique talents and experiences they bring to our organisation."

It has now had its licence to offer sponsorship certificates revoked.

The RCN, meanwhile, said it had seen a rise in the number of inquiries about a range of issues related to exploitation, particularly where workers have incurred debts to agents or employers for visa fees, travel or training.

It said it was aware of at least one instance where an employer withheld a passport from a worker while demanding that money be repaid, while others had said they were threatened with deportation should they be unable to pay.

The RCN wrote to the leaders of the Conservatives, Labour and the Liberal Democrats over the weekend calling for an investigation, which it said should be overseen by ministers.

In the letters, seen by the Guardian, the acting head of the RCN, Nicola Ranger, said: "I ask that you commit to ending this scandal and take the necessary steps to rid our care sector of this exploitation."

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First for NHS as artificial cornea implant saves sight of man, 91

could eventually become a standard treatment and help drive down the health service's record waiting list.

"I can still see my wife after 63 years of marriage. We can just carry on as normal and live life as fully as we can," Farley said.

"It makes your life fuller when your eyes work properly - you don't realise how debilitating it is until it happens to you."

He said eventually he would like to tackle tasks such as repairing a watch but for now he was content "pottering about" with his wife, Elizabeth, 83.

The device, called EndoArt, was created by EyeYon Medical and is the first artificial implant that can replace the inner lining of the cornea - the clear outer layer at the front of the eyeball.

This lining plays an important role in regulating the hydration of the cornea. If it is damaged, whether from injury or disease, it can result in blurred vision and other problems.

EndoArt is similar to a contact lens: it is a dome-shaped, foldable, transparent and clear implant that



the company says is made of a material designed to stick to the back of the cornea. Once inserted into the eye it can be manoeuvred into position with an air bubble and secured in place with a single stitch.

Farley underwent the operation, known as an endothelial keratoplasty, in February, making him one of only 200 recipients of the artificial implant worldwide to date.

Thomas Poole, a consultant ophthalmologist at Frimley health NHS

£1,800

The cost of the artificial implant - about the same as using human corneas, which are in short supply

foundation trust who carried out the operation, said he and his colleague Han Bin Lee had successfully given four patients artificial corneas in the last two months and initial results had shown an improvement in vision. The implant costs about £1,800, in the same bracket as using a human cornea.

"Looking forward to the future,
I think this may end up replacing
human corneas for certain types of
corneal graft patients," Poole added.
"In maybe 10 or 20 years' time this
may become the norm where we
don't need a human cornea and we
can just take one out of the box."

Poole added that Farley was "technically a very difficult first patient".
"I was prepared for things to be

◀ Cecil Farley, from Surrey, said the implant meant he could still see his wife after 63 years of marriage photograph: JORDAN PETTITT/PA

quite hard, but once the graft was fully attached and started to work, it was like: 'Wow, this is really working well," he said.

Prof Sir Stephen Powis, the NHS
England national medical director,
welcomed the new approach, saying:
"The use of artificial cornea transplants is an exciting and innovative
step forward in eye care, which has
the potential to benefit many patients
needing treatment to improve or
restore their vision.

"It could provide an additional treatment option for those waiting for donated transplants, and it's heartwarming to hear of patients like Cecil already benefiting from its use," Powis said.

NHS Blood and Transplant says that to meet all surgery and research needs, it requires a weekly stock of 350 eyes. Between April 2021 and March 2022 it received on average of 88 donations a week.

According to its transplant activity report 2020-21, as of 31 March 2021, 10% of people had who joined the organ donation register had chosen not to donate their corneas.

Kyle Bennett, an assistant director for tissue and eye services at NHS Blood and Transplant, said the low proportion could be down to the emotion and symbolism that people attribute to the eyes.

News





◀Joseph Fiennes as Gareth Southgate in Dear England, which tells the story of the manager's attempt to transform the England men's football team PHOTOGRAPHS: MARC BRENNER: DAVID LEVENE/ THE GUARDIAN



'The idea that at

Dear England goes into extra time with rewritten final act based on team's fate at Euros

Nadia Khomami

Arts and culture correspondent

If England lift the men's Euros trophy this summer, they will have rewritten the script when it comes to the team's fortunes in major tournaments.

But it won't be the only script that will be rewritten. The Olivier-award winning play Dear England, which tells the story of the England men's football team under Gareth Southgate, is returning to the stage with a final act that could very well change.

The play, written by James Graham and directed by Rupert Goold, will return to the National Theatre next spring, followed by a four-week run at the Lowry in Salford.

The announcement coincides with

Euro 2024, where England are among the favourites to win, and could include a redemption arc for skipper Harry Kane, whose penalty miss against France in the World Cup concluded the drama during its last run.

"Idon't want to jinx it, but in terms of the talent we have this feels like a once-in-a-generation opportunity to bring it home at last," Graham told the Guardian. "I'll be changing the play depending on what happens, and I don't quite know what that will look like. We programmed the original play before the Qatar World Cup, and we knew the tournament would be the third act of the play.

"In the end it was Kane missing the penalty and repeating the fate of his mentor, but this time there were mechanisms in place to support him. In the same way, I'm confident no matter what happens in the Euros, it will still illuminate the tail end of the Southgate project."

Graham will attend the Euros as part of his research - for the play and for the BBC TV adaptation (in which Joseph Fiennes will reprise his role as Southgate). He also spent a day with the England manager at the team's St George's Park training ground.

"Sometimes reacting to real events feels like a gimmick or like you're desperately chasing a story to stay relevant, but for me that's the joy of theatre, it's live," he said.

"Ifound it quite intimidating to put England on stage in the first place. The team belongs to all of us, and my England is different to other people's England. But it's about embracing that and having all of those different feelings and prejudice, hopes and dreams in the room at the same time."

The play tells the story of Southgate's attempts to transform the England team's physical and mental acuity, drawing on the help of a psychologist to teach them how to accept losing before they can win again.

It also examines the team's role in English society. Graham, better known for fictionalising politics, including in the acclaimed TV films Coalition and Brexit: The Uncivil War, includes comic cameos from the likes of Theresa May and Boris Johnson, and lightly explores the Black Lives Matter movement and English identity.

The play's title is drawn from Southgate's 2021 open letter, in which he talked about tolerance, equality, and the responsibility he feels to use his voice on social issues.

"Southgate has become a hugely significant national figure beyond the game," Graham said. "As much as the prime minister and the archbishop of Canterbury, the England manager looks after the soul of the nation. Southgate is a great steward of that." As a fan, Graham said, he'd "love nothing more" than an England victory. "It feels like an itch not

scratched, a gaping hole in the middle of our national psyche." But as a dramatist, he's more interested in "a meaningful, beautiful ending".

James Graham

Playwright

Elite sport, he added, has the power to start "really difficult conversations about masculinity, trust, kindness and vulnerability". The problem with previous England squads was their propensity to "chase a quick win" instead of regenerating.

"After Germany lost to England in the early 2000s they were so traumatised they went on a decadelong reboot of the game called 'Das Reboot'. This applies to us politically as well. Why do we struggle to reboot in a way that other nations seem happy to do?"

Graham said it was "truly mad" that the Euros coincided with a general election. "Southgate became the England manager a couple of weeks after the Brexit referendum, as the country turned on its axis and started to go on a brand new, much more chaotic journey of existential angst.

"We've had five prime ministers and however many housing or culture secretaries, but the one constant has been Southgate. The idea that at the end of this journey we might finally win a trophy, there's got to be some meaning in that."

Bellingham trumps rival players as 'best footballer in the world'

Morgan Ofori

Forget the Champions League trophy or the individual awards. Top Trumps has delivered its judgment: Jude Bellingham is the best footballer in the world.

The England midfielder, 20, has been placed in the top spot in the card game's new ranking system - beating other superstars such as Erling Haaland and Lionel Messi in its World Football Stars Top 200 series.

The triumph comes after the wonderkid's victory in the Champions League on Saturday, where he played a starring role at Wembley to help Real Madrid win their 15th European title. He also has England's hopes pinned on him this summer, his first tournament since becoming a global sporting superstar.

And he capped the victory off by asking the Spanish club's former manager José Mourinho to pose for a photo with his mother, telling him: "Sorry about that. My mum's fancied you for years."

The top female player in the Top 200 set is Poland's Ewa Pajor, who ranks 32 in the world, coming out on top in the first pack made available. England's Keira Walsh, Leah Williamson and Millie Bright are also included.

The ranking system exists as another category for children to come to blows over during a car journey, alongside the more typical statistics such as age, goals and height.



After Saturday's match, Bellingham welcomed his mother, Denise, dad, Mark, and younger brother, Jobe - a professional player for Sunderland - from the crowd. Tearfully, he thanked them for their support.

Bellingham said after his £88m move to Real last year that his mother played the "biggest" role in his life. "Without my mum, sometimes I'd get too low with the lows or too high with the highs, and I stay pretty humble because I've got her around," he said. "She's a great laugh as well."

Fitness permitting, he will join the squad in time for their final friendly before Euro 2024, against Iceland at Wembley on Friday night.

News

'Presidenta': Sheinbaum becomes Mexico's first female leader with landslide victory

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political post. Thanks in part to a constitutional amendment that set the goal of gender parity in all races for elected office and in appointments for top jobs in government, women now hold half the seats in Mexico's congress and almost half the jobs in cabinet and one-third of the governorships.

Activists will hope to see this prominence of female leaders translate into policy.

In 2023, Mexico's supreme court ruled that prohibiting abortion was unconstitutional, but this has been slow to manifest in safe and accessible abortion at the state level. Meanwhile, gender-based violence continues to rise.

Although female presidents have been elected in countries across Latin America, Sheinbaum's victory makes her the first woman to lead a North American country.

Sheinbaum's main challenger was another woman, Xóchitl Gálvez, who won 27.6% of the vote as candidate of the opposition coalition. She was unable to overcome the unpopularity of the traditional parties backing her, which many voters view as serving the elites.

Aside from the presidency, more than 20,000 posts were up for grabs in Mexico's biggest ever election.

Morena and its allies are poised to win a two-thirds supermajority in one and perhaps both houses of congress, which would allow it to amend the constitution at will.

Amlo has already laid out a desired package of policies that is wideranging and occasionally eccentric, including pension reform and also outlawing animal abuse and banning fracking and the sale of vapes.

But the most controversial would be a reform to elect supreme court



▲ Claudia Sheinbaum sends a message to her supporters after winning Mexico's presidential election with 59.5% of the vote PHOTOGRAPH: CARLOS TISCHLER/EYEPIX

In the 200 years of the republic, I will be the first woman president of Mexico'

Claudia Sheinbaum Likely president elect justices by popular vote. The court has often stood against Amlo, and such a reform could place it under Morena's control.

Yesterday, Amlo said he did "not want to impose anything" on Sheinbaum, before later adding: "I do think we have to address the issue of judicial reform."

He said: "There has to be a judiciary that represents the Mexican people, that is incorruptible, because if not, we will not move forward."

Of the nine gubernatorial races, Morena held six and won the state of Yucatán, meaning it now controls 24 of Mexico's 32 federal entities.



Altogether, Morena will hold more political power than any party since Mexico's transition to democracy in 2000. The peso slid against the dollar as investors reacted with jitters to Morena's projected hegemony.

Sheinbaum will take power on 1 October with a huge mandate but substantial challenges to address - not least the violence, corruption and impunity that failed to improve under Amlo, as organised crime groups fight to keep control of territory and local businesses.

"Security, and the wake of victims, of pain, of anger, sown through great parts of the country - these are the hardest parts of the legacy that [Amlo] leaves Claudia," said Blanca Heredia, a political analyst.

Amlo also massively expanded the role of the military into areas typically reserved for civil society, such as domestic security and infrastructure construction. "Managing the army will require great intelligence from Sheinbaum, because they have been given many responsibilities, many resources," said Heredia.

"Another pending issue is perhaps national reconciliation," said Vanessa Romero, a political analyst. "These elections were particularly incendiary, as if there were two Mexicos and they don't talk to each other."

A month after Sheinbaum takes power, the US is set for its own election and a showdown between Joe Biden and Donald Trump.

The countries' economies are deeply intertwined, with Mexico the top trading partner of the US. Mexico is also the source of the fentanyl that kills 70,000 Americans a year, and a transit country for US-bound migrants, meaning it will play a key role in the US election.

"I look forward to working closely with president-elect Sheinbaum in the spirit of partnership and friendship that reflects the enduring bonds between our two countries," Biden said in a statement.

In her victory speech, Sheinbaum said the US-Mexico relationship would be based on "mutual respect" before adding: "We will always defend Mexicans who are on the other side of the border."



A theatrical trip ★★★★★ for the dark, alluring Viola's Room Page 15

Hornets here to stay
Insects survive UK
winter for first time
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National



Badges of honour

Veterans of D-day gather for an 80th anniversary event at Southwick House in Portsmouth, a stately home that was the command centre for the Normandy landings on 6 June 1944.



PHOTOGRAPH: DYLAN MARTINEZ/REUTERS

Anger as women are denied 'exciting' breast cancer drug

Andrew Gregory Chicago

Thousands of women with advanced breast cancer in England and Wales are being denied a drug that cuts the risk of the disease spreading by more than a third.

Enhertu has been rolled out to patients with HER2-low breast cancer in Scotland and Northern Ireland, but the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (Nice) has rejected it for patients in England. Women in Wales are also being denied the drug.

Compelling evidence suggests the treatment, also known as trastuzumab deruxtecan, can prolong patients' lives and give them more time before their disease progresses.

Now "really exciting" new data, published at the world's largest cancer conference, suggests Enhertu is even more potent than previously thought. Results from the Destiny-Breasto6 study, presented at the American Society of Clinical Oncology (Asco) annual meeting in Chicago, show the drug can stall the growth of tumours by more than a year, significantly longer than standard chemotherapy.

Overall, Enhertu, developed by Daiichi Sankyo and AstraZeneca, reduced the risk of cancer growing or spreading in patients with HER2-low breast cancer by 38% compared with those who received chemotherapy. The data will pile pressure on regulators to approve the drug for women in England and Wales.

Charities warned that women's lives "will be cut short" with further delays as they called for Enhertu to be made available to women in England and Wales as swiftly as possible.

Dr Simon Vincent, director of research, support and influencing at Breast Cancer Now, said: "This promising study suggests even more people could potentially benefit from Enhertu, offering patients with HER2-low or HER2-ultralow secondary breast cancer who have already had hormone-based therapy more time to live without their cancer spreading further.

"This builds on evidence that this treatment can increase survival by over six months for people with HER2-low secondary breast cancer who have already had chemotherapy.

"Yet, despite this mounting clinical data emerging around the clear benefit Enhertu could bring patients, thousands with HER2-low secondary breast cancer are being denied access to Enhertu on the NHS in England, and this is utterly unacceptable.

"These people are desperately counting on Nice, NHS England, Daiichi Sankyo and AstraZeneca to find a solution in their current talks and to urgently make this treatment available for them."

Sophie Blake, 51, was diagnosed with HER2-low breast cancer in December 2020 before being told it had spread elsewhere, including to her lungs and liver, in May 2022.

The former television presenter's cancer is under control, but Enhertu would probably be a last line of



▲ Sophie Blake said Enhertu could let her see daughter Maya grow up

treatment when needed. Responding to the new trial results, she said: "This is yet more evidence of the precious extra time this treatment could give us. When we're so limited with what options are available, it's particularly devastating. We know women in Scotland whose lives it's changed, it's not that it just gives you an extension, it's also the quality of life."

The mother of one, from Brighton, added: "To us, these wonder drugs are everything - I want to watch my daughter go to university, get married and have children, Enhertu could make that difference to women.

"The most frustrating thing is that we know it's there - they just won't give it to us."

All invasive breast cancers are tested for HER2 (human epidermal growth factor receptor 2) levels. Some breast cancer cells have a higher than normal level of HER2 on their surface, which stimulates them to grow.

Breast Cancer Now said about 50% of all breast cancers show low levels of HER2. It estimates that 1,000 women with HER2-low advanced breast cancer in England and Wales would benefit from Enhertu but are being denied access to the drug.

The trial presented at Ascpo involved 866 women with advanced HER2-low breast cancer.

Those who received Enhertu saw the advance of the disease halted for an average of 13.2 months, compared with 8.1 months for those on chemotherapy.

The treatment was blocked for NHS use in England in March. Nice said the cost the NHS was being asked to pay for Enhertu was "too high" in relation to its benefits.

Melanoma jab halves risk of death or relapse, trial shows

Andrew Gregory

The world's first personalised mRNA cancer vaccine for melanoma halves the risk of patients dying or the disease returning, according to trial results that doctors described as "extremely impressive".

Melanoma affects more than 150,000 people a year globally, according to 2020 figures from World Cancer Research Fund International.

Patients who received the vaccine after having a stage three or four melanoma removed had a 49% lower risk of dying or the disease recurring after three years, data presented at the world's largest cancer conference showed. The NHS is among the organisations testing the jab.

Patients in the trial had highrisk melanomas and had the jab, developed by Moderna and Merck, alongside the immunotherapy drug Keytruda or were given only Keytruda. The 2.5-year, recurrence-free survival rate for the jab in combination with Keytruda was 74.8%, compared with 55.6% for Keytruda alone, delegates at the American Society of Clinical Oncology annual meeting in Chicago heard.

"We are encouraged by the latest results," said Kyle Holen, Moderna's head of development, therapeutics and oncology. "These findings reinforce our commitment to advancing this innovative treatment."

Iain Foulkes, the executive director of research and innovation at the charity Cancer Research UK, said the results marked another milestone in "the exciting, developing landscape of cancer vaccine research".

"After three years of followup, the data suggests that levels of cancer relapse did not increase in people with high-risk, advancedstage melanoma," he said. "The findings highlight the great promise of therapeutic cancer vaccines used in combination with powerful immunotherapies."

Known as mRNA-4157, the jab is custom-built for each patient and tells their body to kill any remaining cancer cells and prevent the disease ever coming back. A sample of tumour is removed during surgery, followed by DNA sequencing and the use of artificial intelligence. The result is a custom-built jab specific to the patient's tumour.

Prof Charles Swanton, Cancer Research UK's chief clinician, said: "The new vaccine approach is another piece of the puzzle that will allow more patients to be cured, hopefully, or fewer patients to suffer disease relapse." 000



Tory fears of 'existential' threat as Farage takes helm at Reform UK

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At a news conference in central London, the rightwinger said that he had witnessed "a rejection of the political class" across the country in a way that had not been seen in modern times and that he wanted to lead a "political revolt".

He also sought to portray Reform UK's surge as part of what he described as "a new phenomenon" before elections this weekend to the European parliament, when parties of the far right are expected to do well. "I promise you something is happening out there," he said.

His decision means the debate around immigration will become even more prominent during the campaign. The Tories will today announce an annual cap on the number of visas issued to reduce overall migration. The figure would be recommended by the migration advisory committee before being put to MPs for a vote.

Farage had been expected to

choose to run either in Clacton or in Thanet East, Kent, which includes much of the old constituency where he made two failed bids to become an MP in 2015 and 2005.

But Clacton would now appear to be a better bet for Reform UK, even though the Tory candidate, Giles Watling, who backed Remain, is defending a majority of 24,702.

Farage suggested that Reform UK could take more than the 3.9m votes Ukip won at the 2015 general election and could even win some seats, although he acknowledged that it would be harder without proportional representation.

Reform UK is aiming to hive off votes from the Conservatives' right flank, potentially splitting the vote in some marginal seats and allowing Labour through the middle.

"They are split down the middle on policy, and frankly right now they don't stand for a damn thing," Farage said of the Tory party.

"So our aim in this election is to get many, many millions of votes. I'm

talking far more votes than Ukip got back in 2015."

However, the return to frontline politics of a man who is close to the US presidential candidate, Donald Trump, will alarm even moderate Conservatives. In an indication of the type of campaign he will run, Farage described the UK contest as the "immigration election".

Tory MPs warned that a Reform UK surge could result in the party

► Richard Tice, who took over as the leader of Reform UK in 2021, is being replaced by Nigel Farage



pitching further to the right to try to

win back support, with more tough

rhetoric on its Rwanda plan, and even

a pledge to leave the European con-

likely that we have a daft, fullblown

'leave the ECHR' policy in the man-

ifesto," said one candidate. "That's

attractive to one end of the mar-

ket and really unattractive to the

other. We need to remain attractive

"It also possibly makes it more

vention on human rights.

▲ Nigel Farage in London yesterday before saying he would stand for election as an MP for the eighth time PHOTOGRAPH: TOLGA AKMEN/EPA

to both." They were downbeat about Reform's impact on the Tories' electoral chances.

"It probably just locks in the worstcase scenario with Reform and means it's very hard for the Tories to make as much of a dent as we need to do to be in better territory."

Another said Farage's decision was a "big blow" to Rishi Sunak. "He will undoubtedly have an impact on both campaigns," they said. "But probably more of an impact on the Conservative one. Reform were always going to nibble around the edges of the Conservative vote but their inroad will be bigger now."

It also reinforced the view among some Tories that Sunak's decision to call the election for 4 July, rather than the autumn, when Farage was likely to be in the US supporting the Trump campaign, was a mistake.

A Tory candidate said: "The PM's decision was really stupid. Your whole thing is the Tories are about stability and the economy is going to get better, and then you call an election before anyone bloody notices.

"I just find it inexplicable. It was [deputy prime minister Oliver] Dowden's argument that won, which was that it's going to get worse. Well, show me how."

Brexit and beyond

Career of populist right's opportunist showman

Ben Quinn

Love him or loathe him, Nigel Farage has been one of the most influential politicians in Britain since the Thatcher era. From his origins as a Conservative party member and trader on the London Metal Exchange, his reinventions have seen him serve as the leader of multiple incarnations of rightwing Eurosceptic parties. Here are some of the key moments on his political career path:

First election to EU parliament

A founder member of the UK Independence party (Ukip), Farage became a member of the European parliament for South East England in 1999.

Becomes Ukip leader

Farage became the leader of Ukip in September 2006, in the first of two stints at the head of a party that would become known for splits and feuds, as well as the threat it would soon present to the Conservative party.

Attack on the president of the **European Council**

Farage earned notoriety - and began to carve out a niche as the showman leader of a new wave of European populists - when in 2010 he launched an attack on Herman Van Rompuy. He accused him of having "the charisma of a damp rag" and "the appearance of a lowgrade bank clerk", two months before the 2010 general election.

Near-fatal plane crash

Farage was dragged from the wreckage of a plane with serious

injuries on the day of the 2010 general election when it crashed after its Ukip-promoting banner became entangled in the tail fin. The event was one of a number of scares in Farage's life, along with being hit by a car in 1985 and then being diagnosed with cancer.

Return as Ukip leader

After failing to unseat John Bercow, the then speaker of the House of Commons, in 2010, his second period as leader lasted until 2016, during which the party focused on forging greater grassroots support for a political insurgency that would lay the ground for Brexit. The party registered its best performance in the 2014 European elections, with more than 26% of the UK vote. The period also covered Farage's failure to become the MP for South Thanet in the 2015 general election. Despite resigning as leader, his resignation was rejected by the party.

Referendum on EU membership

Farage was at the forefront of rallying the pro-Brexit vote during the 2016 EU membership referendum called by the then prime minister, David Cameron, in a bid to see off, once and for all, the threat to the Tories from Ukip and to quell rebellion in his own party.

Farage's involvement included unveiling an anti-migrant poster that attracted accusations of inciting hatred. He subsequently told the Yorkshire Post: "In some ways, it won us the referendum because it kept us focused on the danger of open borders."

Launches Brexit party

Seeking to piggyback on the leave vote, Farage launched his new





Brexit party in April 2019, pledging there would be "no more Mr Nice Guy". He hit out at both the Conservative and Labour parties and said the two-party system was "unfit for purpose".

The party would play a key role in the general election of that year when Farage announced it would not field any candidates against the Conservatives in the 317 seats they had won at the previous general election, after Boris Johnson committed to leaving the EU by 2020 and pursuing a Canada-style trade deal. The Brexit party would later change its name to Reform UK.

Media career

After developing a taste for broadcasting as host of The Nigel Farage Show on LBC, Farage resigned as leader of Reform and embarked on a television career as a presenter on GB News. He sought to reach a new audience in 2023 when he competed in the reality TV series I'm a Celebrity ... Get Me Out of Here!, finishing in third place.

Sketch **John Crace**



Party's paymaster hands over the top job to the narcissist in chief. You couldn't miss the pathos

las, poor Dicky, I knew him well. Richard Tice and Nigel Farage had already given two press conferences in the previous week. Both times they had been given equal billing. Even though everyone but Dicky knew who the real star was. Yesterday all pretence was pushed aside. Out came the op note. Nigel Farage was to make an "emergency

paying for the pleasure. Tice was determined not to be left out, though. The man with no charisma relegated once more to Farage's warm-up act. The man on the downward trajectory.

election announcement". Tice wasn't even mentioned

as an afterthought. Even though he was probably

Soon he will be relegated to doorman. I'm not even sure if Tice even convinces himself. His patter was the sort of thing you might get if you typed "write me a bad Nigel speech" into ChatGPT. Then the ultimate humiliation. He tried to sound upbeat as he revealed that Farage was to take over as leader of the Reform party. Most people outside

Westminster probably assumed he already was. You couldn't miss the pathos. A boardroom coup as Nige realised Tice wasn't up to the job. Deep down even Tice knew he wasn't. People just don't like him. Moments later, Farage took to the stage. Lights, cameras, action. These are the moments he lives for. Right at the centre of things. He'd be lost without them. Farage began by doing a reprise of the speech he had given at the same venue last week. The election

was boring. Labour was going to win. He hated them.

The Tories were useless. He hated them too. Most kids

didn't know what D-day was. Like he would have ever enlisted. His patriotism has its

limits.

Time for the reveal. The worstkept secret. He was going to stand as a candidate in Clacton after all. So what had changed?

"I felt guilty," he said. Guilty that he was letting down all the little people who couldn't survive without him. Who had been begging him to get involved. Guilty that he had left the Reform party in the hands of a bunch of charmless nonentities. He was the talent. The

celebrity. The star of his own movie. Lie back in the warm bath of his narcissism. He just couldn't bear to be left out. To be ignored.

Thereafter his speech rambled somewhat. He didn't have any more to say but he wasn't going to let that stop him. Every media outlet was waiting on his every word. He was going to spin this out for as long as possible. Nothing worked. Everything was in decline. Curiously, he never mentioned how he would kickstart the economy or fix the NHS. Other than stopping immigration and being unpleasant to Muslims. That should do it.

But Farage was in his happy place. All stardust and no responsibility. He's quite happy to break anything, less keen to mend it. Happy to channel the disaffection with empty promises. He would be the official opposition in the next parliament. The biggest party in five years' time. Yup, with Tice as chancellor and David Bull as foreign secretary. The men in orange. Can't see the problem. Though Rishi Sunak could. This was his worst nightmare. A Reform party with Farage at the helm was a far more worrying proposition. A Tory meltdown was now on the cards.

Reality check How much of Farage's speech was accurate?

Have 2.4 million people settled in the UK in the last two years? No. Official statistics showed that 1.2 million people arrived in the UK in the year ending December 2023, which projected over two years makes 2.4 million, but it is incorrect to say they have all "settled". Many will have arrived on temporary visas, for example students and workers on contracts. The standard measure, net migration to the UK, was 685,000 in the year to December 2023 and 764,000 the year before.

Did local election candidates yell "Allahu Akbar" and "we are coming to get you"?

A Green candidate in Leeds, Mothin Ali, shouted "Allahu Akbar" after he won, also saying: "We will not be silent ... This is a win for the people of Gaza." Ali

apologised for his Gaza comments while pointing out that "Allahu Akbar" is commonly used by Muslims as a celebratory term.

There is no evidence of this in Burnley or Bradford, areas Farage may have named because they have large Muslim populations. There is also no evidence of a candidate saying "we are coming to get you".

Is the UK doing better economically than EU members?

This is at best a very selective presentation of the facts. The UK's quarter-on-quarter GDP growth was 0.6% for the first three months of 2024, compared with 0.3% for the eurozone. But in a year-on-year comparison the eurozone grew more quickly - 0.4% against 0.2%. Comparing the first quarter of 2024 against the pre-Covid first quarter

of 2019, eurozone growth has been twice as fast - 3.4% against 1.7%.

Can you shoplift £200 of goods without being prosecuted? While many stores are concerned that shoplifting has become worse, there are numerous news stories about people being prosecuted for stealing less than £200 of goods.

Did Keir Starmer fight "very, very hard" for asylum seekers to get benefits?

This is an apparent reference to a 2003 legal case when Starmer, then a leading barrister, represented five asylum seekers and won. However, this was not a generalised case or about benefits in the usual sense - they had been denied the very basic support, including accommodation, still given to asylum seekers. Peter Walker

He's quite happy to break anything, less keen to mend it. Happy to channel the disaffection with

empty promises

▲ Nigel Farage

as a Ukip MEP

in 2004, top,

and, above,

being pulled

from a plane

crash on the

He lost in the

Buckingham

constituency,

John Bercow

coming third to

day of the 2010

general election.





Abbott will be Labour candidate despite accusing Starmer of lying

Pippa Crerar Eleni Courea

Diane Abbott will be reselected to fight her seat at a meeting of the Labour party's executive today despite having suggested on social media that Keir Starmer was a liar, the Guardian understands.

Abbott will be on the final list of Labour candidates picked to fight the general election that is rubberstamped by the national executive committee (NEC), sources said.

Starmer said last week that Abbott was "free to stand" as a Labour candidate, after days of speculation that she could be blocked.

Abbott said on Sunday that she intended to "run and win" for Labour in Hackney North and Stoke Newington, and denied a report that she had been offered a seat in the House of Lords if she agreed to stand aside in the constituency she has represented for 37 years.

She then apparently tweeted a link to an article by the Starmer biographer Tom Baldwin headlined "Starmer on Abbott: 'I've actually got more respect for Diane than she probably realises", with the words: "More lies from Starmer." She deleted the post shortly afterwards.

Officials confirmed they would in effect ignore the post and press ahead with her reselection. A party source said: "It will hopefully be a very short and uneventful NEC meeting. We need to put this behind us."

Senior Labour figures are concerned the row over Abbott, and what critics have described as a purge of leftwing candidates, could undermine the party's message that it has changed since the days of factional infighting under Jeremy Corbyn.

Labour has attacked the Conservatives over their last few years of chaos and division and has suggested that a Starmer-led government would be more focused on delivering in the interests of the public.

"Keir has said that Diane is free to stand and that's that," said one party insider. "We want to get through the NEC meeting and concentrate on the stuff that voters really care about. Suggestions of internal splits don't help with that."

The Guardian understands that

'Keir has said that Diane is free to stand and that's that'

Labour party insider



▲ Apsana Begum is understood to be clear to stand again for Labour

Apsana Begum is also on the list of party candidates to be nodded through by the NEC despite speculation that she could be blocked.

Local party sources in her constituency of Poplar and Limehouse in east London suggested there had been conversations around whether to parachute in another candidate.

Labour headquarters is understood to have been concerned about the fallout if the party deselected another minority ethnic woman.

A letter from more than 50 local members to Starmer, the Labour general secretary, David Evans, and the NEC yesterday called on them to replace Begum, who had faced a reselection process in 2022, "triggered" by members in every ward, that did not ultimately go ahead.

Labour had faced calls to stop the process after Begum revealed she had been signed off sick from work amid what she described as a "sustained campaign of misogynistic abuse".

The letter, seen by the Guardian, said: "As the ... election approaches, it is crucial for the Labour party to field candidates who embody integrity, transparency, and unwavering commitment to their constituents.

"Unfortunately, recent events and past controversies surrounding Apsana Begum ... raise significant concerns about her suitability as the Labour candidate for this pivotal election. We local members put in a formal complaint today about Apsana Begum and we ask that she be replaced by a local candidate with demonstrable integrity."

Jim Fitzpatrick, the Labour MP for the seat until the 2019 election, said: "At any other time I would expect [Begum] to have been removed by the NEC. I think at present, however, there is a real risk that the local party view will be ignored. This would be disappointing, but I hope I'm wrong."

A spokesperson for Begum, whose supporters sent a letter of their own to the NEC yesterday, said: "This is a last-minute desperate push seeking to smear the first hijab-wearing MP and a survivor of domestic abuse. Apsana is a popular and well-respected representative and has supported constituents relentlessly."



Rayner: 'I haven't changed my mind on Trident but I back party's policy'

Eleni Courea

Political correspondent

Angela Rayner said yesterday she had not changed her mind about nuclear weapons even though she backs Labour's policy to keep and renew them.

The deputy Labour leader voted against the renewal of Trident in 2016 but said yesterday that she supported Labour's so-called "triple lock" - a commitment to maintain the UK's nuclear deterrent round the clock, build four new nuclear submarines, and carry out future upgrades.

Asked in an interview with the BBC about the discrepancy, Rayner said: "I haven't changed my mind. The vote that we had some years ago mentioned nothing about multilateral disarmament, and what I feel is really important for the long term is that globally we should be looking at disarmament of nuclear weapons, but that has to be done in combination with other countries."



▲ Keir Starmer said his commitment to Trident was 'absolutely clear' during a visit to the Fusilier Museum in Bury yesterday PHOTOGRAPH: STEFAN ROUSSEAU/PA

A Labour source said Rayner did not vote to renew Trident in 2016 because the wording of the motion excluded a commitment to multilateral disarmament.

Her remarks yesterday made clear

she was committed to Labour's policy, but struck a different tone to Keir Starmer's. Rayner is among a number of Labour frontbenchers who voted against the renewal of Trident in 2016, under Jeremy Corbyn's leadership.



David Lammy, the shadow foreign secretary, also voted against it.

According to the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Rayner wrote to them in 2020, saying: "I want a world without nuclear weapons and that's what I want a Labour government to work towards. When the last Tory government tabled their motion to renew Trident in the House of Commons, I voted against it."

In a separate interview with ITV, Rayner said there was no split in Labour over the issue and that while global insecurity existed "Labour will be committed to our Trident programme".

If Labour wins the election next month, Rayner will become deputy prime minister. Ordinarily this means she would be in charge of running the country and the UK's nuclear arsenal should Starmer become incapacitated.

Starmer announced Labour's triple lock on nuclear weapons yesterday morning and said his entire shadow cabinet supported the policy. Kicking off the second full week of election campaigning with a focus on security and defence, the Labour leader said the deterrent was "the foundation of any plan to keep Britain safe".

Asked about the views of shadow cabinet members such as Rayner and Lammy, Starmer said: "I lead

▲ Angela Rayner is greeted by Labour supporters in Doncaster PHOTOGRAPH: IAN FORSYTH/GETTY IMAGES

this party. I have changed this party. If we are privileged to come in to serve, I will be the prime minister of the United Kingdom and I've made my commitment to this absolutely clear, and I've got my whole cabinet, shadow cabinet, behind me."

Starmer was speaking at the Fusilier Museum in Bury and was flanked by 10 Labour parliamentary candidates and former members of the military. He reiterated his aim to spend 2.5% of UK gross domestic product (GDP) on defence when resources allowed.

Asked whether he would authorise the use of nuclear weaponry, Starmer said: "We have to be prepared to use it. Now, nobody who aspires to be prime minister would set out the circumstances in which it would be used. That would be irresponsible. But it is there as a part, a vital part, of our defence."

Referring to his uncle's service on HMS Antelope in the Falklands war, he said: "I know the courage, the service and the sacrifice that allows us to sleep soundly at night from our forces and their families.

"I know it. I respect it. And I will serve it, with every decision."

Calvin Bailey How Stephen Lawrence's murder shaped one ex-military candidate

Aletha Adu

Political correspondent

More than 30 years on, the horrific killing of Stephen Lawrence still haunts one of Keir Starmer's new candidates with military experience.

Calvin Bailey MBE was 15 at the time. He had developed a close friendship with Stephen's brother, Stuart, after his family moved from Zambia to south London when he was a young child.

"When people look at me they often say: 'Where is his background? Why haven't you been campaigning for years?' I've been in the military for 24 years, but that's not all the story," he said.

Bailey was speaking shortly after he stood behind Starmer in Bury as one of the party's 10 former military candidates. He is on course to win the safe Labour seat of Leyton and Wanstead, formerly held by the chair of Labour's parliamentary party, John Cryer.

In the aftermath of Lawrence's murder, Bailey joined anti-fascist marches. "I wasn't emotionally intelligent enough to deal with it," he said of the killing. "I went to a lot of the anti-fascist marches at the time ... and they confused me every time, as everything was coming out with anger. I didn't know what that meant.

"They were identifying the cause between the five or six murders that happened at the time to young black men ... and it's making me quite sad, actually," Bailey said. "I think part of it was ... I just didn't know what to do with any of it. I knew I didn't like it and that pushed me away from politics."

Looking back, Bailey said he believed he was able to "vent a whole load of anger" while protesting, but "unfortunately, those marches didn't change anything".

"The approach taken [during the marches] wasn't allowing us to address the issues ... I don't want to detract from the story, but fundamentally, it was about a racist police force ... and those things you have to get through. But we had to get through the raw emotions."

While Bailey, a graduate of Labour's young leaders programme, praised the work Starmer had done for the party, he said he owed his "political reawakening" to the shadow health secretary, Wes



▲ Calvin Bailey said Wes Streeting prompted his 'political reawakening'

Streeting. Bailey recalled listening to a radio interview about Streeting's life and thinking "wow, that's really like mine", before he had the opportunity to meet Streeting, then a backbencher. "I thought, why am I not doing stuff with you?"

The candidate said he accepted differing opinions pervaded Labour, but believed Starmer did not make having different political opinions a problem. "He knows a couple of people have had different views about things, but his language is that 'I'm in charge. This is what we're going to do.' It's really compelling, especially from [the perspective of] a military person."

Bailey said Jeremy Corbyn's leadership and the party at that time resembled "student politics", with Labour "really good at talking to itself, and it was never talking to the electorate". He added: "My dad used to say it's pointless having morals, standing on the margins and watching. If you believe in something, and unfortunately I'm compelled by service, then you've got to go and put yourself forward."

Reflecting on his military honours, Bailey said he was most proud of his MBE, which he received for supporting humanitarian efforts in Haiti and the Philippines, and his US air force medal from resupplying a team that had been hit by an explosive device in Afghanistan.

While Lawrence's death shaped his politics, it was Bailey's mum that shaped his character. "When I was a kid walking with mum from Plumstead to Woolwich, anyone we walked past who had any colour in their skin became my auntie, and their kids, cousins. And it was this kind of approach to people, the fundamental humanity she saw in them, is what I've learned from her."

He had vowed to fight for people from working-class roots because "poor people's problems remain poor people's problems".

Reality check Is nuclear 'triple lock' anything new?

What is the pledge?

Starmer said there were three prongs to Labour's nuclear "triple lock": maintaining Britain's "continuous at-sea deterrent" (CASD) "24 hours a day, 365 days a year", meaning there is always a nuclear-armed submarine in the water; building four new nuclear subs; and delivering "all the needed upgrades" for existing and new submarines in the future.

Would this be a big change?

Not really. The UK already has CASD, with four Vanguard-class submarines, one of which is at sea at any time to avoid detection.

Labour and the Tories have been committed to building four new submarines in the Dreadnought class to replace them since 2007. The commitment to "upgrades" is unclear, given there is no public information available to Labour on what technologies the subs would need. But Starmer's commitment to CASD could still be significant

as the system looks shaky because

delays and cost overruns hindering

of problems with Vanguard, with

their replacement, according to

the Nuclear Information Service (NIS), a non-profit that monitors nuclear weapons policy.

How much would it cost?

The government has said
Dreadnought would cost £31bn
plus a £10bn "contingency".
The NIS said in 2019 that the
full cost of the nuclear weapons
programme until 2070 could
be £172bn, when including new
warheads and running costs. The
National Audit Office (NAO) in
December said costs to support
the nuclear deterrent were £7.9bn
above budget for 2023. The NAO
also reported a £38.2bn increase in
forecast costs at the MoD's Defence



▲ An unarmed Trident missile being launched by HMS Vigilant

Nuclear Organisation to £99.5bn over the decade to 2033 - a 62% increase on estimates a year earlier.

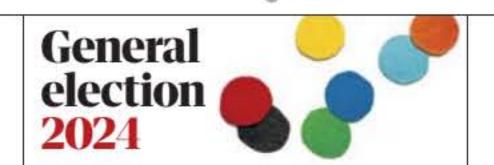
How will it be paid for?

Labour and the Tories have vowed to spend 2.5% of GDP on defence, by 2030 in the case of the Tories. Labour has given no date but Starmer said this would happen "as soon as possible within our fiscal rules", which commit to cutting the proportion of debt to GDP over a five-year period. If tax rises are ruled out, fiscal rules could make a government cut department budgets. With nuclear spending ringfenced in the MoD, the NAO worries the desire to protect the nuclear programme could mean other parts of the military are cut.

Is it affordable?

All prime ministers have chosen to remain nuclear-armed, arguing the weapons' vast costs are the price of security and geopolitical power. The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament said the nuclear budget should be used for "rebuilding our decaying public services". Jasper Jolly





'Why bother?'

Tories face task of getting 'Whitby woman' to vote

Path to power



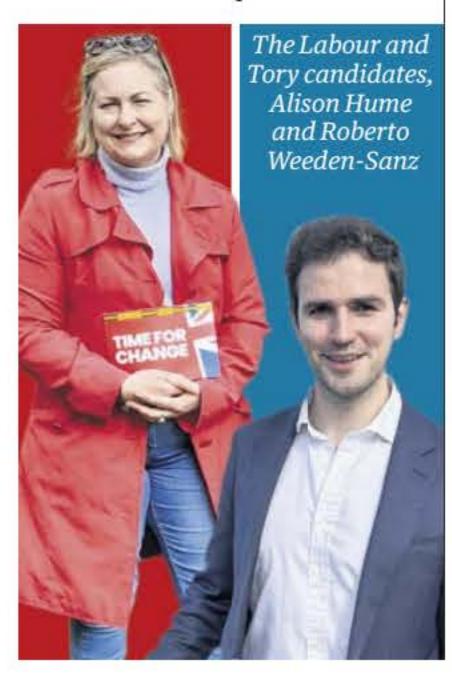
Robyn Vinter North of England correspondent

vote for, the government always get in." Sue Paling - wryly quoting a wise friend - is one of many undecided voters in Whitby. The landlady of the historic Black Horse pub on Church Street in the centre of the medieval North Yorkshire fishing town is representative of a disproportionate chunk of women nationally who are not sure where to place their vote on 4 July.

About 15% of voters are still undecided, according to the research consultancy More in Common. This is not unusual a month before a general election, but what makes it different is the significant proportion who backed the Conservatives in 2019, said its UK executive director, Luke Tryl.

What is even more interesting is the profile of these undecided voters: more likely to be women, owning homes in towns and suburbs, with an average age of 61, less likely to have a degree, more likely to have voted for Brexit.

These are overrepresented in



the constituency of Scarborough and Whitby and, when looking at Labour's list of targeted seats, "actually Scarborough and Whitby becomes *the* seat which gives Labour an overall majority" based on current polling, Tryl said.

Rather than being a true undecided, "Whitby woman" is really a "disgruntled Conservative", and the challenge for Rishi Sunak's party would be motivating her to vote at all, he added. "The parallel with 1997 is it wasn't just that the Tories lost lots of votes to Labour, it was that reliable conservative voters stayed at home.".

While Whitby woman may sound like something from a political marketing manual, it appeared to bear out when the Guardian spent time in the constituency talking to this demographic about how they plan to vote - if they decide to head to the ballot box at all.

At the Black Horse - a tiny, tworoom pub serving Whitby ales, pork pies and cheese boards - the fare is more local than most of the clientele, many of whom are holidaymakers visiting for the rugged coastal beauty and the town's connection with Bram Stoker's Dracula.

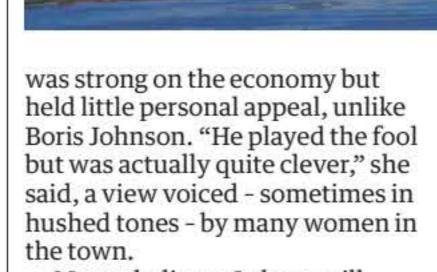
A rise in holiday lets and Airbnbs has driven up house prices and pushed local people - especially young adults - out of the town. House prices in Whitby are well above the average for the region, at nearly £260,0000, but salaries are lower than the national average. Many people work seasonal jobs in hospitality and other minimum wage roles.

For local businesses, attracting workers who live nearby is becoming increasingly tough. "Staffing shortages are a real problem," said Paling. "Not enough people live here to service the jobs. Whitby is like an island - [and] people don't travel here for work. It's not worth it because of the travel costs."

Paling's mother, Maeve, who for 10 years also used to work at the pub, can be found most lunchtimes popping in for a half pint.

Unlike her daughter, Maeve is decided - she always votes
Conservative because "the only times we've gone bankrupt are when Labour are in power". She describes herself as "not very political" but will be sure to cast her ballot next month since women fought for the right to do so.

"The days of good leaders are over," she said, adding that Sunak



Maeve believes Labour will win the election despite Keir Starmer appearing to have had "a personality removal operation".

It is a common refrain in Whitby.
Lots of 2019 voters only really
backed the Tories out of fear that
Jeremy Corbyn would "drag us back
to the dark ages", as one woman in
Scarborough put it.

But while they do not hold the same level of dislike for Starmer, among some people he has virtually no recognition at all.

"I've heard the name," said Claire Lavagna, who works at the popular Sherlocks coffee shop on Flowergate in Whitby. Sunak was also "forgettable", she said.

Many people admitted to not giving the election much thought so far, though issues such as the underfunding of the NHS were at the forefront of women's minds, given that they are more likely to work or have worked in the NHS and tended to shoulder the responsibility of care for their elderly parents.

The shortage of dentists was a huge talking point - the nearest NHS dentist taking on new patients is almost 20 miles away in Scarborough. It is the only one in the constituency of more than 72,000 people.

Those who require medical treatment, especially surgery,



▲ Sue Paling, the landlady of the Black Horse pub: 'Whitby is like an island. People don't travel here for work. It's not worth it because of the travel costs'



▲ Members of the Whitby Women's Institute, from left: Lynn Walker, Betty Bayliss, Shirley Redves, Heather Relf and Joyce Stangoe

are often sent 30 miles to the

James Cook University hospital in

Middlesbrough. The nearest A&E

is 25 minutes away and known for

some of the longest waits in the UK.

it's frustrating," said Katie Hayton,

26, who though younger than the

Whitby woman profile is a former

Tory backer now considering a

switch to Labour. She grew up in

Whitby and works at Botham's, a

traditional bakery and tea room.

Her boyfriend is a fisher and they

transplant after an infection caused

the surgery. "But what can you do?"

She added: "I just get on, go to

Labour support in Scarborough

work, pay my dues. Life's rubbish.

something to look forward to."

their candidate, Alison Hume, a

children's television screenwriter,

which voters said was important.

In addition, many said they felt it

was "time for a change" - one of a

number of signs the constituency

Efforts by the Tories to capture

and Whitby is staunch, and

is popular and from the area,

could be slowly turning red.

these voters do not seem to be

working. Lisa Fox, a hairdresser

who is also undecided, said she

national service, saying she would

And although immigration is

often spoken about as a key issue

"break my boys' legs before I let

was completely turned off by

Sunak's pledge to bring back

them join the army".

damage to her eye and will need to

travel nearly 50 miles to York for

She is waiting for a cornea

rent privately in the town.

"I'm not knocking the NHS, but

Scarborough and Whitby Boundary unchanged

888

Notional results for 2019* Z Conservative Labour Boundary unchanged - notional and actual results are the same Guisborough North Sea Whitby Stokesley Scarborough Robin Hood's Bay and Whitby Goathland Scarborough • Pickering • Snainton Filey 10 miles

◀ Whitby harbour, where the former Conservative MP Robert Goodwill's votes against measures to reduce sewage dumping in 2021 riled sea swimmers and environmentalists PHOTOGRAPHS: GARY CALTON/THE GUARDIAN

Constituency profile

Scarborough and Whitby

Con (2019)

The constituency is made up of the seaside towns of Scarborough and Whitby, taking in former fishing villages and settlements in the North York Moors national park. The area is heavily dependent on tourism and most people work in the trade and service industries. It is older and more white than the English average

Leave vote 61.1% Majority (2019) 20.7 percentage points

Unemployment rate 2.4%

Owns house outright 34.6%

Deprivation rank

A higher rank means a greater proportion of households are deprived. Ranked out of a total 575 constituencies in England and Wales

162/575

Sources: ONS, PA, Rawlings and Thrasher (2019 vote), Chris Hanretty (Leave vote)

'Life's rubbish. You have to book a holiday to have something to look forward to' **Katy Hayton**



You have to book a holiday to have

for voters, it did not register as a major concern in Whitby. In fact, members of Whitby Women's Institute (WI) were "disgusted" when a leaflet came through their door from the young, ambitious Conservative candidate, Roberto Weeden-Sanz, who has been parachuted in by the party and is promising to be tough on immigration.

Source: PA, Rallings and Thrasher, Ordnance Survey. *2019 result applied to new boundary

Some WI members said they felt insulted by what they saw as lazy, "lowest common denominator" characterisations of their demographic being old-fashioned and xenophobic. Lynn Walker, a retired PA who voted Conservative in the last election, said: "We took in a lot of Ukrainians here ... I'll never vote Tory again."

They all volunteered in the community and felt mounting frustration that none of the issues they cared about were being addressed by politicians.

Their list included but was not limited to a "spiral of deprivation", what they saw as the mishandling of the closure of a local secondary school leading to a loss of good teachers to other areas, a pressing need for more social housing, "diabolical" transport and the need to rely on a car. Other issues that came up included investment being directed to the wrong places (such as £10m being spent on a Maritime Hub at the harbour that "we don't need"), nothing to aspire to for young people and the fact the town relies so heavily on ageing volunteers to keep it functioning.

They lamented what they said was a lack of action from their former Tory MP Robert Goodwill (or "Robert Goodgrief" as some WI women called him), who had held the seat since 2005 and served in David Cameron's cabinet. He voted against measures to reduce sewage dumping in 2021, riling up sea swimmers and those who cared more broadly about the environment.

"It is no wonder people are feeling disaffected," said Heather Relf, a retired teacher for the deaf.

"It doesn't matter how much we protest," she added. "There's a sense that no one listens anyway, so why bother?"

First TV debate

How Sunak and Starmer are likely to trade blows

Rishi Sunak and Keir Starmer will go head to head for the first time in this election campaign tonight. Both leaders have spent hours preparing for the hour-long ITV debate, beginning at 9pm and moderated by Julie Etchingham. Sunak has challenged Starmer to debate with him every week of the campaign. The Labour leader has agreed to take part in two debates, saying: "I can do one debate or 100, I know what Sunak is going to say."

The government's record

Keir Starmer The Labour leader will put Sunak under pressure over the Tories' record after 14 years in power, attacking their management of the economy and the NHS. Rishi Sunak The prime minister will try to move the focus off the Tory record, accusing Starmer of harking back to the past while lacking an agenda for government.

Personal attacks

Sunak Week after week at prime minister's questions, Sunak pointed out that Starmer once represented the Islamist group Hizb ut-Tahrir in his legal work. It is part of a broader Tory attack on the Labour leader's record as a human rights lawyer and later as director of public prosecutions. Starmer This week Labour has returned fire on Sunak by saying he has questions to answer about the fortune he earned at TCI, a hedge fund that engineered a deal at the heart of the 2008 financial crash.

Immigration

Sunak Under the Conservatives, legal immigration has soared and small boats have continued to cross the Channel even as the government spent millions on a

(so far) unsuccessful scheme to send asylum seekers to Rwanda. Sunak has staked the future of the Rwanda scheme on this election, pointing out that no flight will take off if Labour wins. Starmer Labour tends to be more comfortable talking about the NHS and cost of living - but polling suggests it is now more trusted to handle the issue of immigration and asylum than the Tories. Starmer is likely to hammer the Tory record and point to his pledge to cut net immigration by an unspecified amount.

Defence

Sunak The prime minister has put global insecurity at the heart of his campaign by announcing mandatory national service for 18-year-olds. Defence is one area in which the Tories still retain a slight poll lead over Labour, and they are eager to reiterate to voters that Starmer once campaigned to put Jeremy Corbyn in Downing Street. Starmer The Labour leader has sought to burnish his defence credentials by announcing a "triple lock" on retaining the UK's nuclear arsenal. He may attack Sunak for cutting the army to its smallest size since the Napoleonic era.

Gender and culture wars

Sunak The Tories have sought to play into the culture wars by drawing dividing lines over trans rights. Their official X account posted yesterday: "We know what a woman is. Keir Starmer doesn't." Starmer The Labour leader is likely to respond to any culture warstyle attacks by arguing that the Conservatives are failing to talk about voters' priorities: the NHS and the cost of living. Eleni Courea

Scotland SNP hit out at Labour spending plans in first debate

Libby Brooks

Scotland correspondent

The SNP has accused Scottish Labour of "completely rewriting" Rachel Reeves' spending plans, as the party leaders took part in the first televised debate of the election campaign.

The clash between the SNP, Scottish Labour, Scottish Conservatives and Scottish Liberal Democrats was screened by STV, without a studio audience, and involved intensive cross-examination of each leader by their political rivals.

With recent polling suggesting Labour could make vital gains on 4 July, in particular in seats in Glasgow and across the central belt, the SNP leader, John Swinney, told Anas Sarwar that his pledges for more spending on the NHS, schools and renewables projects contradicted the constraints laid out by Reeves. "You have completely rewritten the Labour finance strategy. You cannot escape the fact that you have signed up to the Tories' fiscal agenda, the austerity agenda," Swinney said. "You are locked into that and you will not be able to deliver those commitments."

Reeves, the shadow chancellor, will visit Edinburgh today, when she will unveil plans to boost the country's financial services industry and promise to "unleash Scotland's economic firepower to deliver jobs and growth".

Sarwar, Swinney and the Scottish Conservative leader, Douglas Ross, also clashed over the future of the oil and gas sector, with the SNP and Tories facing off in a number of seats in north-east Scotland most affected by transition plans.

Sarwar accused Swinney of being "on the side of BP and Shell, not nurses" in the middle of a cost of living crisis. "You support higher taxes for people earning £29,000 a year in Scotland but not higher windfall taxes on the oil and gas giants making record profits," he said.

The Scottish Greens earlier described as "outrageous" the decision to exclude them from the 90-minute programme.

It's now of the second of the

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National



⋖Joanne Hartshorn reads a tribute left in memory of her brother, the former rugby league player Rob Burrow, outside Headingley Stadium in Leeds with her mother, Irene Burrow, sister, Claire Burnett, and father, Geoff Burrow PHOTOGRAPH: ED SYKES/GETTY

'He'll be looking down': work begins on Rob Burrow centre

Hannah Al-Othman

North of England correspondent

A blue mural on a wall close to Headingley Stadium in Leeds bears the words of Rob Burrow: "In a world full of adversity, we must dare to dream."

The former Leeds Rhinos rugby league scrum-half died on Sunday, five years after being diagnosed with motor neurone disease.

Yesterday, the first spades went into the ground to build a specialist centre in his name after he dedicated the end of his life to raising millions to help others with the disease.

In Leeds, there has been an outpouring of adoration and grief for Burrow, 41, who loved the city as much as it loved him.

His family said that although he was naturally camera-shy, he had raised millions for charity after deciding to go public about his illness to help raise awareness of the disease.

A groundbreaking ceremony at Seacroft hospital in Leeds was attended by his parents, Geoff and Irene Burrow, and his sisters Joanne Hartshorn and Claire Burnett, as well his former Leeds Rhinos teammate and close friend Kevin Sinfield.

Burrow spearheaded a £6.8m charity appeal for Leeds Hospitals Charity to build the first specialist centre for those with MND living in and around the West Yorkshire city. Since Burrow's death was announced on Sunday, the appeal has received about 1,000 donations.

He is survived by his wife, Lindsey, his son, Jackson, and his daughters Maya and Macy. They were with him when he died, Geoff Burrow said, as were his parents and sisters.

The Seacroft hospital ceremony had been organised before Burrow's

death, but went ahead with his blessing, the family said.

"We spoke to Rob and said: 'Do you want to go ahead today?'" Hartshorn said. "And it was an absolute yes."

Fighting back tears, his family said they had channelled Burrow's own bravery to attend the ceremony.

"We're doing that right now, we're being brave, we're being here, we're flying the flag, but he'll be



▲ Burrow, a former scrum-half with Leeds Rhinos, died on Sunday

looking down and hopefully he'll be proud," Hartshorn added. "Last night we were wondering how on earth we were going to be able to do that, but the outpouring of love and everybody's support has been unbelievable," she said.

Irene Burrow said: "The sooner they get this [centre] built the better."

"He didn't really like publicity," her husband added, "but he did it, and he wants us to keep doing it to get that cure. I wish we'd have got it before he passed, but we will get it for him, and all the poor people and families suffering with MND."

Among those at the ceremony was Ian Flatt, 58, from Leeds, who was diagnosed with MND in March 2019 and receives treatment at Seacroft. "Today of all days to have that spade in the ground, it's just so symbolic of the hope and the real sense of hope that we've all got now," he said.

At Headingley Stadium, the home of Leeds Rhinos, fans have been leaving tributes including blue-and-yellow club kit, rhino toys, candles and flowers. One note read: "The rugby league and MND community will never be able to thank you enough," one note read. "You will be dearly missed by so many."

HMRC apology after delay in child benefit payments to 500,000 people

Rupert Jones

About 500,000 people in the UK expecting child benefit payments did not receive them yesterday, with some parents saying the shortfall left them unable to buy food for their children or facing bank charges.

HMRC apologised after about 30% of child benefit payments scheduled for 3 June did not arrive in claimants' bank accounts. Yesterday afternoon, it said those affected would receive their money tomorrow morning.

It said the problem was caused by a processing error that had since been resolved, and not - as some on social media had suggested - a data hack.

Child benefit is usually paid every four weeks on a Monday or Tuesday. The standard weekly payment is £25.60 for the eldest or only child, and £16.95 for each additional child.

On the social media platform X, some parents said they needed the money right away. One said: "We rely on it and live payday to payday, how do I feed my kids?" Another wrote: "This is my family's food money for the next few weeks, and so many other families face the same."

A third, Toni Kemp, said: "My children will be home soon with nothing for dinner as like most parents we still are waiting for the money to hit our accounts to be able to buy our children food tonight ... How do we feed them?"

Amy Pearson tweeted: "So when will these be solved? I have 2 kids one disabled and my electric is beeping on emergency. I rely on this money on a Monday to top my meter up."

Meanwhile, Kim Fuller said she had breast cancer and was relying on her child benefit to pay for afterschool childcare while she went to a pre-operation assessment appointment, which she now could not attend and would have to postpone.

Some people talked about bank overdraft charges, or payments that might bounce, as a result of the money not arriving.

An HMRC spokesperson said: "We are very sorry that some customers did not receive their scheduled child benefit payments as expected, and we understand the concern and difficulty this may have caused. We have now fixed the problem and are putting measures in place to prevent this from happening again."

They added: "Affected customers will now receive their payments on Wednesday morning ... Anyone who has incurred a direct financial loss because of the delayed payment can apply for redress by completing our online complaints form."

Some people can have their child benefit paid weekly - for example, if they are a single parent or receive certain other benefits such as universal credit.

Whittaker returns to London stage to play The Duchess

Chris Wiegand

Jodie Whittaker is returning to the stage for the first time in more than a decade in a version of John Webster's The Duchess of Malfi, adapted and directed by Zinnie Harris.

It means three Doctor Who stars will be appearing in London theatres at the same time. Whittaker will



take the title role in The Duchess at Trafalgar theatre from 5 October to 20 December. David Tennant will reprise his role in Macbeth, which transfers from the Donmar Warehouse to the Harold Pinter theatre from 1 October. In November, Ncuti Gatwa - who is playing the Doctor in the BBC's sci-fi series - will star in The Importance of Being Earnest at the National Theatre.

Whittaker said she was "beyond delighted" to lead Harris's adaptation, which was first staged under the title The Duchess (of Malfi) at the Royal Lyceum in Edinburgh in 2019. "Zinnie has so brilliantly propelled The Duchess of Malfi into contemporary

culture, which is what originally drew me to the piece," Whittaker said. "Being able to portray the duchess's tragic and captivating story on stage every night is a true honour."

The Guardian's Mark Fisher wrote that Harris's version "reframes a canonical tragedy in terms of sexual politics" and added: "As the recently widowed survivor of a miserable marriage, this duchess is a young woman determined to set her own agenda."

Whittaker's last appearance on stage was as Antigone in Polly Findlay's production of Sophocles' tragedy at the National Theatre in 2012 opposite another former Doctor, Christopher Eccleston.

National

Spring was UK's warmest on record, Met Office figures show

PA Media

The UK had its warmest May and spring on record, despite wet, dull weather in many parts of the country, provisional Met Office figures show.

The average temperature in May was 13.1C (55.6F), beating the previous record set in 2008 by a full 1C, making it the warmest May in records dating back to 1884.

The Met Office said the month's high average temperatures were

influenced particularly by warm conditions in the northern half of the UK, and by high overnight temperatures.

The meteorological spring - March, April and May - was also the warmest on record, with an average mean UK temperature of 9.37C. This beat the previous record of 9.12C set in 2017, with the warm conditions influenced by high overnight temperatures. Eight of the top 10 warmest springs have occurred this century, including all the top five.

Scotland was particularly warm in May, with a mean temperature of

12.3C, beating 2018's record by 1.6C. The Met Office said the UK climate was changing, with recent decades warmer, wetter and sunnier than the 20th century.

The world has experienced record temperatures for 11 months in a row up to April 2024, which was the hottest recorded. Climate breakdown caused by human activities is pushing up temperatures and causing more extreme weather.

The UK also had its wettest spring since 1986 and the sixth wettest on record, the Met Office added. An

average of 301.7mm (11.87in) of rain fell on the country across March, April and May, 32% more than usual for the season.

The sun was in short supply in May too, with 17% fewer hours than average in the UK.

Georgia Whitaker, of Greenpeace UK, said: "On the tail of the world's hottest year, and the UK's wettest 18 months, we have the UK's hottest spring on record ... While climate records keep tumbling, our government is largely missing in action. We must hold them to account."



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Telegraph veteran to join Washington Post as executive editor

Jane Croft

A veteran of the Daily Telegraph is to become executive editor of the Washington Post, replacing Sally Buzbee, who is stepping down after three years at the top of one of the US's most respected news brands.

Buzbee, the first woman to hold the post, will be initially replaced by the former Wall Street Journal editor-in-chief Matt Murray until this autumn's presidential election.

Robert Winnett, currently the deputy editor of the Telegraph Media Group, will then take over the role.

The changes have been instigated by Will Lewis, a former Telegraph editor and ex-publisher of the Wall Street Journal, who worked with Winnett and Murray at those publications respectively.

Lewis took charge as the Washington Post's chief executive and publisher in January at a difficult time for the US news group.

After Amazon's founder, Jeff Bezos, bought the publication in 2013, the Washington Post enjoyed years of profitability and exploded in popularity during the Trump administration.

However, last October it announced it would cut 240 jobs, citing "overly optimistic" projections for traffic, subscriptions and





▲ Robert Winnett (top) will replace Sally Buzbee at the Washington Post

advertising. The Post has bled subscribers, to the point where Lewis told employees last month that it lost \$77m (£60m) last year.

Lewis worked closely with Winnett on the MPs' expenses scandal during his 2005-10 editorship of the Telegraph.

Winnett, who joined the Telegraph in 2007, became its political editor after working on the scoop and was made deputy editor 10 years ago.

He said in a statement: "After almost 17 years at the Telegraph, it has been an emotional decision to leave, as I am incredibly proud of all our journalism every day."

The Telegraph editor, Chris Evans, called Winnett "the most tremendous journalist" and said the Washington Post had "made a fine choice in appointing him".

When Winnett becomes editor in November, Murray will switch to being leader of a newly created third newsroom focusing on service and social media journalism.

There has been a recent influx of British executives taking influential positions in the US media.

Last year Emma Tucker, the former editor of the Sunday Times, became the editor-in-chief of the Wall Street Journal and Dow Jones Newswires. And Mark Thompson, the former BBC director general and chief executive of the New York Times, became the new chief executive of CNN, tasked with reviving a US news giant beset by sagging ratings and profits.

Lewis has talked about creating a multi-tier subscription plan for the Post. In an email to employees on Sunday, Lewis said a new third division would begin operation later this year that will focus on more video storytelling, and embrace artificial intelligence and flexible payment methods.

Lewis said he had highlighted the need to "move away from the traditional one-size-fits-all approach in the news media industry and focus on creating news for a broader range of readers and customers".

The Post won three Pulitzer prizes last month, including one in national reporting for a series on the impact of the AR-15 rifle.

Additional reporting
Associated Press

Beijing accuses MI6 of recruiting couple to spy for Britain

Helen Davidson Taipei Agencies

China's secret service has accused MI6, the UK's foreign intelligence service of turning two Chinese state workers and recruiting them as spies.

Beijing's ministry of state security (MSS), which has responsibility for China's intelligence gathering and secret police, said yesterday it had uncovered the "major espionage case" involving a husband and wife both working in "core key units" of a Chinese state agency.

The accusation, which was covered by Chinese state media outlets, follows a number of high-profile cases of alleged Chinese espionage

in Europe, including in Britain, Germany and Belgium.

In a post on its WeChat account, the MSS said the husband, surnamed Wang, had been recruited first when he travelled to the UK in 2015 as part of an exchange programme.

After Wang arrived, "MI6 deliberately arranged for relevant personnel to take special care of him", the MSS said. Wang was invited to dinner gatherings and offered visits and tours, as MI6 worked "to understand his character weaknesses and interests", it alleged. It said they took advantage of Wang's "strong desire for money", and arranged for him to give "consulting services" before convincing him to return to China and spy for the British government.

Through Wang the British spies then recruited his wife, surnamed Zhou, it said. Wang had been initially hesitant but "couldn't withstand the British repeated persuasion, enticement and even coercion", it said. "He and his wife together became British spies."

The MSS said that the case was under further investigation but did not say whether the couple had been detained or charged.

In January this year it accused MI6 of recruiting a national from a third, unnamed, country to spy on China, instructing him to "use his public identity" to collect information during multiple trips to China from 2015 onwards.

The MSS has been increasingly public, launching a WeChat account last year. It has used the social media profile to announce espionage cases and advise citizens on how to avoid being co-opted by foreign forces.

Last month three men - an immigration enforcement official called Matthew Trickett, a Hong Kong trade official working in London, and a Border Force officer - were charged in London with unlawfully assisting the Hong Kong intelligence service. Beijing accused the UK of false accusations, "wanton stigmatisation" and arbitrary arrests in relation to the charges.

Trickett, a former Royal Marine, was found dead in a park near where he lived in Maidenhead, Berkshire, a week later. Police said the death was being treated as unexplained.

In April, two UK nationals, including a parliamentary worker, were charged over accusations they provided prejudicial information to a foreign state, China. The men, Christopher Cash and Christopher Berry, had been arrested in March last year.

The same month, three German citizens, including a married couple from Düsseldorf and a man from Bad Homburg, were arrested on suspicion of passing on technical military knowledge to Chinese authorities in return for money.

Later that month a close adviser to a leading member of Germany's far-right populist Alternative für Deutschland party was arrested on suspicion of spying for China.

China dismissed all allegations of espionage as "malicious slander".

The Foreign Office declined to comment.

Zara Aleena's family tortured by thought that her death was preventable

Caroline Davies

The family of Zara Aleena, who was sexually assaulted and murdered in east London while walking home after a night out, is "tortured" by thoughts that her "death was preventable" - and that a "crumbling justice system" contributed to it.

As a jury-led inquest into the death of the 35-year-old law graduate opened at Walthamstow coroner's court yesterday, her aunt, Farah Naz, read a statement saying: "Since her death we have been campaigning so that our daughters, sisters, friends can be safe and protected as Zara never was. This is Zara's legacy."

Jordan McSweeney killed Aleena early on 26 June 2022 and was handed a life sentence with a minimum term of 38 years in December 2022 after admitting her murder and sexual assault. He later won an appeal to reduce the minimum term. He murdered Aleena in Ilford nine days after his release from prison on licence. After breaching the conditions of his licence, a decision had been made to recall him to prison on 24 June 2022.

Naz told the jury that the family was "tortured with the thought that Zara's death was preventable", adding that her niece's murder highlighted "the crumbling justice system [which is] meant to protect us".

Aleena was a carer for her mother and grandmother, "the rock of our family" and it was the "proudest moment for all of us" when she was offered a job as a legal assistant at the Royal Courts of Justice.

She was "a carefree spirit with the most caring heart" and had worked to help resettle refugees in the UK. "2022 was to be her year to live her wildest dreams. She wanted to buy her own home, find Mr Right and to have children. The future looked bright," her aunt said.

Area coroner Nadia Persaud said the purpose of the inquest was to "consider the circumstance by which Zara came by her death, which will include whether any actions or omissions of state bodies contributed to her death".

The jury was told that McSweeney, 29 at the time of the attack, received his first custodial sentence aged 13, with much of his life spent in prison or under licence.



▲ Zara Aleena, a law graduate, was described as the rock of her family

Theatre review

Darkly alluring tangle of the everyday and otherworldly

Viola's Room

One Cartridge Place, London

Arifa Akbar

he immersive adventure begins with a sleep. We are invited to lie down as the lights fade and the story begins, narrated by Helena Bonham Carter. Her voice pours into our ears through binaural headphones, sometimes velvety and playful, other times a scratching whisper.

She tells a tangled tale, written by the Booker-nominated novelist Daisy Johnson and featuring the parallel lives of a modern-day teenager alongside a princess. A re-imagining of Barry Pain's 1901 short story The Moon-Slave, it is steeped in Victorian gothic, featuring Dionysian femininity, but also a prince, a disappearance and a grief-soaked journey into the night.

There is unfinished business to the concept: Punchdrunk's first show in 2000 was an interpretation of Pain's story, only seen by four people owing to cost constraints. Two decades on, the story is squeezed into a winding series of unlit corridors through which we travel wearing our headsets, and



in which the everyday intersects with the otherworldly, from the teenager's sparkly, poster-clad bedroom to a castle's gothic interior and glittering forests. Johnson's parallel worlds hold shades of Narnia - we wander through children's dens and wardrobes to find fantasy realms nestling within the quotidian.

Conceived by Punchdrunk's Felix Barrett, who co-directs with Hector Harkness, it is a darkly

The story turns into a weird kind of liminal babble dealing in unnameable fear

alluring production that plays with well-worn tropes but spins them in unfamiliar ways. "It's all a dream, surely?" says the narrator as the tale takes strange twists, and it feels like a beautiful, enveloping one that hovers delicately between bedtime story, fairytale, children's game and nightmare.

Groups of up to six venture into the space under instruction of silence but a sense of togetherness grows. We enter without footwear, and the textures change underfoot, from a cushiony, soft-play style floor to the sand-carpeted floors of Pain's story, and then soft grit, as if we have steered off a path into lost, bracken-floored woodlands. The darkness holds us in safety at times but also skulks around us, as if alive (lighting design by Simon Wilkinson).

But then we turn a corner and the light throws up a thrilling vision: a

▲ A member of the audience during the immersive adventure of Viola's Room at One Cartridge Place PHOTOGRAPH: JULIAN ABRAMS tree as luminous as a Yavoi Kusama

tree as luminous as a Yayoi Kusama installation; a hastily left banquet, gorgeously dainty in its opulence. There is dazzling miniaturisation with tiny castles whose lanterns twinkle alongside large cut-out silhouettes that have the effect of a lifesize zoetrope.

The story does not follow rational logic but turns into a weird kind of liminal babble dealing in unnameable fear, and you feel it as you travel through ever darker, narrower spaces. Barely an hour long, it inspires so much puzzling wonder that you want to go straight back in to find other undisturbed paths in the search for Viola.

Until 18 August



National

Only three firms fined over poor drinking-water quality since 2021

Helena Horton

Environment editor

The drinking water regulator has brought only three prosecutions against water companies for providing poor-quality water since 2021, despite 362 instances in which water was flagged as being unfit for human consumption.

When the alarm is raised that water is not safe for human consumption in England and Wales, the Drinking Water Inspectorate can issue legal instruments requiring water companies to put in place a package of measures.

The risks range from old pipes causing discoloured water to a deteriorating water-treatment process. The measures vary from replacing old water pipes to rebuilding whole water treatment works.

New figures reveal that only a tiny fraction of these legal instruments led to prosecutions. Water companies are under a legal obligation to provide safe drinking water to their customers.

Since 2021, the Drinking Water Inspectorate has brought three prosecutions: one against Southern Water (2022), one against South West Water (2022) and one against Wessex Water in 2023. It also gave two cautions against water companies: one against Thames and one against Southern Water, both in 2023.

Southern Water's prosecution related to water that was contaminated with sodium hypochlorite, resulting in chlorate above the WHO recommended guidelines in the drinking water. The company was fined £16,000 and a victim surcharge of £170. South West Water was fined £233,333 and a victim surcharge of £170 for providing water unfit for human consumption. It was brown and had a strange odour, and the company responded at the time by telling customers to add a slice of lemon to remedy the taste.

Wessex Water was prosecuted for providing water unfit for human consumption owing to its appearance and taste, and was fined £280,000 and a victim surcharge of £190.

This month, unsafe drinking water led to more than 100 cases of cryptosporidium in the Brixham area of Devon. About 17,000 households and businesses were told by South West Water not to use their tap water for

The largest of the fines imposed since 2021 after a prosecution by the Drinking Water Inspectorate

drinking without boiling and cooling it first after the parasitic disease was detected in the water supply. People have also been falling ill in Beckenham, south-east London, with Thames Water testing the supply for a potential cause.

The Liberal Democrats have put forward plans for new Blue Flag rivers, setting legally binding targets to prevent sewage dumping in those sites. Blue Flag rivers would give special protected status for swimmers and wildlife.

The party has also announced its intention to abolish Ofwat, introducing a new regulator with greater powers, as well as a ban on water company executive bonuses.

The Lib Dems' Tim Farron said: "It is a national scandal that drinking water is being contaminated by profiteering firms who show complete disregard for public health and the environment.

"Toothless regulators and failed Conservative ministers are allowing water firms to get away with this. A slap on the wrist for contaminated water is not enough. This shows what a farce the regulations are."

The Drinking Water Inspectorate declined to comment.

Asian hornets overwinter in UK for first time and could be here to stay

Helena Horton

DNA testing has confirmed that Asian hornets overwintered in the UK for the first time this year, meaning it is very likely the bee-killing insect will be here for good.

Asian hornets (Vespa velutina) dismember and eat bees, and have thrived in France, where they have caused concern because of the number of insects killed. They sit outside honeybee hives and capture bees as they enter and exit, and chop up the smaller insects and feed their thoraxes to their young.

Previously they were not established in the UK, but earlier this year experts raised the alarm about a hornet that was captured in Kent in March.

Despite the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) saying this month that there was no concrete proof the hornets had stayed here over winter, testing from the government-backed National Bee Unit has shown that three queen hornets caught at Four Oaks in East Sussex are the offspring of a nest destroyed in nearby Rye in November 2023. That implies they are here and breeding in the UK.

For the species to be classed as naturalised in the UK, however, the NBU says there needs to be evidence of a reproducing population present in the wild "for a significant number of generations". Currently, only one generation of hornets has been found. "The presence of overwintered hornets produced from a nest found and destroyed late last year is not considered to be strong evidence of an established population," it said.

Just one Asian hornet can hunt down and eat 30 to 50 honeybees in a day. Asian hornet numbers have skyrocketed in the UK, with 57 sightings in 2023, more than double the previous seven years combined.

It looks like 2024 may be an even better year for the hornet, with 15 confirmed sightings so far. Three sightings had been confirmed by the same date in 2023.

The species first came to Europe in 2004, when the insecrs were spotted in France; it is thought they were accidentally transported in cargo from Asia. Defra was contacted for comment.

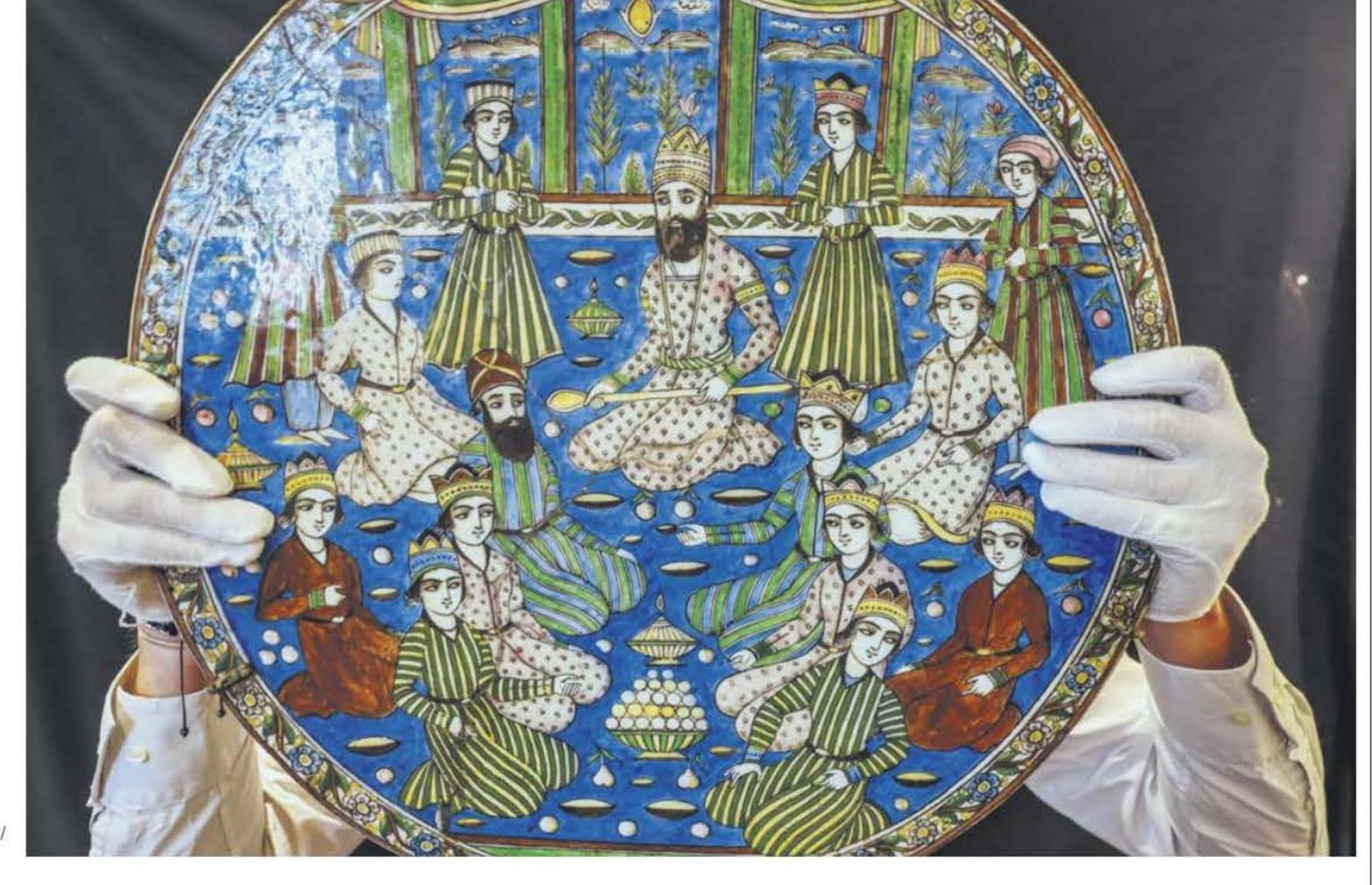


▲ The arrival of the Asian hornet is a threat to UK honeybee populations



Going under the hammer

A fritware tile from the 19th-century Qajar dynasty depicting a Persian ruler and his courtiers is expected to fetch £700-£900 at Olympia Auctions in London tomorrow.



PAUL QUEZADA-NEIMAN ALAMY LIVE NEWS

Black Lace singer Colin Gibb dies days before he was due to retire

Ben Beaumont-Thomas

Colin Gibb, who had huge success as a core member of the novelty pop band Black Lace, has died aged 70 - days before he was due to retire.

His wife, Sue Kelly, announced the news on Facebook, writing: "I love you Colin. You were so happy, so looking forward to our new life,



▲ Colin Gibb, left, has died aged 70. Bandmate Alan Barton died in 1995

now you're gone. As we used to say, always love you forever."

His bandmate Dene Michael said on X: "So sad to announce the passing of my singing partner in Black Lace Colin Gibb. Rest in peace my friend. God bless you."

Gibb joined Black Lace in 1976, and the group recorded their debut single, Mary Ann, in 1979.

The bright, closely harmonised track was selected as the UK's Eurovision song contest entry that year, with the band finishing seventh in the Israel-hosted contest, but just missed out on the UK Top 40.

In 1981 the band split, leaving Gibb and Alan Barton to carry on as a duo.

This incarnation of Black Lace found vast success. They recorded a version of Chicken Dance, AKA The Birdie Song, in 1981, followed by their first chart hit in 1983, Superman.

The next year brought their biggest hit, Agadoo - a cover version of an earlier Europop hit - which reached No 2 in the UK and spent 35 weeks on the charts, and found success across Europe. They returned to the UK Top 10 with their next single Do the Conga. Barton died in 1995.

Gibb announced his retirement only last month, saying: "All good things must come to an end" and adding that he would play a final concert at a Tenerife hotel.

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Galleries had 'kneejerk' reaction to Black Lives Matter, says artist

Lanre Bakare

Arts and culture correspondent

British arts institutions deployed "kneejerk" and "stopgap" responses in the aftermath of the Black Lives Matter movement as they attempted to avoid criticism for the lack of diversity in their collections, according to the artist Gavin Jantjes.

The South Africa-born artist, who was a key figure during the British black art movement of the 1980s, told the Guardian that under-pressure organisations approached him to buy work that they had ignored since it was made decades earlier.

He said: "Institutions would come to me and say: 'Do you have a work from the 1970s we can buy?' When I was making those works in the 1970s, nobody wanted to look at them."

During the Black Lives Matter movement, most of the UK's prominent arts institutions released

statements pledging to address racial bias and diversify senior leadership teams. Since 2020 there has been a dramatic rise in the number of exhibitions featuring black artists.

But Jantjes believes institutions were looking to paper over cracks rather than engage meaningfully with the work and its creators. "It's a kneejerk reaction, it's a stopgap,"



he added. "That to me proves institutions still do not want to bother investigating what artists are doing today rather than talking about their ethnicity, sexuality or post-colonial engagement or whatever."

Jantjes, who is having a career retrospective at the Whitechapel Gallery in east London this summer, came to prominence in the UK when he had an exhibition in 1976 at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, making him one of the first black artists to hold a show there.

▼ School Days and Nights, a 1978

at the time no one wanted his art

PHOTOGRAPH: GAVIN JANTJES

work by Gavin Jantjes, who said that

His work then was mostly collage, mixing newspaper reports, magazine images and text that focused on apartheid. South Africa barred Jantjes from returning because his work was critical of the regime.

Jantjes was first exposed to art as a three-year-old who went to a community art school near Cape Town, where he lived until moving to Hamburg. He became one of the first black art lecturers in the UK, working at what is now the University of the Arts London. He then worked at the Arts Council before moving to Norway, where he was the artistic director of the Henie Onstad Art Center.

The retrospective To Be Free! will span the early collage works, later figurative paintings and Jantjes's most recent abstract paintings, which he started to work on once he returned to Britain from Norway.

Jantjes said that when he first came to London in the 1970s it would be almost impossible to find an exhibition of work by anyone who wasn't white but that things have now changed dramatically, which he views as an attempt to "correct the record" because many black artists from the 70s and 80s were ignored. "It's blatantly obvious that [galleries] were myopic and overlooked things deliberately. These works were good they were at the time, which is why they're still being collected now."

To Be Free! is at the Whitechapel Gallery from 12 June to 1 September

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'He has a litany of questions to answer on his judgment, his transparency and his truthfulness'

Andrew RT Davies Leader, Welsh Conservatives

◀The Welsh first minister, Vaughan Gething, on the campaign trail in Abergavenny last week

PHOTOGRAPH: STEFAN ROUSSEAU/PA

Gething faces no-confidence vote as scandals cut through

Steven Morris

There was no honeymoon period and precious little breathing room for Vaughan Gething to relish the historic achievement of becoming the first black leader of a European country.

Since he was chosen as Welsh Labour leader and first minister 11 weeks ago, Gething has faced a slew of allegations about donations, the deletion of messages during the pandemic, and the sacking of a minister.

Tomorrow he will confront what will be his most uncomfortable test yet, a vote of no confidence in the Senedd, the Welsh parliament, tabled by the Conservatives.

UK Labour leaders and strategists dismiss it as mischief making, but there is growing evidence, in polling and doorstep conversations, that the scandals are cutting through to voters.

While it would be an exaggeration to say the issue was top of the agenda at Cardiff market yesterday, people were aware of it. "They're going to get rid of him, aren't they?" said Tim Close, a butcher. "He took £200,000. That looks terrible. It's a lot of money. If someone gives you that, they want something back."

Lynette Ford, who has a knitting stall, was pleased when Gething got in: "He seemed different, but maybe they all just think of themselves."

Gething's tenure has been overshadowed by £200,000 in donations he took from a company whose owner, David Neal, was convicted of dumping waste on the Gwent Levels and criticised over a landfill site in Pembrokeshire described as a "stink bomb on steroids".

The first minister has repeatedly said he followed the rules. He has expressed regret at the impact the donations have had but has not returned the cash.

Last month, the pressure was ratcheted up by the emergence of iMessages with fellow Labour members from the time of the pandemic, when Gething was health minister, in which he said he was going to delete a thread, leading to suspicions of decisions being covered up.

It got worse when Gething sacked his minister for social partnership, Hannah Blythyn, suggesting she had leaked the messages, which she denied. Within hours, Plaid Cymru had ended its cooperation agreement with the Welsh government, making it trickier for the government to operate, as it does not have an overall Senedd majority.

Now comes the no confidence vote. The motion calls on the Senedd to recognise the "genuine public concern" over the donation and highlights the iMessages and the ministerial sacking.

Andrew RT Davies, the leader of the Welsh Conservatives, said: "Vaughan Gething has a litany of questions to answer on his judgment, his transparency and his truthfulness." The opposition parties will support the Tory motion. The Plaid leader, Rhun ap Iorwerth, said: "The first minister has undermined his own office."

The balance of the Senedd is delicate. Labour holds only half of the 60 seats, but Gething is helped by the llywydd - the presiding officer - being a Plaid member. If the vote on the no confidence motion is tied, she will be obliged to vote against it under standing orders.

Unless Labour members rebel, Gething should be safe. The vote is not legally binding and does not automatically trigger a process to remove him. But it is likely to further undermine his authority. Over the last few years, the Welsh government has felt more stable than in England, Scotland or Northern Ireland. It has begun to feel a little shaky now.

The former Labour minister Leighton Andrews said he believed Labour members would rally against a Tory motion in the middle of an election. "What happens after the general election in the run-up to the next Senedd election [in 2026] is another matter entirely," he said.

It is not just in the Senedd that the issue is a live one. There are more than 4,000 signatures on two Gething petitions, one calling for a public inquiry on the donations, one for tighter rules around them.

Whenever Keir Starmer and other UK leaders visit, they are asked about Gething's position. A poll last month found that 70% of Welsh voters agreed that Gething should return the donation.

In Butetown, the old Cardiff dockside area and a Gething stronghold, there is some support for him. Mo, a student, said the first minister did a lot of good in the area: "He does his best for people around here, he has for years. Politics is a tough business. You need money to fight."

But Lyn Eynon, a former secretary of the Butetown branch of the Labour party, said: "For me, the main issue is not Vaughan Gething as an individual but the role of money in Welsh politics. It will be difficult for me to vote Labour this year, and I am seriously considering voting for another party for the first time."

Nerys Lloyd-Pierce, a Cardiff environment activist, said Gething had proved he didn't care about preserving the natural world. "I will not be voting Labour, either in Wales or nationally, while Gething is in post."

Anna-Louise Marsh-Rees, who leads Covid-19 Bereaved Families Cymru, said the iMessages were "the final straw". She argued he should have disclosed them before the Welsh leg of the Covid inquiry in March.

World on track to miss target for renewable electricity - IEA

Fiona Harvey

Environment editor

The world is not on track to meet the goal of tripling renewable electricity generation by 2030, a target viewed as vital to enable a swift global transition away from fossil fuels, but there are promising signs that the pace of progress may be picking up.

Countries agreed in December last year on a tripling of renewable power by the end of this decade. But few have taken concrete steps to meet this requirement and on current policies and trends global renewable generation capacity would roughly only double in developed countries, and slightly more than double globally by 2030, according to an analysis by the International Energy Agency.

Fatih Birol, the executive director of the IEA, said: "The tripling target is ambitious but achievable - though only if governments quickly turn promises into plans of action."

Governments should include

targets and policies on renewables in their national action plans for the climate, which are a requirement under the Paris agreement, the IEA said.

The IEA, the gold standard for global energy research, analysed the domestic policies and targets of nearly 150 countries, and found that they would result in about 8,000 gigawatts of renewable energy capacity by 2030.

That is about 70% of the 11,000GW of capacity needed to meet the tripling goal agreed at the Cop28 UN climate summit in Dubai last year.

Solar power makes up about half of the capacity governments are planning to install, with wind making up about a quarter.

Heymi Bahar, a senior energy analyst at the IEA and co-author of the

report Cop28: Tripling Renewable Capacity Pledge, said: "There is a gap, but the gap is bridgeable."

Last year, there was a record increase in renewable capacity, amounting to about 560GW, a 64% increase on the capacity added in 2022. Solar and wind are still cheaper than fossil fuels, and the IEA does not foresee that changing. There is plenty of solar manufacturing capacity, and supply issues with wind power components are being resolved. Some wind companies that had been in

560GW

The amount that renewable capacity increased by last year, a 64% increase on the 2022 figure

difficulty owing to high component prices were moving back to profitability, said Bahar.

Some countries are moving faster than their national targets. Last year, China added more new renewable generation capacity than the rest of the world combined. "It was incredible," said Bahar. "One of the reasons is that solar and wind are so much cheaper than coal."

Governments now need to focus on upgrading their electricity grids, which are a major block on progress in many places, Bahar added.

Governments are meeting this week and next in Bonn to discuss the pledges made at Cop28, and progress towards the Cop29 conference, which will take place in November in Azerbaijan.

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Eyewitness

▶ Dale, 48, New York City: 'I never wanted to be a girl, I just wanted to be a cowboy with red lipstick. Now, far away from Texas, I feel powerful and free'



▼ Paulina, Hawaii: 'I live out here because I like to sparkle'







Under cover

For seven years, the US photographer Barbara
Peacock crisscrossed the country taking pictures of people in the spaces they defined as their bedrooms - whether indoors or outdoors, in tents, cars or buses. Peacock's images, alongside the words of the people they depict, are collected in a new book, American Bedroom, published by Kehrer Verlag.





◀ The Kalatas family, Portland, Maine: 'Our world revolves around autism but it's our hearts that keep us together'

Tuesday 4 June 2024 The Guardian





■Laverne, 72, and James, 74, Big Stone Gap, Virginia: 'Finding love late in life has taught me not to be shy or embarrassed by my body'

▼ Jon, 66, and Doris, 97, Overland Park, Kansas: 'Caring for my mother in the final months of her life was the most profound thing I have ever experienced'

▲ The Mathews family, Saratoga Springs, Utah: 'Endless possibilities and adventure! We sold our home and just about everything we owned three years ago'







▲ The Lafayette family, Detroit, Michigan: 'I really want better for my kids. Right now, we all live in one room'



▲ Jeremiah, 45, Kauai, Hawaii: 'I've been sleeping in the grass between the trees, sky and by the ocean for six years now. My body and soul are clean'

◀ Jamie, 44, and the Seh-Nielsen family, Victor, Idaho: 'These apples of my eye remind me to slow down and see the beauty in all things'

World

'Ball is in Hamas's court' over Middle East peace plan, White House says

Julian Borger Jerusalem Bethan McKernan Washington

The White House said yesterday the "ball is in Hamas's court" on whether to accept a new Gaza peace proposal, despite mixed signals from Benjamin Netanyahu that reflect turmoil within his governing coalition.

The Israeli prime minister said any deal that did not lead to the complete destruction of Hamas's military and governing capacity would be a "nonstarter". He told the Knesset: "The claims that we have agreed to a cease-fire without our conditions being met are incorrect."

But the US national security spokesperson, John Kirby, said: "I've heard different statements coming out of Israel." He pointed out that the country's foreign minister, Israel Katz, had acknowledged that it was an Israeli proposal.

"Hamas has now got this proposal. It got it Thursday night. We're awaiting an official response by them," Kirby said. "They ought to take the deal. This gives them what they've been looking for, which is a cease-fire and over time, through phases, the potential withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza.

"It is fair to say that the ball is Hamas's court," he said.

US officials said the proposal had evolved in discussions between US, Israeli and Qatari negotiators in the past few weeks. However, Netanyahu had been given just a few hours notice that Biden would make it public on Friday.

The officials insisted that the timing, with Biden speaking when Israeli government offices were closed for the sabbath and the country's most conservative, religiously observant politicians had cut themselves off from the internet and other communications, was not deliberate but was dictated by the fact that the plan was delivered to Hamas on Thursday.

It was transmitted to the Hamas political leadership based in Qatar, but officials said it could take time for it to be conveyed to Yahya Sinwar, the militant group's leader in Gaza, and for a reply to come back from him.

The first phase of the proposal would be similar to an earlier plan that failed to win agreement. Over six weeks, Hamas would release elderly, sick, wounded and women hostages, and Israel would free a greater number of Palestinian detainees. There would be a ceasefire and Israeli forces

Maldives to bar Israelis



The Maldives says it will ban Israelis from entering the country, known for its luxury resorts, with the office of the president making the announcement amid public anger over the war in Gaza.

Mohamed Muizzu, the Maldives president, has "resolved to impose a ban on Israeli passports", a spokesperson for his office said in a statement, without giving details of when the new law would take effect. The country is visited by thousands of Israelis every year.

In response, Israel's foreign ministry recommended that its citizens not travel to the Maldives, including those with dual citizenship. "For Israeli citizens already in the country, it is recommended to consider leaving, because if they find themselves in distress for any reason, it will be difficult for us to assist," it said.

The Maldives decision comes amid mounting international fallout for Israel in a number of spheres, including business and academia, over the Gaza war.

A month ago, Turkey imposed a ban on the import and export of goods to and from Israel, which Israeli media said yesterday had resulted in significant shortages.

Israel, which imports 40% of its concrete from Turkey, has been forced to shop for more expensive concrete in Europe, while household brands such as Heinz, Gillette, Braun and Pampers - that had been imported from Turkey by Diplomat, a major Israeli company - have also been affected.

On Friday it was announced that Israeli firms would not be allowed to have a stand at the Eurosatory arms fair in Paris.

The Maldives decision came after pressure from opposition parties and government allies in the predominantly Muslim nation on the president to ban Israelis.

Peter Beaumont

would pull back from densely populated areas, allowing Gazans to go back to whatever is left of their homes, and 600 trucks of humanitarian assistance would cross into the coastal strip each day.

At the same time there would be negotiations on how to reach a second, more comprehensive phase, which would involve the release of all remaining hostages and the freeing of more Palestinian prisoners, a complete withdrawal of Israeli troops and a permanent cessation of hostilities. A third phase would address reconstruction and governance in Gaza.

One of the innovations of the new proposal is a clause saying the initial six-week ceasefire would extend as long as negotiations for a second phase continued, so there would not be a looming deadline that would trigger a return to combat.

It is in the transition between the first and second phase where the gaps between Biden and Netanyahu's versions are the greatest. The plan, as spelled out by the US president, suggested that Hamas and Israel would negotiate the second phase, but the Israeli prime minister insisted Hamas would have to be smashed before there could be an enduring ceasefire.

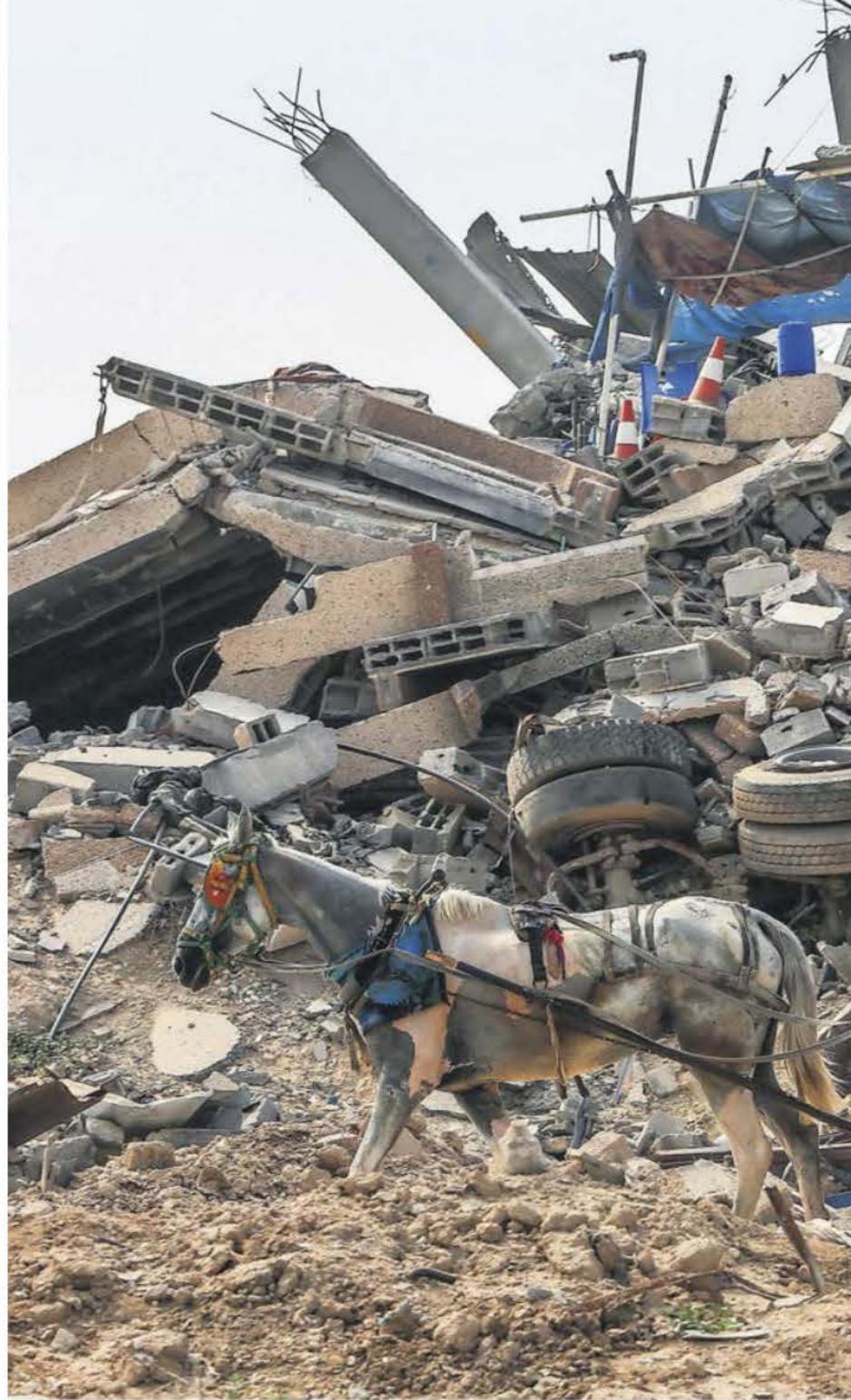
Biden said Hamas was no longer in a position to launch another attack like its 7 October assault on southern Israel that killed 1,200 people and triggered the current Gaza war, implying that Israel had achieved its military objectives. However, Netanyahu suggested the obliteration of the extremist group had to be more extensive and final.

A spokesperson for the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), R Adm Daniel Hagari, said last night that the military would be able to ensure Israel's security in any Gaza truce and hostage release deal decided on by the government.

The IDF also said that four more Israeli hostages held by Hamas had died in captivity. The four were named as Haim Perry, Yoram Metzger, Amiram Cooper and Nadav Popplewell, a British-Israeli citizen. All had appeared alive in hostage videos posted earlier by Hamas.

About 120 hostages are still unaccounted for, of whom 40 are thought to have died.

Netanyahu told his cabinet yesterday that Israel's first priority was to destroy Hamas, and the first stage of the plan announced by Biden could be implemented on its own without agreeing to an end to the war.



Gaza Militant resurgence in north highlights risk of 'forever war', experts say

Jason Burke International security correspondent

here may be more
Hamas militants in
the north of Gaza,
supposedly cleared by
Israeli forces months
ago, than in Rafah, the
territory's southernmost city that
was described by Israeli officials as
the militant Islamist organisation's
"last stronghold", analysts believe.

More than 1 million people have fled Rafah after instructions from the Israel Defense Forces, the biggest wave of displacement since the early months of the conflict. The IDF has said repeatedly that four Hamas brigades - its biggest remaining force - are in Rafah.

But though Israeli forces have now invaded Rafah, it was fighting in Jabaliya, the second-most populous town in northern Gaza, that was described last month by IDF officials as "perhaps the fiercest" yet seen in the seventhmonth-long conflict.

"There are more Hamas armed people in the north of Gaza in the places that the IDF has already moved out of than ... in Rafah. Those are the IDF's numbers ...

Latvia migration Dutch pair face jail after helping refugees Page 24

'Do you have shoes?'
Nigerian TikTok star
fights stereotypes

Page 27





Hamas is controlling all those areas," Eyal Hulata, the head of Israel's national security council from 2021 to last year, said last month. Israeli officials, including the prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, have long claimed that the Rafah offensive, despite strong opposition from many allies, will achieve their aims of destroying Hamas's capability to threaten Israel and freeing hostages.

The battles in Jabaliya between lightly armed Hamas militants and a powerful IDF underlines the threat of a "forever war" continuing for months or even years as Israel tries to stamp out a tenacious insurgency, experts say.

"Hamas was in complete control here in Jabaliya until we arrived a few days ago," the IDF said before its May operation, four months after its spokesperson Daniel Hagari claimed militants were operating in the area only sporadically and "without commanders".

The resurgence of Hamas also involves a concerted effort to

maintain the group's authority over all aspects of civilian life.

"This is not some kind of shadow government ... The leaders of Hamas are very flexible and they have adapted to the new situation," said Michael Milshtein, from the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, an Israeli thinktank.

Residents of Jabaliya said they had seen Hamas officials last month patrolling markets, enforcing price controls on key goods and organising distribution of aid.

The difficulties faced by the IDF in achieving a decisive victory may discourage Hamas from agreeing to a peace deal presented by Joe Biden on Friday. Sources close to Hamas say Yahya Sinwar, its leader in Gaza, believes the humanitarian crisis in the territory and growing international outrage towards Israel strengthens Hamas in negotiations. More than 36,000 people have died in Gaza since the beginning of the Israeli offensive, mostly women and children, according to local

▲ A refugee camp after an Israeli strike. More than 36,000 people have died in Gaza since October photograph: ABED RAHIM KHATIB/ANADOLU

health authorities. The figures do not differentiate between combatants and civilians.

Mkhaimar Abusada, a professor of political science at al-Azhar University in Gaza, believes the high civilian casualties will spur recruitment. "There is a widespread belief that Israel is not at war with Hamas, but with the Palestinian people," he said.

Netanyahu has resisted pressure from allies and the IDF to outline a plan for civilian administration of Gaza for fear of losing the support of far-right ministers.

The US secretary of state, Antony Blinken, said Israel was "on the trajectory, potentially, to inherit an insurgency with many armed Hamas left or, if [Israel] leaves [Gaza], a vacuum filled by chaos, filled by anarchy and probably refilled by Hamas."

Jury panel selection begins for Hunter Biden trial

Guardian staff

Jury selection began yesterday in the federal gun case against the US president's son, Hunter Biden.

The proceedings seriously complicate Joe Biden's re-election campaign as Republicans search for a distraction in the wake of Donald Trump's conviction last week of 34 felony counts of falsified business records.

In a show of support, Jill Biden, the first lady, was at the federal court-house in Delaware where her stepson is facing trial.

In a statement, the president said that as a father he had "boundless love for my son, confidence in him, and respect for his strength".

Prosecutors allege Hunter Biden lied about his drug use on application forms when he bought a handgun in 2018, while in the throes of addiction.

In theory, he could face a jail sentence, but it is widely regarded as unlikely.

"I am the president, but I am also a dad," Biden said, adding that he would not comment further on the federal case.

Hunter Biden, the president's youngest and only surviving son, has struggled with drug addiction and a troubled private life.

"Jill and I love our son, and we are so proud of the man he is today," the president wrote. "Hunter's resilience in the face of adversity and the strength he has brought to his recovery are inspiring to us."

Prospective jurors were questioned by the district judge Maryellen Noreika to determine whether they could be fair and impartial.

The questions ranged from their knowledge of the case to their thoughts about gun ownership and whether they or anyone close to them had struggled with substance abuse or addiction or ever owned a gun.

Other questions focused on the



▲ Hunter Biden arrives at court with his wife, Melissa Cohen Biden

role politics may have played in the charges.

One prospective juror said she did not know whether she could be impartial because of the opinion she had formed about Hunter Biden based on media reports. "It's not a good one," she replied when an attorney asked her opinion.

Another prospective juror was dismissed because his family had a long history in law enforcement, and he said he could not be impartial.

A third was excused because he was very aware of the case and said: "It seems like politics is playing a big role in who gets charged with what and when."

The president's son has acknowledged being addicted to crack cocaine during the period when he purchased a handgun in 2018, but his lawyers have said he did not break the law.

In his memoir, Beautiful Things, he described becoming consumed by drugs and alcohol after his older brother, Beau, died at 46 from brain cancer in 2015. The brothers were close, having survived a car crash when they were children that killed their mother and baby sister.

Hunter Biden has said he has been sober since 2019. But prosecutors intend to use his memoir to make the case that he knew he was addicted to drugs when he denied it on the form that every person must fill out when buying a gun.

A plea deal aimed at avoiding a trial collapsed last year, though it is possible some form of pact could be revived.

Republicans are expected to try to use this trial – and another more serious one over tax issues that has been set for September – as a line of attack against the president, as they have sought to do for several years.

Republicans will no doubt be motivated by Trump's host of legal travails. The former president was found guilty last week of falsifying business records linked to hushmoney payments to the adult film actor Stormy Daniels to cover an affair that was seen as potentially harming his 2016 election prospects.

Like Hunter Biden, Trump could face jail, though that is also regarded as an unlikely outcome.

The timing of the trial is unfortunate for Democrats, who are seeking to highlight Trump's ignominious mantle as the first former US president with a criminal conviction.

Joe Biden, in keeping with his reputation as a close family man, has stuck by Hunter Biden through all his troubles and that is unlikely to change during the trial, which is expected to last about a week. However, the trial could air potentially embarrassing family details.

David C Weiss, the special counsel overseeing the prosecution, has signalled that he will call Hunter Biden's ex-wife, Kathleen Buhle, to the stand. Prosecutors may also call Beau's widow, Hallie Biden, who was dating Hunter Biden in 2018.

Additional reporting
Associated Press



Dutch pair face jail in Latvia after helping refugees to reach safety

Shaun Walker

Two Dutch people are facing prison sentences of up to eight years in Latvia over what they say was an act of compassion to help a group of refugees reach safety, including the sister of one of the pair.

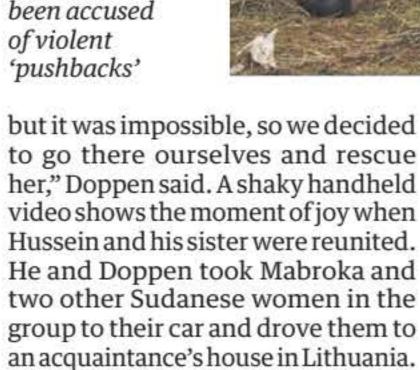
The case has put Latvia's harsh laws on migration under the spotlight and comes as a rights activist also faces jail time, for helping refugees who crossed into Latvia via the country's border with Belarus.

Dutch citizens Abdulaal Hussein, a 24-year-old actor, and Martine Doppen, a 30-year-old climate campaigner, have been released on bail. They are due to stand trial this year.

Hussein, who is of Sudanese origin, said his younger sister, Mabroka, left Sudan last spring after taking part in a documentary that highlighted her activism against the regime there and receiving threats.

After making it to Egypt, desperate to reach the safety of Europe, she paid intermediaries to help her with a journey via Russia and Belarus. Her group was able to cross the border to Latvia but the smugglers left her and a group of four other Sudanese people at an abandoned farmhouse without food, water or heating.

"When she was able to contact us with her location, we tried to find someone in Latvia who could help her Migrants at Belarus's border with Poland in 2021. Poland and Latvia have been accused of violent 'pushbacks'



"We left some food but the two people who were left behind were weak and scared. We just followed our gut feeling and decided we had to go back for them," said Doppen.

She and Hussein were driven by the human instinct to help people in need, she said, and they knew that if the Latvian authorities caught the refugees they would probably be pushed back to Belarus.

The route through Belarus into the EU has been used by many people since 2021, when the regime of Alexander Lukashenko was accused of weaponising migration by allowing people from conflict-stricken countries to enter Belarus and then encouraging them to cross the border.

Guards in Poland and Latvia have been accused of violent "pushbacks",



PHOTOGRAPHS: OKSANA MANCHUK/BELTA/AP; ABDULAAL HUSSEIN



not allowing people who cross to claim asylum. They are then often stuck in a forested "grey zone" for days or weeks as Belarusian guards do not allow them to return further into Belarus. Many people have died at the border over the past three years.

An Amnesty International report in late 2022 found instances of systematic mistreatment by Latvian guards Abdulaal
Hussein, his
sister Mabroka
and Martine
Doppen.
Abdulaal and
Doppen are to
stand trial for
helping refugees
who crossed

into Latvia
via Belarus.
Mabroka left
Sudan after
being an activist
against the
regime there.
They drove her
from Latvia
to Lithuania

of people who crossed the border. "Latvian authorities ... tortured and ill-treated people; subjected many to excessive use of force; and arbitrarily detained people in secret locations, possibly amounting to enforced disappearance in some cases," the report said.

Hussein and Doppen drove back to pick up the pair, arriving late at night. Soon after collecting them they were stopped at a road block and arrested on suspicion of people-smuggling. All four were taken to a police station.

"I explained to the police that these people are in danger, they have been without food for five days, and they didn't care at all, they left them on the ground in the police station for the entire night," said Doppen.

She and Hussein were arrested. She was released on bail, quickly, for €6,200 (£5,280), while Hussein was sent to jail and released after a month after a bail payment of €30,000.

"While the law does not prohibit a person, for example, from providing food and drink, as soon as it is transported or shelter is provided, criminal liability ensues with severe consequences," said Raimonds Briedis, Hussein's lawyer. The pair face between two and eight years in jail.

The trial appears to be part of an attempt to intimidate anyone who may want to help at the border. Unlike in Poland, where a network of activists offers help and assistance to people who cross from Belarus, in Latvia there is almost nobody carrying out such work.

Ieva Raubiško, one of the few activists to have done so in recent years, is on trial and facing a sentence of up to two years for helping a group of people in need who crossed the border.

She was arrested for giving assistance to Syrian refugees in a closed zone near the border early in 2023. She said her case and that against the Dutch pair were designed to deter anyone from helping refugees.

"We have a border with two violent, unpredictable regimes, and there is a war going on. I can understand the security concerns. But I cannot accept people losing limbs or dying unidentified at our borders," she said.

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(investment companies with variable capital under Dutch law, the "Companies")

At the annual general meetings of shareholders on 30 May 2024, the following dividends per share over the 2023 financial year were agreed:

	ISIN	Gross amount in EUR	Dividend	
			tax	
Robeco Sustainable Global Stars Equities Fund - EUR E	NL0000289783	0.80	15%	
Robeco Sustainable Global Stars Equities Fund - EUR G	NL0010366407	1.00	15%	
Rolinco - EUR E	NL0000289817	0.60	15%	
Rolinco - EUR G	NL0010510798	0.60	15%	

Shareholders not liable to Dutch domestic taxes are advised to contact their own advisor to discuss the effect of the deduction of 15% Dutch dividend tax on their own situation. Principal paying agent is ING Bank N.V. in Amsterdam.

The following schedule shall apply:

Dividend dates (Transfer Agent)	Dividend dates (Euronext)	Explanation
10 June 2024	13 June 2024	Shares issued up to Dealing Day 10 June 2024 are entitled for the dividend distribution. Euronext will use the settlement positions as of 13 June 2024.
11 June 2024	12 June 2024	The NAV per share will be quoted ex-dividend as of the Dealing Day 11 June 2024. The NAV per share of the Dealing Day 11 June 2024 will be published on 12 June 2024. Euronext will stamp this NAV with date 12 June 2024.
24 June 2024	24 June 2024	Deadline for reinvestment application.
26 June 2024	27 June 2024	The Dealing Day of reinvestment will be 26 June 2024. Execution at Euronext will take place on 27 June 2024.
1 July 2024	1 July 2024	
	(Transfer Agent) 10 June 2024 11 June 2024 24 June 2024 26 June 2024	(Transfer Agent) (Euronext) 10 June 2024 13 June 2024 11 June 2024 12 June 2024 24 June 2024 24 June 2024 26 June 2024 27 June 2024

The boards

CJD expert 'cut off' from Canada brain illness review, emails claim

Leyland Cecco

Toronto

A leading government scientist in Canada has alleged he was barred from investigating a mystery brain illness in New Brunswick and said he fears more than 200 people affected by the condition are experiencing unexplained neurological decline.

The allegations, in leaked emails to a colleague seen by the Guardian, have emerged two years after the eastern province closed its investigation into a possible "cluster" of cases.

"My scientific opinion is that there is something real going on in [New Brunswick] that absolutely cannot be explained by the bias or personal agenda of an individual neurologist," wrote Michael Coulthart, a prominent microbiologist. "There are just too many (now over 200)."

New Brunswick health officials warned in 2021 that more than 40 residents were suffering from a possible unknown neurological syndrome, with symptoms similar to those of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease - a brain disorder caused by misformed proteins known as prions. The symptoms were varied and dramatic: some started drooling and others felt bugs were crawling on their skin.

A year later an independent committee set up by the province determined the patients had most likely been misdiagnosed and were suffering from known illnesses such as cancer and dementia.

The committee and the New Brunswick government also cast doubt on the work of the neurologist Alier Marrero, who was initially referred dozens of cases in the region, and subsequently identified more. The doctor has since become a fierce

advocate for patients he feels have been neglected by the province.

A final committee report found there was no "cluster".

But leaked emails viewed by the Guardian suggest senior research scientists in Canada's public health agency, PHAC, remain concerned about the cause of a seemingly unexplained illness that disproportionately affects younger people.

In an October 2023 email exchange with another PHAC member, Coulthart, who served as the federal lead in the 2021 investigation into the New Brunswick illness, said he had been "essentially cut off" from any involvement in the issue, adding he believed the reason was political.

Coulthart, who heads Canada's Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease Surveillance System, did not respond to a request for comment. But in the leaked email, he wrote that he believed an "environmental exposure - or a combination of exposures - is triggering and/or accelerating a variety of neurodegenerative syndromes" with people seemingly susceptible to protein-misfolding ailments, including Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease.

The complexity of the issue had given politicians a "loophole" to conclude "nothing coherent" was going on. "For now all we can do ... is continue to collect information on the cases that come to us as suspect prion disease," he wrote.

Copies of the emails were sent to the parliamentary health committee in March. The committee did not respond to a request for comment.

New Brunswick's health department did not respond to specific questions about Coulthart's emails. It said: "Although Dr Alier Marrero has made statements regarding findings and observations with regards to a large number of patients, since May 2023, Public Health New Brunswick has received a total of only 29 complete notifications from Dr Marrero. These are being reviewed."

Marrero declined to comment on the emails and directed questions to the province's health authority.

Eyes on Russia after coffins draped with tricolour left at Eiffel Tower

Kim Willsher Paris

French police are investigating whether the placing of five full-sized coffins covered with the French tricolour at the Eiffel Tower at the weekend was another act of Russian interference.

Three men were formally put under investigation yesterday - the equivalent of being charged - in connection with the coffins, each of which was inscribed with "French soldiers in the Ukraine".

The inscription is believed to be a reference to the French president, Emmanuel Macron, raising the possibility of sending western troops to Ukraine, a suggestion Moscow has described as "dangerous".

The incident also followed talks between French and Ukrainian defence ministers a week ago in which the possibility of France sending military instructors to Ukraine to train its forces was raised.

Detectives are investigating links between one of the suspects and the vandalism of the Holocaust memorial in Paris a week ago; 35 red hands were painted on the monument, which honours individuals who saved Jews from persecution during the 1940-44 Nazi occupation of France.

On Saturday, security cameras showed a white van with Bulgarian number plates stopping near the Eiffel Tower and two men removing the coffins from the vehicle. The driver, a 34-year-old Bulgarian national, was subsequently arrested and told police he had been paid to transport the coffins.

He said he had arrived in Paris from Bulgaria the previous evening and met up with the two other suspects a German and a Ukrainian - who had travelled to France separately. They were later arrested at a Paris coach terminal as they were about to board a bus to Berlin.

All three said they had been paid to deposit the coffins and needed the money as they were unemployed.

The driver and the German were also subject to an expulsion order from France, Le Parisien reported. It said police sources had confirmed one of the men involved in Saturday's incident was being looked at in connection with the red-hands graffiti.



▲ Three men have been charged over the incident at the Eiffel Tower

Bearfaced cheek as koala raids plant nursery in broad daylight

Lisa Cox

Sydney

Claude the koala became Australia's cutest thief and a viral sensation when he was filmed munching on seedlings at a nursery in New South Wales (NSW) in September.

But fame has only made him more brazen, with the hungry marsupial now helping himself to a weekday feed in front of staff at the Eastern Forest Nursery near Lismore.

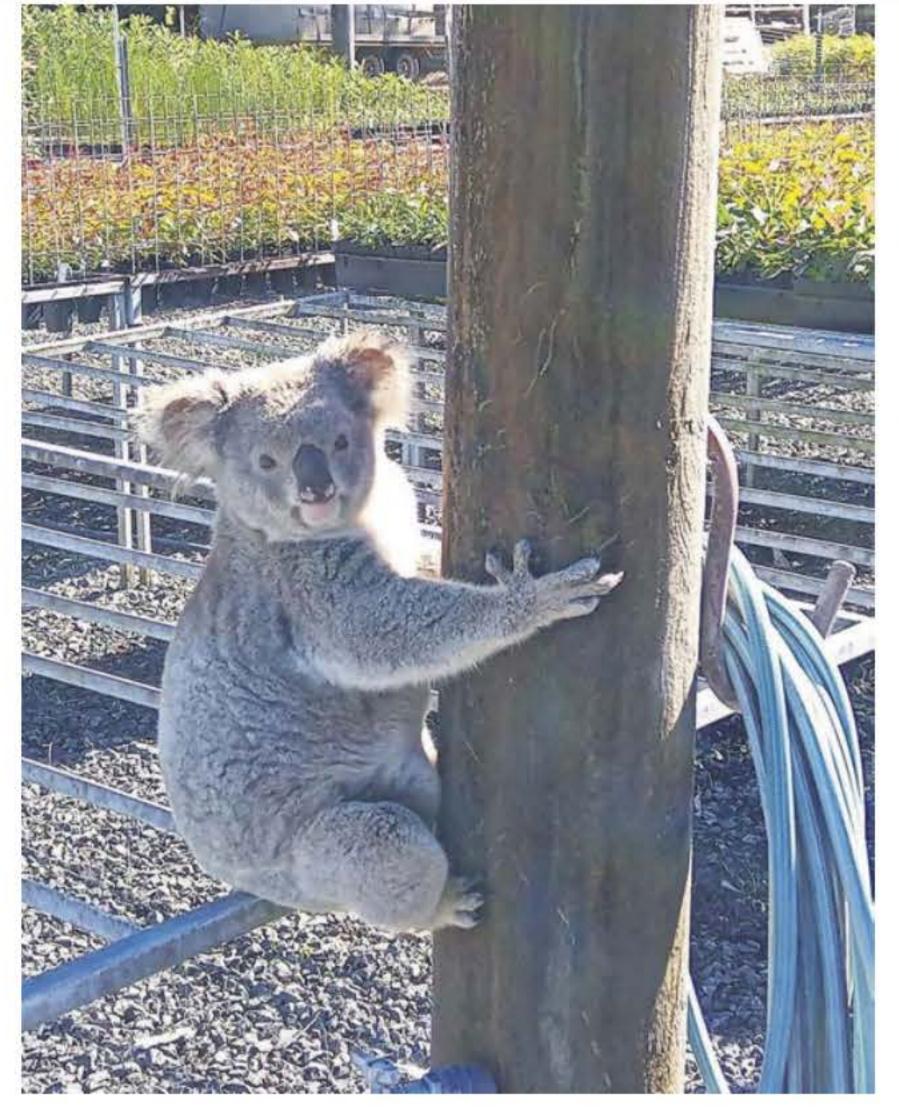
New photos show Claude making a meal of eucalyptus seedlings in broad daylight as a nursery worker looks on. He reached the plants after climbing a shade cloth and down a pole. Previously the koala would raid seedlings at night or on weekends when no one was around.

"We had no idea that a koala would actually come into the nursery and feed directly on our plants. I would never have believed it until I saw Claude sitting there on the pole," the nursery's manager, Humphrey Herington, said.

"We all found it quite amusing, but at the same time he has caused quite a lot of damage and continues to come back and visit the nursery."

Adorable though Claude may be, conservationists say his behaviour highlights a serious problem - there is not enough food in the heavily cleared local environment in the Northern Rivers region of NSW for koalas to eat.

"Claude and his friends raiding





▲ Claude the koala is caught on security cameras as he climbs down a pole to get into the nursery in New South Wales, left, where he munched on eucalyptus seedlings, top right PHOTOGRAPHS: WWF



"This area in the Northern Rivers, especially around Lismore, is heavily cleared and it's really missing goodquality habitat for them.

"We need to plant more trees and urgently stop tree clearing, especially around the Northern Rivers, which is a stronghold for koala populations in New South Wales."

About 500 seedlings that Claude had munched on have just been planted in the area to help provide food for him and his friends.

The seedlings were unsuitable for sale but still viable, so Herington donated them to WWF Australia, which is funding a larger community tree-planting project. Community groups have planted 400,000 seedlings in the region and are aiming to reach as many as 500,000 by the end of the year.

A 2020 NSW parliamentary inquiry found koalas would be extinct in the state by 2050 without urgent action.

"We're in one of the most biodiverse, rich areas on this continent, but historical clearing has seriously degraded the area," said the NSW Greens MP Sue Higginson.

"I'm privileged to be a custodian of this little patch of the Northern Rivers. My job, while I'm here, is to make this place better.

"We're doing this because we have an incredible koala population hanging on for dear survival right here."

after the River Neckar overflowed its banks in the city of Heidelberg PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL PROBST/AP

German floods prove need for urgent climate action, says chancellor

Kate Connolly

Berlin

The German chancellor, Olaf Scholz, said flooding in the south of the country was a call to action on the climate crisis, as the death toll from the disaster rose yesterday and thousands faced another night away from their homes.

At least four people have died, others are missing and thousands have been forced to evacuate after torrential rain at the weekend caused widespread flooding in Bavaria.

Speaking on a visit to Reichertshofen, in a flood-hit area north of Munich, Scholz said such floods were no longer a "one-off".

"This is an indication that something is up here. We must not neglect the task of stopping man-made climate change," he said.

The Bavarian state premier, Markus Söder, who accompanied Scholz on his visit, said there was no "full insurance" against climate change. "Events are happening here that have never happened before," he said, after a state of emergency was declared by districts across Bavaria.

The flooding, which comes just a fortnight before Germany hosts the Euro 2024 football championships, raised concerns about transport infrastructure during the tournament.

While no matches are due to be held in the affected areas, it has been suggested that the disruption caused by the flooding could have a knockon effect on hundreds of thousands of football fans as they travel to venues across the country.

Over the weekend, a volunteer firefighter died while trying to rescue trapped residents.

Police in Baden-Württemberg said yesterday a man and a woman had been found dead in the basement of their house in Schorndorf after the flooding. The same fate befell a 43-year-old woman in Schrobenhausen, Bavaria.



A cormorant sits on a streetlamp

The historic city of Regensburg, with a population of 150,000 people, announced a state of emergency yesterday as the water reached a critical point amid fears that the record deluges of 2013 and 2002 could be

The German military and the national relief organisation, THW, were in the area helping to rescue people and clearing dangerous

obstacles. Passengers stranded on Sunday were given refuge in trains in Stuttgart, Nuremberg and Munich.

Scholz expressed his gratitude to rescue workers, saying they had "tried to prevent the worst from happening and to save lives". He promised federal support for flooded areas and said that this was the fourth time he had visited a flood-stricken region this year.

"This shows how the situation has changed due to climate change," the chancellor said.

Environmentalists called for a greater willingness among politicians and the population at large to recognise the link between the high rains and floods, and climate change.

Additional reporting **Agence France-Presse and Reuters**



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'Yes, we have phones here' Stereotypes skewered by Nigerian TikTok star

Sarah Johnson

hen Charity
Ekezie joined
TikTok and
started posting
videos from her
home in Abuja,
Nigeria, in 2020, she had just left a
job at a radio station and thought it
might be a good way to keep busy
and not let her journalism skills
fall away.

Within months, she began to realise from the comments on her posts that some people knew nothing about Africa. People from the US and Europe would ask her how she had a phone or whether there was water in Africa.

"Wait, are you serious?" Ekezie remembers thinking at the time. "This is not the Africa I live in. I mean, we have phones in Africa. There is bottled water here. I decided to start responding."

Armed with humour and some heavy sarcasm, Ekezie's sharp and witty rebuttals to questions such as "does Africa have aeroplanes?" and "do you have shoes in Africa?" have gained the 32-year-old a combined following of more than 4.5m across TikTok, Instagram, YouTube and Facebook, with some posts



PHOTOGRAPH: ADEDAYO ADESILOLA/BLV STUDIOS

viewed tens of millions of times. In one TikTok post responding to a question asking how Africans can afford phones but not water, she holds a bottle of water with more stacked behind her, and explains that every month people gather for a spitting festival. "All the men do a spiritual chant led by the wizard of the community and all the women and girls take turns to spit in a drum ... After two days, we go and the saliva is purified. We can now take it and drink," she jokes.

People laughed at the videos, so Ekezie made more, and more questions came. She thinks some were people trolling her, but many were genuine.

One post featured her and two cousins dancing in a lake, responding to comments saying there is no water in Africa. It has had more than 22m views but also attracted thousands of racist comments. Ekezie didn't always spot the racism. "I didn't understand it," she says. "I knew the concept of racism but I had never been treated in a racist way before. It hurt me so much."

But she has also received a lot of positive feedback from many Africans, some of whom join in on the joke in the comments section. On one post making light of the fact that many people don't understand Africa is a continent rather than a single country, people from nations across Africa commented with emojis of their flags. "No matter the country they came from, they were united and in on the joke," says Ekezie. "One person said: 'You are single-handedly going to unite Africa.' That was so cool."

Ekezie is grateful social media allows her to share her perspective. Since her following on YouTube has rocketed, she has been able to make a living from the posts.

"I'm not saying African countries are perfect," she says. "I mean, which country is perfect anyway? But we need to put our best foot forward. People need to know that, in as much as we have our own problems, we are also amazing. We have amazing culture, amazing food, amazing people."

Paris 'emptied of vulnerable people' in lead-up to Olympics

Kim Willsher

Paris

Thousands of homeless people have been removed from Paris and the surrounding area as part of a "clean-up" operation before the Olympic Games, campaigners say.

Those moved on included migrants, families and children already in a precarious and vulnerable situation, the collective Le Revers de la Médaille, which represents 90 associations, said in a report yesterday.

Police were also cracking down on prostitutes and drug addicts, removing them from their usual networks in which they could receive vital health care and support, it added.

"The Île-de-France region has been emptied of some of the people that the powers that be consider undesirable," it concluded.

The collective said expulsions and the dismantling of tent camps in and around the city had intensified since April last year, and that 12,545 people had been moved in the last 13 months.

Paul Alauzy, a coordinator for Médecins du Monde, accused the authorities of "social cleansing" the city's most precarious population in order for Paris to "appear in the most flattering light possible" for the Olympics. He said people were being bussed to temporary centres set up last year in other regions as a short-term fix for the problem.

"They are hiding the misery under the rug," he said. "If this really was a dignified solution to the problem, people would be fighting to get on the buses. They're not. We are in the process of making life impossible for these people and those who support them."

The collective said at least 20,000 homes were needed across France, including 7,000 in the Île-de-France region, to provide a long-term solution for the homeless. Paris city hall had come up with a plan to provide 1,000 urgent places but it had yet to be approved by the prefect, the state representative, it added.

The report qualified social cleansing as "the harassment, expulsion and disappearance of populations categorised by the public authorities as undesirable from the venues where the Games are happening".

"This clean-up is based on a double approach of dispersal to avoid the creation of informal settlements that would be too visible, and the removal from the Paris conurbation of those people who are in a very precarious situation and who may occupy public space on a daily basis," it said.
"Although these public policies have been in place for a number of years, a number of indicators lead us to believe that the Olympic Games are acting as an accelerator."

Anne Hidalgo, the Paris mayor, has said city hall has been asking the government, which is responsible or emergency housing, to come up with a credible plan to accommodate the estimated 3,600 people living on the capital's streets "for years".



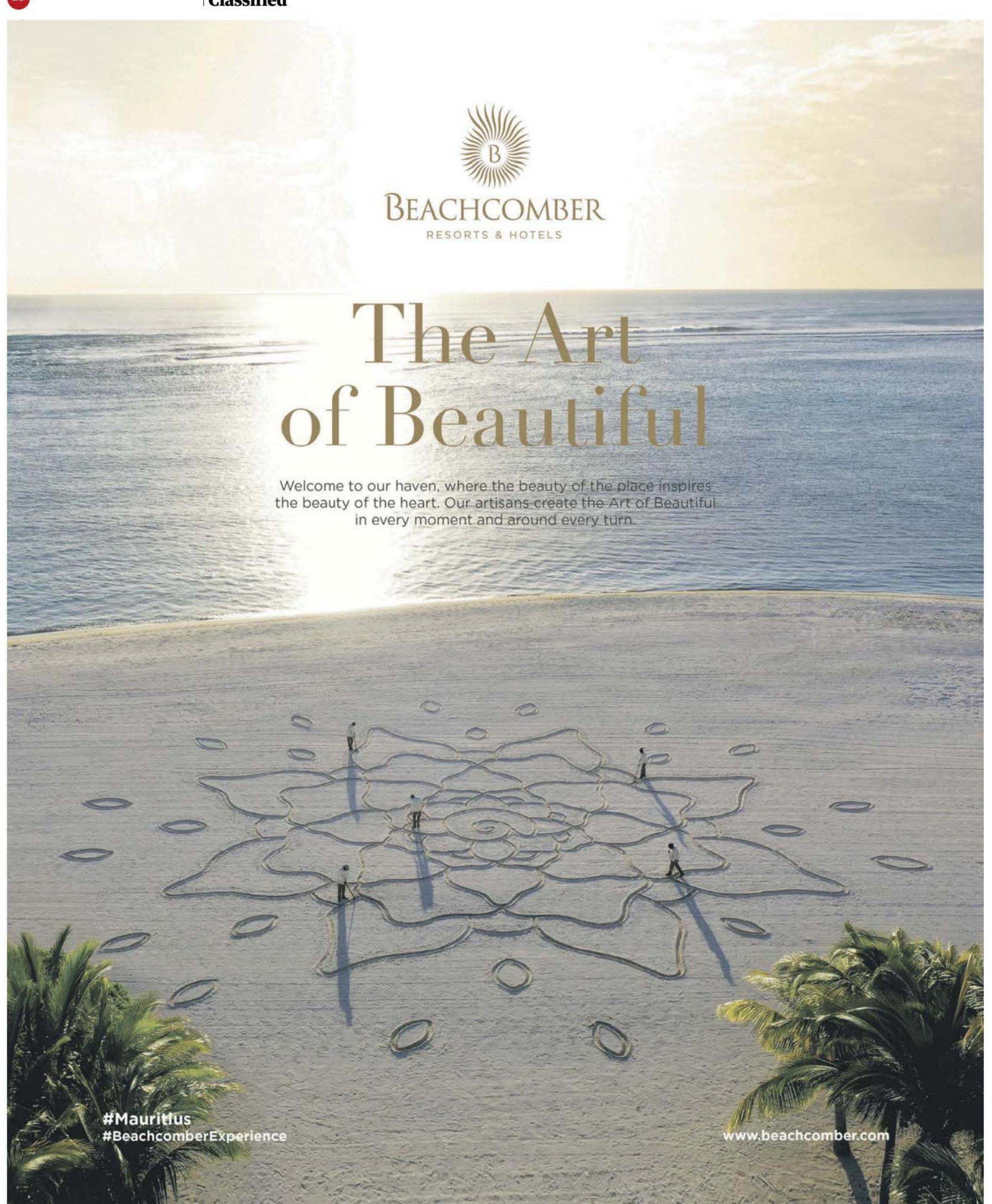
▲ Seats being set up in Paris's central security zone, where 300 people were said to face removal for the Games

Last year she insisted nobody would be forced to leave the city.

"I am angry about this being pushed on to the city," Hidalgo said. "We already play more than our part in finding urgent accommodation for vulnerable people. Every week we are putting families into homes," she said.

In April, Pierre Rabadan, the deputy mayor in charge of the Olympics, said the problem was the number of people living on the streets. He said the 300 people who faced being moved from the central security zone for the Games represented less than 10% of rough sleepers in Paris. "We should surely be able to find a dignified solution for them."

Léa Filoche, the deputy mayor for emergency housing and protecting refugees, laid the blame with the central government. "First they said they'd come up with 400 places, then 200. Now it's down to 80. We came up with a plan to create 1,000 urgent places. They came back to us and said they had no money."



Growth in UK

weakest since

fall in inflation

Consumer spending growth is at its

weakest in more than three years as

higher council tax bills and the rising

cost of broadband and mobile phones

eat into household budgets, a report

2021 despite

spending

Larry Elliott

has said.

Economics editor





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Business

China's Shein wins Labour support for London listing

Jack Simpson

The Labour party has indicated its support for Shein's potential London listing, as the Chinese online fashion company prepares to push the button on the UK's biggest ever stock market flotation.

The retailer is reportedly close to confidentially filing a prospectus for the listing on the London Stock Exchange to the Financial Conduct Authority as early as this week.

Labour confirmed a report that its MPs had met the retailer, among "a range of companies including Shein that are looking to invest or list in Britain". A spokesperson for the party said: "Raising investment, productivity and growth is one of Labour's missions for government."

However, the listing could prove politically divisive. Shein's decision to opt for London comes after an initial effort to float in New York was derailed when politicians and regulators raised concerns about tensions between Beijing and Washington.

Senior politicians, including three parliamentary committee chairs, have questioned efforts to woo Shein, and raised concerns about labour conditions in its supply chains.

Labour said it expected "the highest regulatory standards and business practices" from businesses operating in the UK. "We believe the best way to ensure this is to have more companies operating from and regulated by UK law," the spokesperson said.

Jonathan Reynolds, the shadow business secretary; Sarah Jones, the shadow minister for industry; and Chris Bryant, the shadow minister for creative industries, recently met Donald Tang, Shein's executive chair, to discuss listing, the Times reported.

The chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, also met Tangearlier this year to try to persuade Shein to list in the UK rather than New York.

The company, launched in Nanjing, China, in 2012, has become one of the world's largest fashion retailers because of its low prices and highvolume sales. It is headquartered in Singapore. While most of its suppliers are based in China, it does not sell products within the country.

The company posted more than \$2bn (£1.6bn) of profits in 2023, nearly double the \$1.1bn of 2021. If listed in

the UK, it is understood it could be valued at £50bn.

The expected filing of a prospectus does not guarantee the company will list in the UK, but people close to the process told Sky News - which first reported the impending filing - that a City float for Shein was likely.

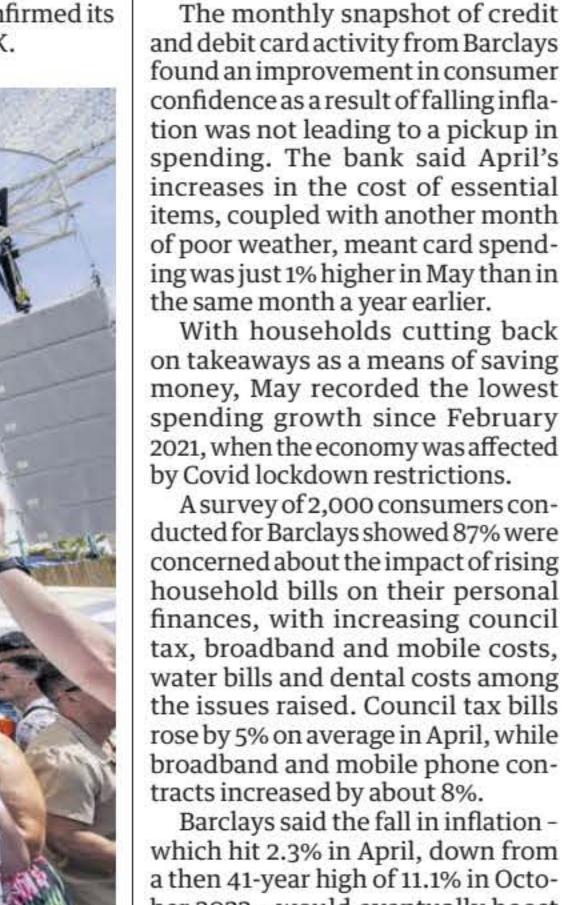
Shein's profits in 2023. If it lists in London it is understood the online retailer could be valued at £50bn

Shein has previously responded to criticism by saying it took visibility across its supply chain seriously, had zero tolerance of forced labour and was committed to human rights.

If Shein does list in the UK it would be a significant boost in a gloomy period for the LSE, with a number of high-profile firms leaving the UK for listings elsewhere.

Last month, the Paddy Power owner, Flutter, confirmed it was moving its listing from London to New York, while the UK chip designer Arm opted to list on Wall Street last August after the government failed to persuade it to float in the UK.

In February, the Anglo-German travel company Tui voted to abandon the LSE in favour of listing its shares solely in Germany.



broadband and mobile phone contracts increased by about 8%. Barclays said the fall in inflation which hit 2.3% in April, down from a then 41-year high of 11.1% in October 2022 - would eventually boost activity. The survey found almost one in three consumers (28%) said they would spend more when the weather improved.

Karen Johnson, the head of retail at Barclays, said: "Retailers faced a challenging May, yet the few sunnier days in the month did bring a welcome uptick in footfall. As consumers gear up to spend more with better weather, and with the Euros, Wimbledon and Taylor Swift's Eras tour on the horizon, there's a brighter outlook for the coming months."

A separate survey from the British Retail Consortium and KPMG also highlighted the effect of the weather on consumer behaviour.

The report showed retail spending in stores and online was 0.7% up on a year earlier, an improvement on April's 4% annual decrease.

Helen Dickinson, the BRC's chief executive, said: "Despite a strong bank holiday weekend for retailers, minimal improvement to weather across most of May meant only a modest rebound in retail sales."



▲ A Shein show in Ibiza in May. The company has grown rapidly since its launch in 2012 PHOTOGRAPH: XAVI TORRENT/GETTY

Melrose gives £176m shares handout to 21 executives

Jack Simpson

The UK engineering firm Melrose Industries has handed out a £176m reward pot to 21 of its current and former executives, with the lion's share going to three of them.

In a move that is likely to further

fuel the controversy over executive pay, the FTSE 100 company confirmed yesterday that the bosses had been issued with shares totalling £176m under a bonus scheme set up in 2020.

The business's former finance director Geoffrey Martin and two of its co-founders - ex-CEO Simon Peckham and previous vice-chair Christopher Miller - have received the lion's share of the 28.8m shares.

As they no longer work for the company, Melrose does not have to disclose how much they are getting, but it is understood it could be up to half of the total - £88m.

The trio will have to hold on to shares worth three times their former salaries, roughly about £1.5m each, but can sell the rest at any time.

The payout, which follows similar

bumper deals for the bosses of UK firms such as AstraZeneca's Pascal Soriot and David Schwimmer of the London Stock Exchange, is the product of a four-year performance plan under which managers stood to gain 7.5% of any increase to the market value of the company since 2020.

During that period, the share price of the group has increased by more than £4bn, with the business now worth more than £8.1bn.

The scheme was set up just a couple of years after the company came in for heavy criticism over a hostile takeover of the British engineering stalwart GKN, which led to Melrose being condemned by the Conservative MP Robert Halfon as "robber baron capitalism at its worst".

While the total pot for the payout was about £330m, the company said

that just under £160m had been paid to HMRC, with it in effect cancelling 25m shares to raise the cash.

Peter Dilnot, Melrose's chief executive, will receive just over £1m in shares but will be unable to sell them while still at the company.

The payouts will be the final payday for Miller and Peckham, who alongside David Roper set up Melrose in 2003. After a series of big industrial acquisitions, its most high-profile deal came in 2018 with the GKN takeover which prompted Melrose to refocus as a specialist aerospace company.

Peckham told the Sunday Times in April the bumper award represented a "good payout". He said: "You could take a view that no one should earn more than this or that, but I would say that's capitalism working."

However, there was some good news last month when the UK-based tech firm Raspberry Pi confirmed its intention to float in the UK.

Business

Business view Nils Pratley



Scaring off festival sponsors won't stop fossil fuel firms making hay this summer

n a ranking of climate villains in the fund management industry, Baillie Gifford would surely come a long way down most people's list. The Edinburgh-based firm preaches long-termism and its specialism is backing technology companies, especially those with kit to accelerate the transition to cleaner energy and transport. It was early into Tesla on the thesis that polluting internal combustion engines are on the way out and Elon Musk had a winning electric design. Another high-profile bet was Northvolt, the Swedish pacesetter in batteries that is now the net zero envy of the rest of Europe.

Few portfolios in the

mainstream asset management world are entirely free of fossil fuel assets but Baillie Gifford's are definitely at the less oily end. As the firm has pointed out repeatedly in recent weeks, only 1% of the £225bn of the assets it manages is invested directly in fossil fuel companies, and the figure is still only 2% if one includes stocks such as supermarkets that sell petrol. The industry average is 11%.

None of these details matter to a campaign group called Fossil Free Books. With the help of high-profile endorsements from the likes of the singer Charlotte Church and the comedian Nish Kumar, it has managed to bounce the organisers of the Hay festival and the Edinburgh international book festival into dropping Baillie



▲ Asset manager Baillie Gifford has been dropped as principal sponsor of the Hay festival after lobbying from Fossil Free Books photograph: STEVEN MAY/ALAMY

Gifford as principal sponsor. For the activists, the fact that 1% to 2% adds up to the seemingly large number of £2.5bn-£5bn is all that matters - never mind that a single oil company, Shell, is worth almost £200bn, and never mind that Baillie Gifford is not free to divest because, as is normal, it manages to mandates set by its clients.

One can also wonder why a group of "workers in the literary industry" didn't start by pitching their demands closer to home. Waterstones and the US book chain Barnes & Noble - two major employers in the literary industry - are owned by the New Yorkbased hedge fund Elliott, whose commodities operation says it actively trades in "crude oil and oil products, natural gas" among other things. Not a squeak from the campaigners on that front.

Thankfully, somebody in the literary world can see what's going on here. The environmental writer Mark Lynas, the author of Our Final Warning: Six Degrees of Climate Emergency, wrote a sensible

blogpost decrying the attacks on a "soft target" of Hay "in a campaign primarily relying on peer pressure and public moral intimidation, because the activists knew the festival management would have to give in".

As he says, not a penny will end up being disinvested, nor will any emissions be reduced. "All that's happened is that literary festivals now have huge holes in their budgets which will mean they have to raise ticket prices (excluding those on lower incomes) or maybe go out of business. Who would risk sponsoring now, given what has happened?"

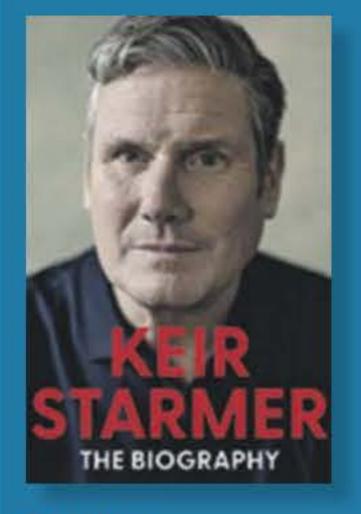
Exactly right. The likely outcome from such extreme demands will be a decline in sponsorship for the arts. Yes, festivals should apply an ethical filter of some form, but an insistence on investment purity will only lead to a plunge in contributions. Boardrooms everywhere will now be assessing whether they should quietly not renew next year.

The cause of climate activism will not be advanced when the demands are so absolute. Before the financing of arts festivals is completely wrecked, it would be useful if more authors dared to say so. Really, there isn't a long queue of alternative liberal-minded sponsors out there.

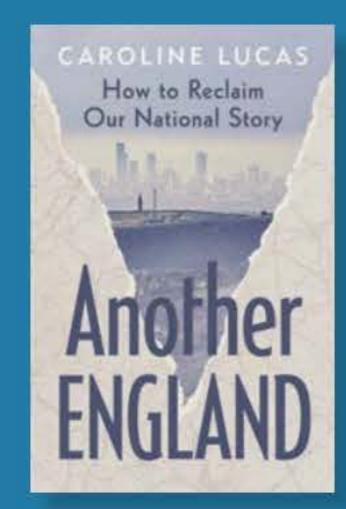
Election reading



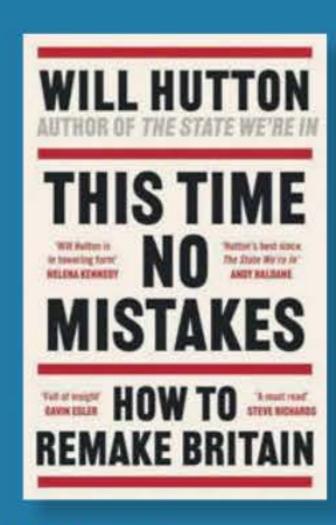
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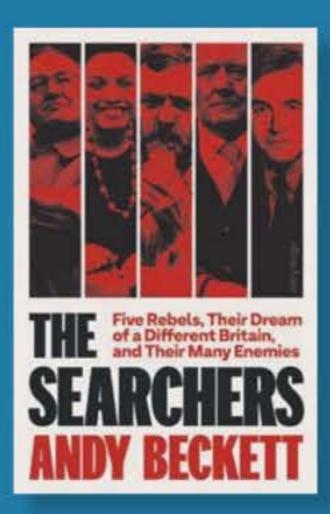
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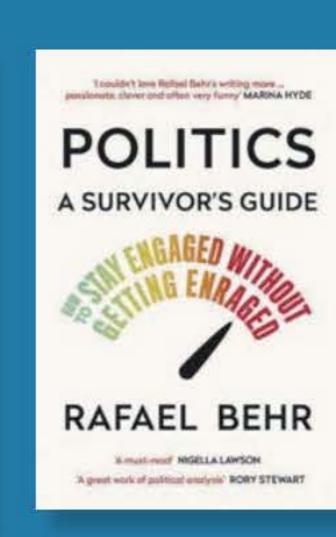
£18.70 RRP £22



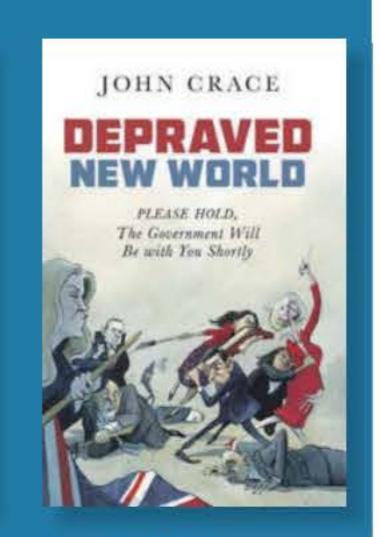
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£9.67 RRP£10.99



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Blackstone raises bid for song owner Hipgnosis to \$1.6bn

Jack Simpson

A private equity company attempting to take over Hipgnosis sweetened its offer to value the troubled music rights owner at nearly \$1.6bn (£1.3bn) yesterday as it sought to end a protracted sale process.

Blackstone has said it will switch the offer for the Hipgnosis Songs Fund to a "scheme of arrangement deal", which would require it to meet a higher threshold of shareholder support but could make the takeover quicker if it is achieved.

In an attempt to secure the support of more investors in the company, which owns the rights of artists including Beyoncé, Neil Young, Red Hot Chili Peppers and Justin Bieber, it has increased its offer by \$0.01 to \$1.31 a share, which would value Hipgnosis at about \$1.58bn.

The revised offer comes after Blackstone fought off competition for Hipgnosis from the US-based royalties fund Concord Music, which had offered \$1.4bn.

If the deal is completed, it would mark the end of a turbulent six years for Hipgnosis, which was set up in 2018 by Merck Mercuriadis, a former manager of acts including





■ The Hipgnosis
Songs Fund
owns the rights
to music by
artists including
Beyoncé,
Red Hot Chili
Peppers (above)
and Justin
Bieber (below)
PHOTOGRAPH:
KEVIN MAZUR/
WIREIMAGE/
PARKWOOD

Elton John, Iron Maiden, Guns N' Roses and Beyoncé. Mercuriadis used his music industry connections to spend millions on the rights to 138 catalogues with more than 40,000 songs, but the company ran into problems recently because of rising interest rates and changes to the valuation of its songs.

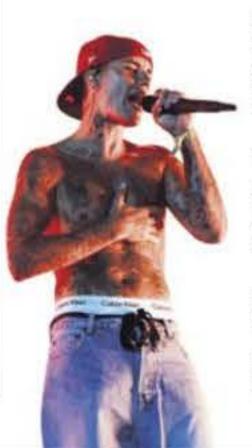
This resulted in a shareholder rebellion last year, with its investors voting in October against continuing the struggling fund in its then form.

Under the scheme of arrangement deal put forward by Blackstone, the takeover will need approval from 75% of voting shareholders. The previous arrangement required 55% of all investors to back the deal.

However, once this is met the deal becomes binding across all investors and would make it easier for Blackstone to control all of the shares in issue, regardless of whether a shareholder voted for it or not.

Blackstone is already a majority shareholder in Hipgnosis's investment adviser, Hipgnosis Song Management, which is paid to manage the music rights fund.

The deal would be separate to this, but Blackstone did have an option to make an offer for the Hipgnosis portfolio if the advisory agreement was terminated.



'A battleground' More tribunals expected as companies try to clamp down on remote working

Jane Croft

awyers and HR experts expect an increase in employment tribunal cases as companies increasingly clamp down on working from home and staff become resentful that the flexibility they have enjoyed since the pandemic is being slowly rolled back.

A number of companies are now advocating a full five-day return to the office, with others enforcing a minimum number of days in the workplace. Administrative staff at Boots, who previously worked in the office three days a week, will return to the office five days a week from September. Many US banks,

such as Goldman Sachs, also expect senior staff to come in for the full week, and its chief executive, David Solomon, labelled remote working an "aberration".

Lawyers say some employers have become emboldened after an employment tribunal rejected the case of a senior manager who sued the City watchdog, the UK Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), because she wanted to work at home full time.

The employment judge Robert Richter ruled that the financial watchdog was within its rights to reject Elizabeth Wilson's request. He said there were "weaknesses with remote working" and added that the case raised a key issue "which will no doubt be the subject of continued litigation".

Richard Fox, a partner at

Keystone Law, said that although each tribunal claim would turn on its own facts, the FCA case was significant and closely watched.

"The FCA case was not binding but employers have felt it is an important case to consider," he said. "The issue is becoming a battleground and we advise employers to play it very carefully."

The HR consultancy Hamilton Nash said it expected the number of employment tribunals involving remote working to rise this year. Its analysis of past tribunal records shows that 42 tribunals mentioned remote working in 2022 - up 50% from the 27 cases in 2021.

In the first half of 2023, there were 23 cases, it said. This compares with pre-pandemic when just six employment tribunal cases cited working from home in 2019 and 16 cases in 2020.

"I would expect more tribunal cases," said Jim Moore, employee relations expert at Hamilton Nash.

"We're seeing significant tensions between flexible working requests from people keen to secure their hybrid arrangements and employers pushing people back into the office."

Gemma Dale, a senior lecturer in the business school at Liverpool John Moores University, said the FCA case "was one of the few cases since the pandemic and there hasn't been that much case law". In some cases business leaders were advocating a return to the office based on their personal views, she said.

She added: "The progress made on flexible working is quite fragile. The Homes Under the

'The fallacy that all those working from home are watching TV is still strong in some organisations'

Gemma Dale Liverpool John Moores University Hammer fallacy that everyone who is working from home is watching TV is still strong in some organisations," she said.

A survey of chief executives by accountancy firm KPMG published last October found 63% of global leaders in the UK predicted a full return to in-office working by 2026.

Companies including law firms and big banks are now increasingly using entry gate data to track staff attendance, said Raoul Parekh, partner at law firm GQ Littler. "What we are seeing is monitoring of staff, looking at badge data to track staff, and what I would expect now round the corner is the next phase of enforcement and disciplinary action," he said.

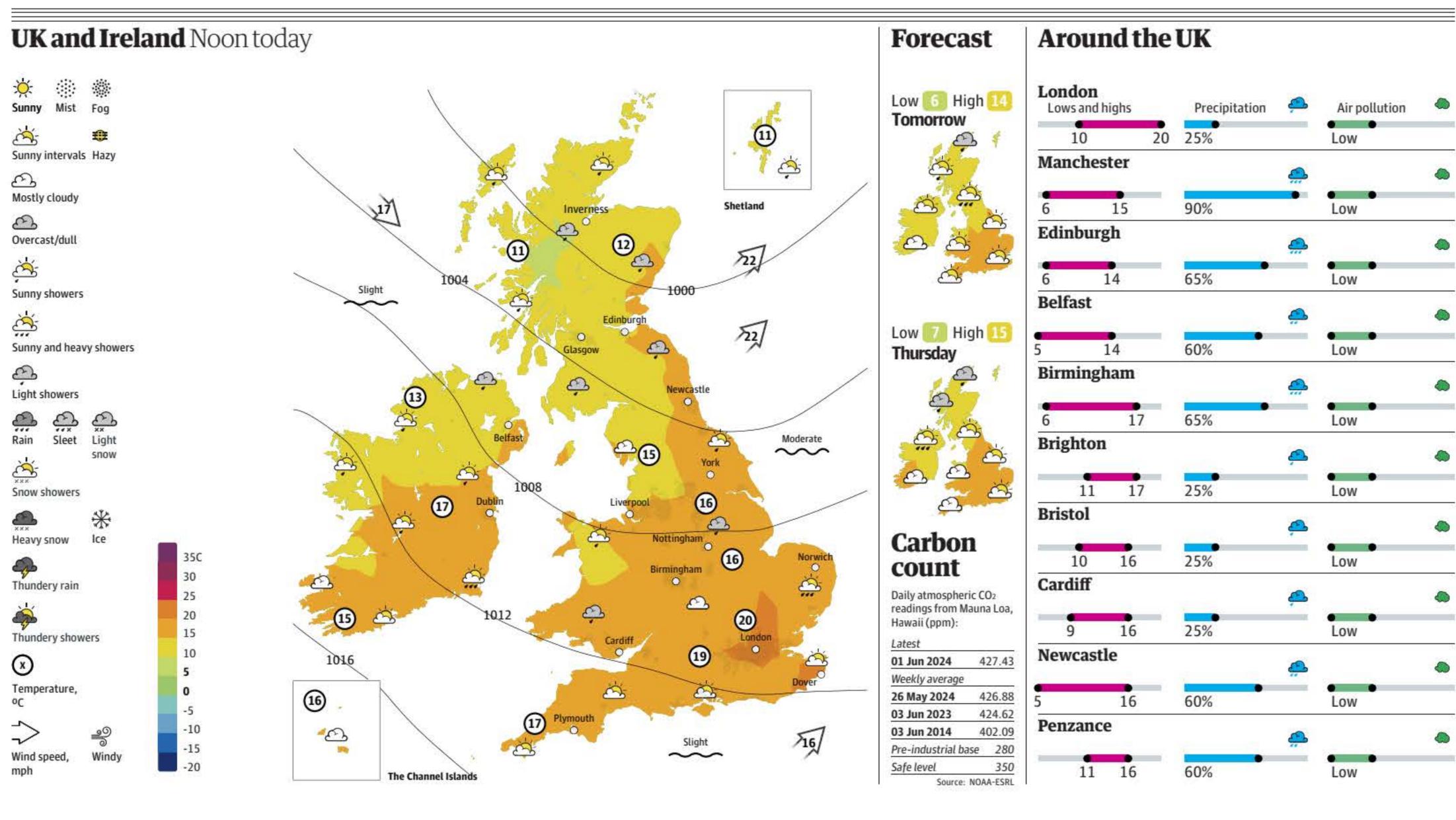
Last year Lloyds Banking Group offered free food to help win over staff who were asked to come back into the office two days a week.

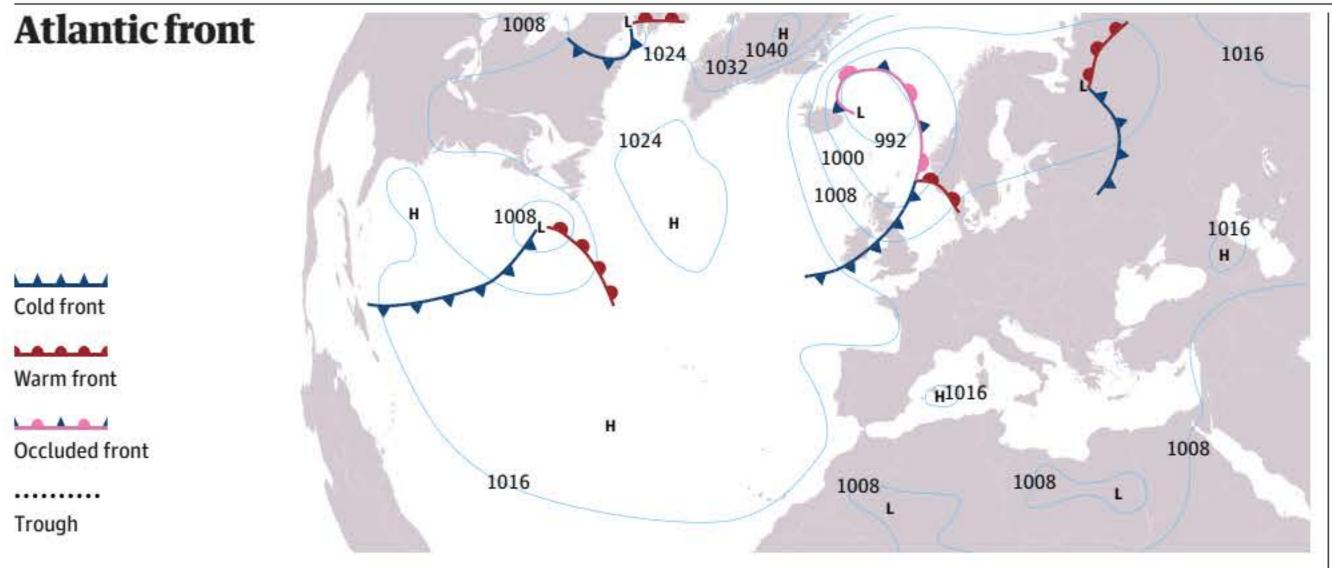
Sharon Doherty, Lloyds' chief people and places officer, has said the new arrangement provides "an enhanced range of flexible working policies for our people".

Paula Tegg, the assistant general secretary of Accord, the union that represents staff at Lloyds, said that since last year's backlash most staff had returned, "albeit in some cases begrudgingly", and flexibility had generally been granted for caring responsibilities or health issues.



Weather Tuesday 4 June 2024





High tides

Aberdeen	0010	3.9m	1219	4.1m
Avonmouth	0600	12.2m	1828	12.3m
Barrow	1019	8.9m	2249	8.7m
Belfast	1002	3.4m	2229	3.3m
Cobh	0408	3.8m	1634	3.8m
Cromer	0535	4.5m	1735	4.8m
Dover	1012	6.2m	2230	6.4m
Dublin	1031	4.0m	2306	3.8m
Galway	0358	4.8m	1624	4.9m
Greenock	1122	3.3m	2350	3.2m
Harwich	1040	3.8m	2253	3.8m
Holyhead	0909	5.4m	2144	5.3m
Hull	0511	6.8m	1719	7.2m
Leith	0115	5.1m	1330	5.3m

8.9m

2229

8.8m

0957

Liverpool

Milford Haven	0458	6.5m	1725	6.5m
Newquay	0353	6.4m	1619	6.4m
North Shields	0215	4.7m	1423	4.8m
Oban	0451	3.7m	1705	3.5m
Penzance	0325	5.2m	1554	5.1m
Plymouth	0429	5.1m	1659	5.1m
Portsmouth	1011	4.4m	2241	4.7m
Southport	0919	8.6m	2157	8.5m
Stornoway	0544	4.5m	1820	4.4m
Weymouth	0449	1.1m	1723	1.1m
Whitby	0248	5.1m	1459	5.3m

3.2m

7.8m

Source: © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Times are local UK times

6.7m

3.8m

London Bridge 0012

Lossiemouth

Wick

Workington

1035

1008

1021

1250

2316

2249

2251

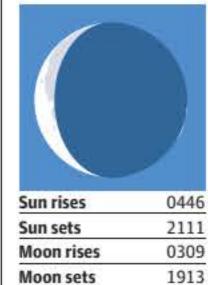
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Sun & Moon



Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather @2024

New I

Lighting up

Norwich 2112 to 0434

Penzance 2126 to 0515

		Belfast	2154 to 0452
		Birm'ham	2123 to 0447
10	N N	Brighton	2108 to 0450
	13	Bristol	2121 to 0457
V		Carlisle	2143 to 0436
A COLOR	4	Cork	2147 to 0518
ises	0446	Dublin	2147 to 0500
ets	2111	Glasgow	2156 to 0436
rises	0309	Harlech	2135 to 0454
sets	1913	Inverness	2207 to 0422
Moon	6 June	London	2111 to 0445
cu		M'chester	2131 to 0444
eather .com		Newcastle	2139 to 0431

Weather tracker

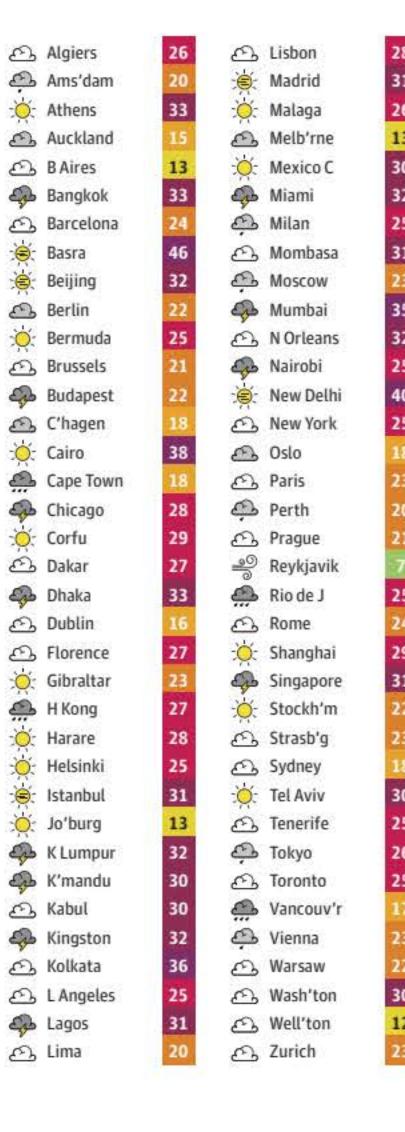
Finland had exceptionally warm weather in May, with temperatures significantly higher than normal by day and night across large parts of the country. The Nordic nation officially recorded 16 heatwave days, breaking the previous high of 14 days set in 2018. The Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI) defines heatwave conditions as days when temperatures reach 25C.

Average temperatures were 3-4C higher than normal in the south and west, and 1-3C above normal in the north and east. At the Hattula Lepaa observation station, 29.9C was recorded on 31 May, the warmest day of the month.

The high temperatures were the result of an area of high pressure that sat across much of northern Europe, with higher than usual temperatures also observed in Norway and Sweden. Humaninduced climate change was likely to have played a part, with temperatures about 2C higher than they would have been in a preindustrial climate, the FMI said.

It was also extremely dry, with some areas receiving less than 10% of normal rainfall. There are fears that sustained dry and warm weather this summer could bring an increased risk of forest fires and drought. Matt Andrews MetDesk

Around the world



3

Rugby league

Fans at Wembley to pay tribute to Burrow

Page 35 →

Football

Lionesses out to avoid another French lesson

Euro 2025 qualifying, page 36 →





▲ José Mourinho was worshipped like a deity by the Fenerbahce fans during his unveiling ANADOLU/GETTY IMAGES

Welcome to hell

Mourinho thrives on discomfort with Fenerbahce move a fitting sanctuary

Jonathan Liew



owards the end of the second hour, with the time beginning to drag like heat, and even the flies losing the will to live, José Mourinho leans towards the microphone. "After 20 years of football, this is the longest press conference of my career," he announces with a wry smile.
"Welcome to Turkey," replies Ali Koc, the billionaire president of Fenerbahce.

And of course it always starts like this: with smiles and quips, handshakes and camera flashes, with the promise of something new and pristine. With warm tributes to his predecessor and a catchy pre-written slogan - "the shirt is going to be my skin," he says at his unveiling - and the sincerely expressed belief that there is nowhere on Earth he would rather be than right here, in Europe's ninth-best league, at a club that hasn't won the title in a decade, preparing for the Champions League second qualifying round in late July.

"What is ambition?" he asked enigmatically yesterday afternoon. "To have a London club and fight to be sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth? To have a team in Italy stay fifth, sixth, seventh? To be in Portugal? Ambition is to play to win. Ambition is to feel the heat. For me, Fenerbahce means ambition."

Like the very best actors, part of Mourinho's residual appeal is the way he can still say this stuff and sound like he means it. Incidentally this is what makes him - at the age of 61, with his best coaching years well in the past - such an irresistible target for brands and sponsors. José sincerely flogging sticker albums on the telly. José sincerely reclining into his business-class airline seat. José sincerely plugging some new football app. Hang on, you think. He doesn't appear

to be remotely embarrassed by this at all. He appears genuinely invested in the product. Did he even get sacked by Roma, or was it "mutual consent"?

Of course, the unspoken part was left unspoken for a reason. Mourinho's appointment at Fenerbahce was not, by any measure, the biggest footballing story of the day. It wasn't even the biggest unveiling of the day. This is shaping up to be a summer of monumental managerial manoeuvres, with the Chelsea, Barcelona, Bayern Munich, Liverpool, Ajax, Manchester United, Brighton, West Ham, Marseille, Juventus and Napoli jobs either vacant or in contention. And Mourinho's name was basically nowhere in any of it.

those stories that feels familiar, and yet seems to make less sense the more you interrogate it. Particularly when you examine some of the coaches being touted for these jobs: men such as Vincent Kompany and Enzo Maresca and Kieran McKenna and Thiago Motta whose reputations rest on one or two promising seasons and the elixir of novelty. And in an age when clubs increasingly derive revenue not just from gate receipts but from engagement, there is a tangible value in being able to offer the impression of renewal. Some or all of the above may turn out to be excellent coaches. But right now the crucial part - the sellable part - is that we don't know.

ow we reached this point is one of

Whereas with Mourinho, we do know, or we think we do. Even as he arrives, you can see the outline of how it ends, identify the faultlines that will turn into deadly rifts, spot the weaknesses that Mourinho will brandish as excuses. "A big percentage of our players are in the Euros," he pointed out by way of managing expectations for the Champions League qualifiers. He demands time and calmness, urges president Koc "to be stable, to be patient, to be balanced".

Yes, well: good luck with that. And perhaps the most intriguing aspect of this job is the extent to which Mourinho will be at the mercy of forces beyond his control. He has walked straight into a bitter presidential election campaign, with Koc standing against his predecessor, Aziz Yildirim, this weekend.

Even as he arrives you can see the outline of how it ends and identify the faultlines

Yildirim has been claiming Mourinho had to ask his permission to take the job, and that his first move will be to sign Paulo Dybala and Romelu Lukaku from his former club Roma. Mourinho had to deny this, and pledged allegiance to Koc. He could well be working with Yildirim by next Monday. So, good luck with that.

Then there is the football, and an ageing squad in which Edin Dzeko (38) and Dusan Tadic (35) will bear much of the attacking burden. The schedule will be relentless, the

standards exacting: Mourinho's predecessor, Ismail Kartal, led Fenerbahce to a record 99 points last season, but Galatasaray got 102, so he was sacked.

But there is also a certain synergy here. The Fenerbahce fans who flocked in their tens of thousands to the Sukru Saracoglu Stadium on Sunday already worship Mourinho like a deity and will expect deific feats in return for their devotion. It is not sufficient simply to win; they must win with spite: to advocate and emote, to demean rivals and impugn referees, to scream about conspiracies and corruptions. This of course is Mourinho's constituency, his sanctuary. Discomfort is his comfort.

This is why the Saudi riyal and the Major League Soccer dollar held little interest for him. A seething cauldron; a packed stadium; a club sufficiently starved of success to suspend its disbelief one more time. A two-year deal, which feels like the height of optimism on both sides. It always starts the same way. It always ends the same way. It's the bit in between that still beguiles, the conviction – against all available evidence – that this ride will be worth the trouble.

Sport Cricket T20 World Cup

Group B

Archer targets homecoming glory with England in Barbados

Ali Martin

Bridgetown

It will be a pretty magical moment for Jofra Archer when he walks on to the Kensington Oval today, with his friends, family and perhaps even his beloved bulldogs looking on. Jos Buttler's England begin their T20 World Cup defence - Scotland first up - and their chances of a repeat have only increased with the fast bowler's homecoming in this tournament.

Those recent warm-ups against Pakistan in the UK were a just pair of boxes being ticked. A precious asset of beguiling pace and skill, Archer was advised by Rob Key not to set any targets during that most recent 14-month absence with an elbow stress fracture. But thoughts of a first international on the island where it all began were his sustenance.

Cricket is baked into the soil in Barbados, some even positing that the porous coral rock underfoot is why it has produced 100 international players over the years. Not one but two of this remarkable crop will be decked out in the red of England today, Archer joined by his best friend Chris Jordan.

"Jofra is obviously a really cool, calm and collected guy but I'm sure there's some emotion around that as well," Buttler said, a day before this Group B clash in Bridgetown. "He'll

England v Scotland Kensington Oval

3.30pm

England

Probable

JC Buttler (capt/wkt),
PD Salt, WG Jacks,
JM Bairstow, HC Brook,
Moeen Ali, SM Curran,
CJ Jordan, MA Wood,
JC Archer, Adil Rashid

Probable
HG Munsey, OJ Hairs,
MA Jones, B McMullen,
RD Berrington (capt),
MH Cross (wkt), MA Leask,
MR I Watt BT I Wheal

BJ Currie, BC Sole

28° 🚓

Umpires NN Menon (Ind)and Asif Yaqoob (Pak)
TV umpire JS Wilson (WI) Referee DRS Madugalle (Sri)
TV Sky Sports Cricket Radio BBC 5 Live Sports Extra

Over-by-over Follow our coverage live on the web

theguardian.com/cricket

be desperate to perform well. We know what he's capable of but we just need to allow him to be for a bit and not expect too much."

Phil Salt, Buttler's opening partner, makes it a third connection to the island; considered an adopted Bajan by the locals given the six years of his youth spent living here. Salt played junior club cricket alongside Hayley Matthews, the West Indies women's captain, and was also sat in the Hall & Griffith Stand when Paul Collingwood's side won the T20 in 2010.

"Every kid in the ground thought that 'is going to be me one day' but you never believe it. Colly came past the stand with the trophy afterwards and said 'here you are, touch it while you can' and that always sticks with me when I think about that day. To be here in an England shirt is incredible."

Barbados can be a distracting place for touring cricketers, the senses almost instinctively becalmed upon arrival as holidaymakers bake on the beaches and enjoy the sultry evenings. But even though some



squad members enjoyed a boat trip out into its azure blue waters yesterday, English minds really should be sharp and alert from the get-go, with a record to set straight after that blowout in India last winter.

Buttler was keen to move on, as his players underwent their final drills before the big push. "I am focused on this World Cup," he replied when asked about it. A simple question about any Caribbean-specific advice from England's new consultant coach, Keiron Pollard, was also met with a sarcastic: "He said it's windy." Given they apparently needed a local expert to tell them not to bowl first in a Mumbai heatwave, hopefully the Trinidadian's input is a bit more fleshed out in private.

In fairness, there has been a lot of talking during the buildup to this

one and, thanks to rain in Leeds and Cardiff before departure, too little cricket. Unlike his Test equivalent, Ben Stokes, Buttler is not one to give a team or even clues as to its makeup in advance. But from the two T20s England did play back home, the side appears settled, confident and the final call may be a second outright quick in Mark Wood or Reece Topley's left-arm swing.

The pitch will be the same one used for the low-scoring Oman versus Namibia match on Sunday night that was eventually settled by a super over and so a case could be made for either direction. There was a bit of inconsistent bounce that might make Wood a particularly awkward proposition, equally Namibia's Ruben Trumpelmann, a left-armer with a similar build to the giant Topley, got the white Kookaburra to swing.

Namibia's eventual victory was under lights, however, and England's first meeting with Scotland since they lost a one-off ODI in 2018 starts at 10.30am. Either way, Buttler's men are heavy favourites but associate upsets cannot be ruled out in cricket's most fickle format. Richie Berrington's side went unbeaten in qualifying, shocked Bangladesh and West Indies in their last two T20 World Cups, and in George Munsey have a 360-degree opener who hits a long ball. Mark Watt, the left-arm spinner who likes to keep tactical notes in his pocket, will be in the game unless this used pitch is rolled flat.

Group D

Cricket hits New York for six with tight game on dire pitch

Andy Bull

New York

"Ladies and gentlemen! Westbury is the next stop, change at Westbury for the Cricket World Cup!" After all these years, New York hosted its first game of big-time cricket yesterday, when South Africa beat Sri Lanka by six wickets at the brand new Nassau County International Cricket Stadium on Long Island.

It is a scaffold palace of a pop-up stadium, 30 miles outside Manhattan. A crowd of 12,500 locals travelled out on the Long Island Rail Road to watch, and were rewarded with a beautiful day for a game. The sun was out, the sky was blue, the drop-in pitch tricky and quick, and batting was hellishly difficult.

Holding a World Cup in New York is an absurdly ambitious venture. The organisers have built a stadium larger than Lord's out here in the middle of nowhere, and so much about it went so smoothly and well that it seems a shame to have to nitpick any part of it.

But the drop-in pitch is a stinker. Only one batsman scored at faster



than a run a ball, and that was Reeza Hendricks who made four. The game included 12 boundaries, six fours and six sixes, across both innings.

As Twenty20 games go, it made a good advert for Test cricket because it was oddly compelling despite the slow scoring. The New Yorkers - most of them Sri Lankan expats but with a good scattering of South Africans, Indians, English and Trinidadians mixed in - seemed delighted just to be at the match. They made a hell of a noise, even though Sri Lanka's 77 was their lowest total in T20 cricket.

The surface seemed two-paced. Some deliveries shot by faster than a New York minute, others hardly bounced ankle high. There were two boundaries scored in the first 12 overs, one an uppercut by Kusal Mendis, the other a pick-up over midwicket by Kamindu Mendis. It wasn't for want of trying. The Sri Lankans swung and missed so often against South Africa's quicks that you wondered when the umpires were going to start calling the balls and strikes.

It didn't help them any that South Africa have such a mean attack for this kind of pitch, with four fast bowlers - two of them, Kagiso Rabada and Anrich Nortje, quicker than most, and another, Marco Jansen, taller than any. In the end it was the other one, Ottniel Baartman, who took control of the innings. He came on first change and had Pathum Nissanka

▲ Fans make their presence felt in South Africa's absorbing victory against Sri Lanka on Long Island ALEX DAVIDSON/ICC VIA GETTY IMAGES

caught at deep third with his first ball. Baartman conceded only three off his first two overs, and at the end of the powerplay Sri Lanka were 24 for one.

You could already tell which way the game was headed, but not how fast it was going to get there after Baartman gave way to Nortje. It felt like the batsmen had crested one wave only to come down the other side and see the even bigger one that was about to break over them. Nortje dismissed Kamindu Mendis in his first over, caught in the deep,

Scoreboard

P Nissanka c Klaasen b Baartman 8 †BKG Mendis c Stubbs b Nortje...........19 30 PHKD Mendis c Hendricks b Nortje11 15 *PW Hasaranga st De Kock b Maharaj ... 0 WSR Samarawickrama b Maharaj......0 KIC Asalanka c Hendricks b Nortje6 AD Mathews c Baartman b Nortje 16 MD Shanaka b Rabada..... MM Theekshana not out M Pathirana c Markram b Rabada......0 IDN Thushara run out (Nortje/Jansen) .. 0 Extras (lb3, w3)......6 Total (19.1 overs) Fall 13, 31, 32, 32, 40, 45, 68, 70, 71. Bowling Jansen 3.1-0-15-0; Rabada 4-1-21-2; Baartman 4-1-9-1; Maharaj 4-0-22-2; Nortje 4-0-7-4. †Q de Kock c&b Hasaranga RR Hendricks c PHKD Mendis b Thushara..4 *AK Markram c PHKD Mendis b Shanaka .. 12 14 T Stubbs c Asalanka b Hasaranga13 28 0 0 Extras (lb3, nb1, w2) Total (for 4, 16.2 overs) Fall 10, 23, 51, 58. Did not bat M Jansen, KA Maharaj,

New York South Africa beat Sri Lanka by six wickets.

Kusal Mendis, in his second, caught in the deep, Charith Asalanka in his third, caught in the deep, and Angelo Mathews in his fourth, and you'll never guess how.

Umpires CM Brown (NZ) and RA Kettleborough (Eng).

K Rabada, AA Nortje, OEG Baartman.

Toss Sri Lanka elected to bat.

Shanaka 3-1-6-1; Pathirana 3-0-12-0;

Hasaranga 3.2-22-2; Theekshana 1-0-3-0.

Bowling Mathews 3-0-16-0; Thushara 3-0-18-1;

Sri Lanka's solution was to send Wanindu Hasaranga up the order to attack the South Africa spinner Keshav Maharaj. Only Hasaranga was stumped off his second ball. Then Sadeera Samarawickrama was bowled by one after it. It took a couple of sixes from Mathews, and another from Dasun Shanaka to get their score up as high as the temperature. Their efforts were put into perspective by South Africa's own trundling innings running down a target of 78. It took them 16.2 overs.

▼ A photo of Rob Burrow and a fan, left as a tribute to the rugby league icon



'An inspiration': Burrow to be celebrated at final

After the death of the Leeds Rhinos great, the RFL intends to honour his remarkable life

Aaron Bower

The Rugby Football League has confirmed plans to celebrate the life of Rob Burrow at the Challenge Cup final on Saturday after the Leeds Rhinos legend's death at the age of 41.

Burrow died four and a half years after being diagnosed with motor neurone disease. Alongside his close friend Kevin Sinfield, he led a high-profile fundraising campaign to support people living with the incurable disease that has raised almost £20m and has led to plans for a dedicated MND centre in Leeds.

Burrow won the Challenge Cup twice with Leeds and he will be honoured at Wembley. A minute's silence will be held before the men's and women's finals on Saturday, with the RFL encouraging everyone to also take part in a minute's applause in the seventh minute of the games. Burrow wore the No 7 shirt during his playing career.

The RFL is also likely to ask supporters wishing to make their own personal tribute to Burrow to do so by the statue of rugby league legends Eric Ashton, Billy Boston, Martin Offiah, Alex Murphy and Gus Risman outside Wembley. Plans for a special statue of Burrow and Sinfield are still planned at Leeds's Headingley Stadium.

Tributes have poured in from across the sport and beyond, with Warrington's head coach, Sam Burgess, praising the impact Burrow has had in supporting the MND community. Burgess has his own experience of the disease; his father, Mark, was diagnosed with MND and died when Burgess was a

It's pretty raw still, he'll leave a massive hole ... he was a special guy'

Kevin SinfieldFriend and ex-teammate

teenager. "Condolences go to Rob and his family and friends," Burgess said.

"I think the saddest day was the day he was diagnosed. It was inevitable it was coming. He's left a legacy that will never be forgotten. What he's done for the MND community is unimaginable. He's an absolute inspiration and he should be remembered that way.

"We should celebrate the life of Rob Burrow. The support he's given to everyone in a similar position is incredible. The awareness he's raised and the people he's got talking about MND is amazing. He's changed lives for the better. Let's just hope it gets us to a cure, that's what everyone wants. They're slowing things down a bit now, but I don't know how good that is. I think Rob is in a better place, and everyone should be so proud of what he's achieved, being so stoic.

"His wife is an amazing woman and I'm sure his legacy will continue to grow and the impact will make the difference to a lot of lives, which is a really wonderful thing."

Sinfield paid his own emotional tribute to Burrow yesterday. Speaking at a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Rob Burrow Centre for MND at Seacroft hospital in Leeds - which Burrow said should still go ahead as planned before he died - Sinfield told the BBC: "I wish he could have seen the outpouring of love.

"We all lose special people. But it's very, very rare you lose someone who is so special to so many different people. As you can see it's pretty raw still, he'll leave a massive hole. We're pretty heartbroken this morning but he was a special guy.

"What's really important is that Rob Burrow continues to live forever and I'm sure the MND community and everyone who has supported us previously will make sure Rob's name is at the forefront of everything we do.

"I was amazed at some of the things he did on the rugby field but some of the things he's done in the last four and a half years has been unbelievable. The respect, love and admiration I've got for him couldn't be any higher. The inspiration he's given everyone across the UK who has been across this story, it'll live in the memories for ever."

Work begins on Rob Burrow motor neurone disease centre Page 13 → Obituary Journal, page 10 → Tennis French Open

Djokovic casts doubts over knee after battling through

NDjokovic 6 5 3 7 6

F Cerúndolo 17653

Arg, 23

Ser, 1

Tumaini Carayol

Roland Garros

As yet another unforced error from Novak Djokovic sent him down a break in the fourth set of his tense, gripping tussle with Francisco Cerúndolo, the world No 1 reckoned with the very real prospect of his earliest defeat at Roland Garros in 15 years. He was limping, wincing, and struggling to find his range as his Argentinian opponent seemed to laser forehand winners at will.

But nobody knows how to plot their way back from a desperate deficit like Djokovic. Despite trailing by two sets to one for a second match in a row and ingesting a cocktail of painkillers for a sore knee, he found a way through, defeating Cerúndolo 6-1, 5-7, 3-6, 7-5, 6-3 after 4hr 39min to return to the quarter-finals of the French Open.

Djokovic spoke at length about the knee injury he sustained after a slip in the second set and he said he was uncertain about whether his knee would allow him to continue competing in the tournament.

"The adrenaline, of course, that kicks in, that helps you go through the tournament," he said. "Sometimes it is a match or two, sometimes the entire tournament. Good thing about the slam is that you have a day between that will allow hopefully the healing process to happen more efficiently for me. That's it. I don't know

what will happen tomorrow or after tomorrow if I'll be able to step out on the court and play. I hope so. Let's see what happens."

A day and a half after Djokovic closed off his third-round victory against Lorenzo Musetti at 3.07am, the latest finish at this tournament in its 133-year history, he returned to the same court striking the ball with total freedom as he rolled through the first set without issue.

Early in the second set, however, Djokovic slipped on the court and injured his knee. In the subsequent games, he twice called out the trainer for treatment at the changeover. He also had a heated discussion with Wayne McKewen, the tournament supervisor, expressing his frustration at the state of the court. At 5-6, an error-strewn service game from Djokovic gave Cerúndolo the second set.

While Djokovic floundered,



▲ Djokovic came back from two sets down for the second round in a row

Cerúndolo was excellent. Despite his slight build, the 25-year-old 23rd seed possesses some of the most vicious forehands in the game, which cuts through all conditions with supreme pace and spin. He put his opponent under unabating pressure, also mixing in drop shots, and as Djokovic moved gingerly he soon trailed by two sets to one and 2-4 in the fourth set.

No matter how beaten Djokovic may appear, the lesson from his past 13 years of dominance is that he will almost always find a way back. According to the Serb, in this case the second wind came with the help of painkillers: "I got the medications, and then after the third set was done, I asked for more medications, and I got them. That was the maximum dose that kicked in, as I heard now from [a] doctor after 30 to 45 minutes, which was just about the time, kind of end of the fourth, when things started to really improve for me."

As the 37-year-old began to connect with his return of serve and consistent depth with his ground-strokes, Cerúndolo began to feel the pressure. After breaking back for 4-4 in the fourth set and calling on the crowd to guide him through, Djokovic saved a break point in a dramatic service game at 5-5 before forcing a fifth set.

To his credit, even as he trailed a break in the fifth set, Cerúndolo fought desperately until the end and he forced Djokovic to win the match from him. But Djokovic has been in these positions so many times before. After spending more than nine hours on court in the past two matches alone and barely holding on, the defending champion stayed alive.

If he takes to the court tomorrow, Djokovic will next face Casper Ruud, the seventh seed, who defeated the 12th seed Taylor Fritz 7-6 (6), 3-6, 6-4, 6-2 to return to the quarter-finals.

Alex de Minaur broke through to reach his first quarter-final at Roland Garros, defeating Daniil Medvedev, the fifth seed, 4-6, 6-2, 6-1, 6-3.

Andreeva gives Gracheva swift send-off to reach last eight

Tumaini Carayol Roland Garros

Mirra Andreeva became the secondyoungest woman in the 21st century to reach the quarter-finals at Roland Garros with a 7-5, 6-2 win against Varvara Gracheva.

Just over a year after Andreeva first broke through on the WTA weeks before her 16th birthday, she continues to make strong progress. Armed with her intelligent, varied game and endless grit, the 17-year-old has not dropped a set outside of her spectacular late-night win against Victoria Azarenka in the second round. Next week she will break the top 30 for the first time in her career.

"I'm proud for everything; for all the matches that I won, for all the matches that I have played," said Andreeva, who is two years older than Bulgaria's Sesil Karatantcheva was when she reached the last eight in 2005. "I would say that, for example, the most memorable match would be the match against Vika when we finished really late. That was really hard. After, it was hard to recover.

"That was a great match, of course. Also today was tense and nervous. Big court, big stage. There was a lot of crowd, a lot of people. So, yeah, I'm just proud of the way I managed to stay calm and keep playing my game."

In her first quarter-final at a grand slam tournament, Andreeva will be part of one of the most formidable lineups in years. She will next face Aryna Sabalenka, the second seed, who outclassed the 22nd seed



▲ Mirra Andreeva will face Aryna Sabalenka for a place in the last four

Emma Navarro, 6-2, 6-3, to reach the quarter-finals without dropping a set.

"I felt quite confident in all conditions, like I was playing really great tennis when it was cold. Today I played really great tennis as well. It was warm with different conditions," Sabalenka said after the first warm day at Roland Garros this year.

"I would say right now it doesn't matter what the conditions are going to be. All that matters is how focused I'm going to be and if I'll be ready to fight for every point."

Elena Rybakina, the fourth seed, is also yet to drop a set and she overpowered the 15th seed Elina Svitolina 6-3, 6-4. She will face Jasmine Paolini, the 12th seed, tomorrow. In the top half, Iga Swiatek, the top seed, faces the fifth-seeded Marketa Vondrousova and Coco Gauff, the third seed, will do battle with the eighth seed Ons Jabeur.

Both the top five seeds and the four reigning grand slam champions - Swiatek, Vondrousova, Gauff and Sabalenka - have all reached the quarter-finals. As Swiatek tries to make history by becoming the fourth woman in the Open era to win three Roland-Garros titles in a row, there are no easy matches ahead.

▼ England's Ella Toone

in training at the Stade

Rugby union

Hill's alleged altercation with fan investigated by police

Gerard Meagher

A police investigation has been launched following an incident that left a supporter with a cut above his eye in an alleged altercation with Jonny Hill after Bath's Premiership playoff win against Sale at the Recreation Ground on Saturday.

The 28-year-old supporter reported the incident to Avon and Somerset police, who confirmed that an investigation is under way. Hill, who plays for Sale but is out with injury, was watching the match from near the press box alongside the Sharks' coaches. After the final whistle Hill was seen in a scuffle as he went down the stairs of the stand. The supporter complained of broken sunglasses and a cut above his eye.

"Officers are investigating after receiving a report of one man assaulting another at Bath Rugby grounds on Saturday 1 June," Avon and Somerset police said. "One man received medical attention from a paramedic at the grounds and inquiries are ongoing to establish the circumstances of the incident."

On Saturday, Sale said they would be conducting their own investigation while the Rugby Football Union is speaking to the Sharks and Bath before deciding on its course of action. The supporter, who does



▲ Jonny Hill was seen in a scuffle in the stands after Sale's defeat at Bath

not wish to be named, said after the incident: "I was sitting there, and he came down the stairs, grabbed me around the throat, snapped my sunglasses and cut the top of my eye. To be honest, all I want is a new pair of sunglasses. It is not football. I was sitting with my partner and her family [Bath fans]. We were Worcester fans. I don't want to make a big thing."

Some Sale players came to Hill's defence on social media, and said the full story remained unknown. The Sharks director of rugby, Alex Sanderson, said he did not see the incident but offered a defence of Hill's character. "It is news to me, Jonny is not the aggressive type and I will answer those questions when I know [more]," he said.

Meanwhile Tom Curry has been called into the England squad preparing for the summer Tests against Japan and New Zealand despite making his return from a seven-month injury layoff only last weekend but Elliot Daly has been ruled out of the tour due to the imminent arrival of his first child. Curry is included in a 33-man squad along with his twin brother, Ben.

The Currys are two of 13 players added from the losing semi-finalists - those from Bath and Northampton were not considered - with Steve Borthwick poised to finalise his touring squad next Monday. Dan Cole and Joe Marler have also been added, while of the 19-man squad announced last week Guy Pepper is the only omission.

Gloucester's Josh Hathaway is one of four uncapped players in the Wales squad for their matches against South Africa and Australia. The 20-year-old, who can play at full-back or wing, has represented both Wales and England at under-20 level but has been called up by Warren Gatland, who missed out on the dual-qualified Immanuel Feyi-Waboso this year.

ip co

Championship clubs fear risk of bankruptcy over RFU deal

Robert Kitson

England's second-tier clubs say they face being pushed into bankruptcy unless they receive a fairer deal in negotiations with the Rugby Football Union and the Premiership. The Championship clubs insist the terms of the proposed Professional Game Partnership risk dividing the game.

The RFU and the Premiership clubs are preparing to unveil an eight-year deal that will cover all aspects of English professional rugby but there is no firm agreement over the future shape of promotion and relegation to and from the Championship, nor the

confirmed level of central funding for clubs outside the elite.

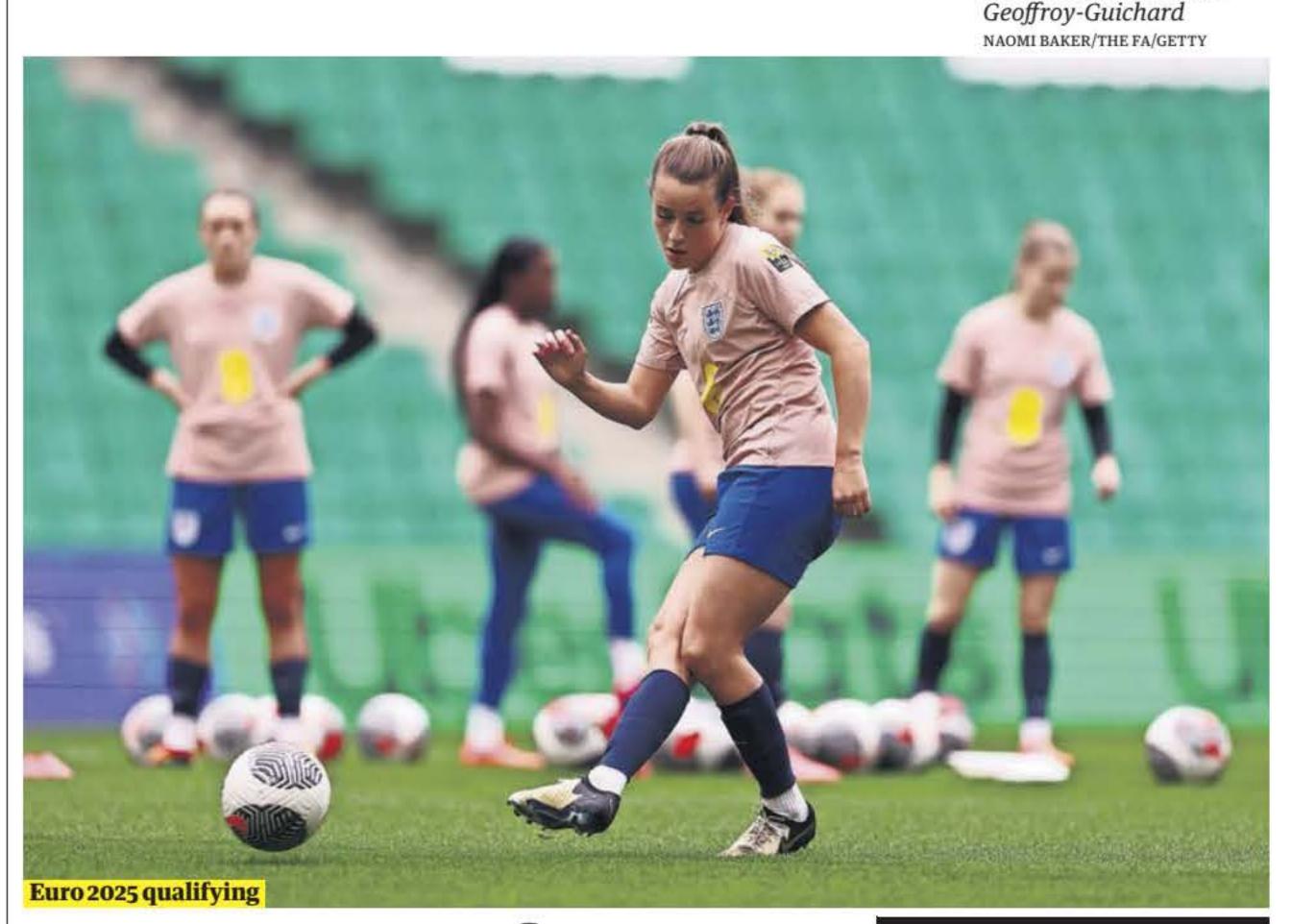
Championship officials say that unless a more equitable financial deal is done it will be "too late" to preserve a viable second-tier league, with serious implications for the whole English game. They are also appealing for intervention by the RFU council that is due to meet on 14 June to approve the new PGP accord.

"We have been presented with a proposition we cannot accept," a statement read.

"We understand and support the need to stabilise the top tier of the game but our clubs must properly be part of the structure ... If there are not changes now, it will be too late."

In response, the RFU said: "For the past 15 months the RFU, Premiership Rugby Limited, Championship clubs and national leagues have been working hard to develop a redesigned Tier 2 with the aim of developing a whole-game solution to support the development of England Rugby. We will be disappointed if the Championship clubs disengage in the process."

Sport Football



Wiegman refuses to compromise on Lionesses' 'identity'

Suzanne Wrack Saint-Étienne

Sarina Wiegman has said England will not compromise on the way they play for the sake of improving their unpredictability, as the team prepare to take on France for the second time in four days tonight.

The Lionesses endured a 2-1 defeat by France at St James' Park to put them in a vulnerable position in Euro 2025 qualifying Group A3. England sit third at the halfway point, behind France and Sweden, who they are also yet to play away, and ahead of the Republic of Ireland.

"There were some details we could have done better," Wiegman said of the France game, in which England conceded twice from set pieces. "We have an identity, we're not going to throw everything overboard because we want to be unpredictable to the opponent, because then we're going to be unpredictable to ourselves. We want to build on what we already have, do a couple of things better, make a couple of little tweaks and build on our strengths to try to capitalise on their weaknesses and take away their strengths."

Beth Mead said England had a "target on our backs" as European champions. With the increased attention that brings, Wiegman said they were working on how they prevent themselves from becoming predictable while maintaining their identity.

"We're working on that every time we're together, we're trying to be unpredictable," she said. "In possession, what we want to do is keep the ball better, then we can rotate more and challenge the opponent more. That's the first thing we have to do - be tight on the ball - and then we can create. We saw that on Friday: being tighter on the ball made it easier for us. When we have too many turnovers it becomes harder to be unpredictable."

Wiegman would not concede that the game tonight was must-win, though a home victory would secure France's qualification and leave England and Sweden battling for the second qualification spot that would avoid the playoffs.

"It's a want-to-win," Wiegman said. "We always want to win games, and of course it would really help to put us in a better position if we win the game. Of course that is how we're going to approach it, and with the experience on Friday we feel comfortable that we can get a good result."

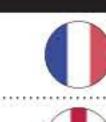
Everyone trained for England yesterday, confirmed Wiegman, who said Mary Earps would probably return for the Lionessess' next camp in July after sustaining a hip injury on Friday that has ruled her out here. Hannah Hampton is expected to start, after coming on for the Manchester United goalkeeper in Newcastle.

About 10,000 fans are expected at Saint-Étienne's Stade Geoffroy-Guichard, which has a capacity of



▲ Hannah Hampton is expected to start in goal against France

France



England

8pm

Injured Le Sommer Group A

England Probable: 4-4-2 Probable: 4-3-3 Peyraud-Magnin; Hampton; Bronze, De Almeida, Lakrar, Bright, Williamson, Renard, Bacha; Toletti, Carter; Walsh, Stanway, Karchaoui, Dali, Diani; Toone; Mead, Russo, Katoto, D Cascarino Subs from Durand, Subs from Keating, Thomas, Picaud, Henry, Périsset, Greenwood, Kirby, Naz,

Subs from Durand,
Picaud, Henry, Périsset,
E Cascarino, Samoura,
Geyoro, Le Garrec,
Baltimore, Benyahia,
Dufour, Ribadeira
Doubtful
None
Subs from
Keating, Thomas,
Greenwood, Kirby, Naz,
Kelly, Beever-Jones,
Clinton, Le Tissier, Park,
Morgan, Turner
Doubtful
None

Venue Stade Geoffroy-Guichard Referee Ivana Martincic (Cro)



TV ITV4 Radio BBC 5 Live

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
France	3	3	0	0	4	1	+3	9
Sweden	3	1	1	1	4	2	+2	4
England	3	1	1	1	4	3	+1	4
Rep of Ireland	3	0	0	3	0	6	-6	0

Injured

Earps, James

12 July England v Republic of Ireland, France v Sweden 16 July Republic of Ireland v France, Sweden v England

almost 42,000, and France's manager, Hervé Renard, urged fans of the club, whose men's team won promotion to Ligue 1 on Sunday, to show up and back the women's national team. "All the supporters of Saint-Étienne are welcome to come even to celebrate their promotion," he said.

"They can come with their green jerseys and everything - we welcome them. This France team is having very good results, so they need support."

Wiegman said she hoped the attendance would rise. "When we arrived last night, Saint-Étienne had got promoted so there was a huge party going on in the airport and they made some noise, so we know that France can make noise.

"I hope overall, the women's game is growing, more people get excited and I hope that tomorrow we can put a great performance on the pitch together with France."

International friendly

Scotland end winless run but fail to punish Gibraltar

Gibraltar

Scotland

Christie 58, Adams 85

Ewan Murray

Estádio Algarve

In October 2015, a Scotland side that had failed to qualify for the following summer's European Championship was cheered from the rooftops at Estádio Algarve as Gibraltar were seen off 6-0. Gordon Strachan, buoyed by this giddy scene, opted to stay on for another campaign; which Scotland botched as well. Looking back, celebration despite these unsuccessful attempts to reach finals feels cringeworthy.

Scotland's return to the outskirts of Faro came in altogether different circumstances. The Tartan Army did not bother travelling to Portugal en masse. They have much bigger fish to fry. A week on Friday, Steve Clarke's team will kick off Euro 2024 with a clash against Germany, the tournament hosts.

Scotland wanted to rattle home a few goals against Gibraltar, afford some much-needed minutes to fringe players and continue with preparations for the more serious business. Clarke has lost five squad members to injury; Scotland can ill afford further fitness woes. Liam Cooper limped off 12 minutes before full time, causing heads to be placed in hands. Otherwise, this proved a low-key means to an end. Clarke did not leave his seat in the stand for the entire 90 minutes.

Scotland were functional rather than flashy. The visit on Friday of Finland to Hampden Park will surely prove more insightful. Scotland's support will allow the players the tournament send-off they deserve.

Reaching half-time while still

scoreless was hardly relevant in big-picture terms but it still represented a minor embarrassment for the Scots. France recently trounced Gibraltar 14-0. There are legitimate questions about Scotland's ability to break down packed defences. Germany will not provide one but Group A's other teams, Hungary and Switzerland, will have taken notice.

Ryan Christie's breaking of the deadlock raised Scottish spirits. Clarke's side were on their way to ending a run of seven games without victory. Ché Adams added gloss to the scoreline with a ferocious finish. Scotland had 24 efforts at goal. Their manager is hopeful Cooper will recover in a few days from a "knee-on-knee" collision.

Clarke also offered hope to Tommy Conway, the Scotland Under-21 striker who could receive a late European Championship call-up. "He is a good boy Tommy and he is certainly in my mind," Clarke said. "I've still got to sit down with all the coaches and just have a little chat through to try to come up with something that will help us now going into this



▲ Ché Adams (right) celebrates after sealing Scotland's victory in Portugal

tournament. That's for tomorrow." It felt as if the absence of potency against Gibraltar had struck a chord.

Scotland controlled the first half but lacked punch in attack. With a little more conviction, the centre-back Grant Hanley would have celebrated a hat-trick. Christie was the first to test the debutant Jaylan Hankins in the Gibraltar goal. From the subsequent corner, Hanley's header cleared the crossbar. James Forrest should have scored from an Andy Robertson cut-back but fluffed his lines. Christie volleyed over, Kenny McLean missed with a header and Ryan Porteous could not convert the rebound after Hankins blocked Hanley's latest attempt.

Hanley's opportunity four minutes before the interval was the best of the lot but again Scotland were frustrated. In reply, Gibraltar had just one tame shot. An upset never felt in the offing, it was simply that Scotland had to do much more with their territorial superiority.

Clarke resisted any temptation to implement wholesale interval change. Cooper replaced Hanley and that was that. Christie showed his pedigree as he lashed high into the net, Gibraltar having failed to deal with a Robertson cross.

Cooper's departure was the most notable aspect of what happened next. "Liam's OK," Clarke said. "We'll see how he is in the morning. He's a tough man."

Adams, who will surely lead the Scotland line against Germany, ensured the scoreboard more accurately reflected the direction of traffic. John McGinn was the creator before Adams fired home an angled volley. This proved a marquee ending to a game that won't linger long in the memory of anybody who attended. That was precisely Scotland's intention.

4-3-3

Hankins; Olivero, Lopes, Sergeant, Jolley; Scanlon (Ronan 66), Annesley Walker (De Haro 77); Britto, El Hmidi (Casciaro 66), De Barr (Bartolo 86)

Scotland 4-5-1 Clark; McCrorie, Hanley (Cooper ht; McKenna 77), Porteous, Robertson (Tierney 66); McLean (McGregor 73), Gilmour (Jack 73); Christie, McGinn, Forrest (Adams 66); Shankland

Referee Jamie Robinson (NI)

Mbappé joins Real Madrid for five years with €125m bonus

Real Madrid have announced the signing of Kylian Mbappé seven years after they first tried to bring him to the club. The France forward will officially join on a free transfer on 1 July after his Paris Saint-Germain contract expires.

Mbappé will be paid an annual salary of between €15m (£12.8m) and €20m (£17m) with annual increments. He is due to receive a €125m (£106.5m) signing-on bonus spread over five years of the contract, and will get 80% of his image rights.

Shortly after a Madrid statement confirmed the move, the 25-year-old forward shared images on social media of himself as a youngster in the club's clothing, including meeting Cristiano Ronaldo at the Valdebebas training ground. "A dream come true," Mbappé wrote. "So happy and proud to join the club of my dream, Real Madrid. Nobody can understand how excited I am right now."

With Mbappé preparing with France for Euro 2024, Madrid hope to present him in mid-July. He will wear the No 9 shirt next season. Madrid's statement confirming his arrival said: "Real Madrid and Kylian Mbappé

have reached an agreement whereby he will be a Real Madrid player for the next five seasons."

Mbappé moved to PSG from Monaco seven years ago and Madrid made further attempts to get him in 2021, when they offered €200m on summer deadline day, and 2022, when the forward held positive talks with the Spanish club but ended up committing to a new contract.

The signing of Mbappé follows Madrid's win against Borussia Dortmund last Saturday that secured a record-extending 15th European Cup. Mbappé, who scored 256 goals in 308 PSG appearances, joins forwards at Madrid including Vinícius Júnior and Rodrygo. Another Brazilian forward, Endrick, is due to arrive next month from Palmeiras when he turns 18.

Mbappé was not included by Thierry Henry yesterday in France's 25-man preliminary squad for a training camp for the Paris Olympic Games and will not be part of the final squad. The men's tournament runs from 24 July to 9 August. "Clubs have the power to say yes or no," Henry said. Guardian sport



▲ Kylian Mbappé said he is 'happy and proud' to be joining Real Madrid

Maresca: 'To join Chelsea is a dream for any coach'

♦ Continued from back page

in the summer of 2025, qualifying as the 2021 Champions League winners.

"To join Chelsea, one of the biggest clubs in the world, is a dream for any coach. It is why I am so excited by this opportunity," Maresca said. "I look forward to working with a very talented group of players and staff to develop a team that continues the club's tradition of success and makes our fans proud."

Maresca counts Pep Guardiola among his influences, having worked under him at Manchester City, initially as the club's elite development squad manager in 2020-21 when he won the Premier League 2 title by 14 points.

After a short-lived stint as the manager of Parma the following season - he won four and lost four of 13 Serie B matches - he returned to City in the summer of 2022 as Guardiola's assistant and helped them to treblewinning glory.

In a parallel with the Arsenal manager, Mikel Arteta - another former Guardiola assistant at City - it is possible to see similarities in terms of playing style between Maresca and Guardiola. Maresca is obsessed by patient possession and positional play, his go-to system is 4-3-3 and the

Chelsea hierarchy are convinced his approach will suit the technically gifted squad.

Maresca left his native Italy at 18 to sign for West Brom at the start of his playing career, earning a move to Juventus, where he worked under Carlo Ancelotti and Marcello Lippi, and played alongside Antonio Conte. Early in his coaching career, Maresca was the assistant to Manuel Pellegrini at West Ham. Guardiola is hardly his only influence.

Maresca went to Leicester in the summer of last year, living at the training ground for the first two months to get a feel for the job, which was to rejuvenate the club after the shock relegation from the Premier League. He was charged with getting them straight back up - nothing else. It did not matter that James Maddison, Harvey Barnes and Youri Tielemans had left. Maresca delivered.

Leicester said they were "disappointed" that he "no longer wants to be part of our vision". They will receive about £10m in compensation for Maresca and six members of his backroom staff who have also gone to Chelsea. They are the former Chelsea goalkeeper and assistant manager Willy Caballero, the coach Danny Walker, the goalkeeper coach Michele De Bernardin, the fitness coach Marcos Álvarez, the first-team analyst Javier Molina Caballero, and Roberto Vitiello, who worked as the development coach.

Chelsea confirmed the arrival of the set-piece coach Bernardo Cueva from Brentford. It has been known for some months that he would be joining. Pochettino, when questioned about the appointment in March, was not effusive.

Results

Football

MEN'S INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLIES

England (0) 3 Bosnia & Herzegovina (0) 0 Palmer 60pen Alexander-Arnold 85

Gibraltar

Germany 0 Ukraine 0

(0) 0 Scotland Christie 58, Adams 85 Albania 3 Liechtenstein 0; Croatia 3 North Macedonia 0;

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLIES

Australia 2 China 0; Bangladesh 0 Chinese Taipei 1; Japan 4 New Zealand 1; Morocco L Congo DR L; Trinidad & Tobago 0 Aruba 1; Uruguay L Russia L; Venezuela O Colombia 3

MEN'S U21 INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLIES Turkey 2 Scotland 1

SSE AIRTRICITY IRISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Derry City 3 Waterford 0; Sligo Rovers 2 Drogheda 1; St Patrick's 2 Dundalk 3

Cricket

ICC MEN'S T20 WORLD CUP

Group B

Bridgetown Oman 109 (R Trumpelmann 4-21). Namibia 109-6 (JN Frylinck 45). Match tied. Nambia beat Oman 21-10 in the super over.

Group D

New York Sri Lanka 77 (AA Nortje 4-7). South Africa 80-4. South Africa beat Sri Lanka by six wickets.

Tennis

FRENCH OPEN (Paris)

Men: Fourth round: A DE MINAUR (Aus, 11) bt D MEDVEDEV (Rus, 5) 4-6 6-2 6-1 6-3; N DJOKOVIC (Ser, 1) bt F CERÚNDOLO (Arg, 23) 6-1 5-7 3-6 7-5 6-3; CRUUD (Nor, 7) bt T FRITZ (US, 12) 7-6(6) 3-66-46-2 Women: Fourth round A SABALENKA (Blr, 2) bt E NAVARRO (US, 22) 6-2 6-3; J PAOLINI (It, 12) bt E Avanesyan (Rus) 4-6 6-0 6-1; E RYBAKINA (Kaz, 4) bt E SVITOLINA (Ukr, 15)

Cycling

6-4 6-3; M Andreeva (Rus) bt V Gracheva (Fr) 7-5 6-2

CRITÉRIUM DU DAUPHINÉ (France) Stage Two (Gannat-Col de la Loge, 142km): 1 M Cort (Den) Uno-X Mobility 3hr 21min 42sec; 2 P Roglic (Svn) Bora-Hansgrohe; 3 M Jorgenson (US) Visma Lease-a-Bike; 4 G Ciccone (It) Lidl-Trek; 5 O Lazkano (Sp) Movistar all

Selected others: 7 L Nerurkar (GB) EF Education-EasyPost; 12 T Geoghegan Hart (GB) Lidl-Trek; 52 D Rafferty (Ire) EF Education-EasyPost all at same time.

Overall standings: 1 M Cort (Den) 7hr 23min 2sec; 2 P Roglic (Svk) +4sec; 3 M Jorgenson (US) +6;

Greg Wood's racing tips

Southwell 2.15 Tropical Talent 2.45 Taste The Fear 3.15 Ava's Angel 3.45 Letterston Lily 4.20 Backmersackme 4.50 Glimpse Of Glory 5.20 Elham Valley 5.50 Malago Rose Leicester 2.33 Rokuni 3.03 Magic Rascal 3.33 Forest Gate 4.03 User Amistoso 4.38 Hat Toss 5.08 Alfred Cove Wolverhampton 5.30 Where's Clare 6.00 Stoic Syd 6.30 Wake Up Harry 7.00 Blackjack 7.30 Little Empire 8.00 Coast (nap) 8.30 Due Date 9.00 One Cool Dreamer Lingfield 6.15 Warhol 6.45 Al Qudra 7.15 Mick's Spirit 7.45 Queen's Guard (nb) 8.15 Blacklion 8.45 Camacho Man

4 B Armirail (Fr) Decathlon AG2R La Mondiale +8; 5 C Champoussin (Fr) Arkea-B&B Hotels +10.

Selected others: 23 D Rafferty (Ire) +10sec; 28 T Geoghegan Hart (GB); 40 L Nerurkar (GB) at same time. Ice hockey

NHL PLAY-OFFS

Semi-final Dallas 1 Edmonton 2 (Edmonton won 4-2)

Fixtures

Football (7.45pm unless stated) **UEFA Women's Euro 2025 qualifying**

Group A1 Finland v Netherlands (5pm); Italy v Norway (5.15pm). Group A2 Belgium v Czech Republic (7pm); Spain v Denmark (8.30pm). Group A3 France v England (8pm); Sweden v Republic of Ireland (5.30pm). Group A4 Iceland v Austria (8.30pm); Poland v Germany (5pm) Group B1 Azerbaijan v Turkey (4pm); Hungary v Switzerland (4.30pm). Group B2 Israel v Scotland (3pm); Slovakia v Serbia (5pm). Group B3 Bosnia-Herzegovina v Malta (3pm); Northern Ireland v Portugal (7pm). Group B4 Croatia v Kosovo (7pm); Ukraine v Wales (7pm) Group C1 Georgia v Cyprus (5pm). Group C2 Latvia v Slovenia (4pm); Moldova v North Macedonia (5pm). Group C3 Andorra v Montenegro (6pm); Faroe Islands v Greece (4.45pm). Group C4 Bulgaria v Romania (5pm); Kazakhstan v Armenia (3pm). Group C5 Albania v Luxembourg (5pm) Men's international friendlies Austria v Serbia; Italy v Turkey (8pm); Portugal v Finland;

Rep of Ireland v Hungary; Romania v Bulgaria (7.30pm); Slovenia v Armenia (5pm); Switzerland v Estonia (7.15pm) Women's international friendlies Argentina v Costa Rica (12.10am); Senegal v Sth Africa (6pm)

ICC Men's T20 World Cup

Group B England v Scotland, Bridgetown (3.30pm) Group C Afghanistan vs Uganda, Providence (1.30am) Group D Netherlands v Nepal, Dallas (4.30pm)

UCI World Tour Criterium du Dauphine (France) Stage Three Celles-sur-Durolle-Les Estables (11.35am)

Sport Football Friendly international



England ignite their mojo with second-half spree

England

38

Palmer 60pen, Alexander-Arnold 85, Kane 89

Bosnia and Herzegovina

3

David Hytner

St James' Park

Gareth Southgate decided to make his move. The hour had passed and although his experimental England team was getting closer, he wanted to introduce the big gun, his captain Harry Kane, from the bench - plus four others including James Maddison and Jack Grealish. There would also be the thrill of debuts for Jarrad Branthwaite and Adam Wharton.

Kane had taken off his tracksuit but there would be one last action because the VAR had spotted something amiss inside the Bosnia and Herzegovina box as they defended a corner. It soon became apparent that

the defender Benjamin Tahirovic had a hold of Ezri Konsa's shirt. It was a clear penalty and Kane had to be licking his lips at the prospect of getting on to take it for his 63rd England goal.

Instead, he was held back and the responsibility fell to a player at the other end of the international experience spectrum - Cole Palmer, on his full debut. Palmer is famously cold from the spot and he was never going to pass up this one, his first senior England goal a special moment.

Southgate's team had flattered to deceive in the first half, save for a few flashes from another full debutant, Eberechi Eze, plus a few more by Palmer. The penalty settled them, liberated them ahead of the grand Euro 2024 kick-off. After one more warm-up friendly against Iceland at Wembley on Friday, it will be all systems go for the tournament opener against Serbia on Sunday week.

There would be further tonics. Trent Alexander-Arnold had been moved from the right centre midfield role in Southgate's 4-2-3-1 to rightback after the mass substitutions but how he affected the game from there. One long diagonal over to Grealish took the breath and almost enabled Maddison to score but not as much as the volley for 2-0, Alexander-Arnold fizzing it low and clean into the far corner from a tight angle. There was a glorious nonchalance about it. Wharton, playing with a maturity that belied his 20 years, had gone left to Grealish and he got the assist with a floated cross.

Conor Gallagher - singled out for post-match praise from Southgate went close to 3-0, denied by the goalkeeper Nikola Vasilj after a surging run, before Kane, inevitably, did gloss the scoreline. The goal had featured smart approach work from Grealish, Maddison and Jarrod Bowen and, when Konsa could not set his feet for a close-range finish, Kane could.

There has been plenty of fretting

about Southgate's defensive problems with Harry Maguire and Luke Shawinjured; John Stones coming off an uneven club season. There is rather less doubt about the attacking riches and this was a game to show them off. It was not perfect. Yet when England cut loose, there was much to enjoy.

It was easy to feel that it was a bad sign for Grealish to have been among the substitutes, after he reported early for duty last week following the FA Cup final in which he did not get on for Manchester City. He would change the narrative sharply, playing



▲ Harry Kane celebrates his late goal with James Maddison

with a point to prove, although he was hardly the only one. Southgate had started with Bowen, Palmer and Eze, right to left in the line behind the striker, Ollie Watkins, and opportunity had knocked for all of them.

Eze looked assured on the ball, those lovely feints to the fore. He will beat you from a standing start. Premier League fans know that and the small contingent of Bosnia and Herzegovina fans, up in the St James' Park gods, quickly realised it. Palmer had a few moments before the interval, ushering in Watkins for the first chance. Watkins might have gone to ground as Nikola Katic grappled with him. He instead shot straight at Vasilj.

The atmosphere was subdued in the first half, apart from when Kieran Trippier, the Newcastle hero and England captain at the outset, got on the ball. Or when Jordan Pickford did likewise. The Sunderland boy heard boos from the locals, although the England diehards who had travelled from further afield chanted his name.

England gave the crowd little to get excited about before the interval. They did not move the ball with sufficient zip and against big, physical opponents it was all a little clogged. Bowen wanted to get in behind up the right but Eze's inclination was to drift inside. Trippier was never going to get up and outside from left-back.



Eze burst away from three challengers in the 27th minute - a breathtaking and isolated incision - the ball spinning for Konsa, who won a corner. From it, Konsa again got a break and stabbed low for goal. Vasilj saved smartly. Bowen shot low at the goalkeeper on 45 minutes.

The crowd tried to rouse England after the restart. The noise levels went up significantly, consistently. They implored the team to bring more against the nation ranked 74th on the Fifa list. It worked. Palmer flickered, seeing one shot deflect wide after a trademark shoulder drop, almost creating a yard for himself on another occasion following a low Bowen cut-back.

The breakthrough was coming. When Eze worked the ball wide after a corner, Bowen banged in a low shot and watched it deflect for a corner. Kane and the raft of replacements were stripped. England would strike before they got on.

England

4-2-3-1 Pickford; Konsa, Dunk (Gomez 73), Guéhi (Branthwaite 62%), Trippier (Wharton 62); Alexander-Arnold, Gallagher; Bowen, Palmer (Maddison 61), Eze (Grealish 63); Watkins (Kane 62)

Bosnia and Herzegovina 5-4-1 Vasilj; Bicakcic (Muharemovic 82), Katic, Gazibegovic*; Gigovic (Burnic 82), Tahirovic,

(Mujakic 74), Ahmedhodzic Radeljic (Hadzikadunic 74), Saric (Huseinbasic 63),

Hajradinovic; Demirovic

(Tabakovic 74)

.............

Referee Rohit Saggi (Nor) Attendance 50,061

Analysis

Jacob Steinberg St James' Park

090



Struggling attack shows Southgate must hope for Shaw to prove his fitness

he quest for balance occupied England's thoughts for much of this 3-0 win over Bosnia and Herzegovina. An experimental lineup laboured for long spells and, although there was plenty of promise from Cole Palmer and Eberechi Eze on their first international starts, the concern for Gareth Southgate has to be that there were just as many moments when the attack struggled to function without the added threat of Luke Shaw's overlapping runs on the left flank.

It is an obvious area of potential weakness for England before they head to Germany with dreams of becoming European champions. Will Shaw make it back in time? Southgate needs him. He does not have another recognised left-back at his disposal. There was no place for Ben Chilwell or Tyrick Mitchell in England's provisional 33-man squad.

So much is riding on Shaw making it back in time for the European Championship and, while there have been optimistic noises about his recovery from injury, the fact remains that nobody can be sure about whether the Manchester United defender can be trusted to make it unscathed through seven tournament games given that he has been out since February.

But Southgate has gambled. In a move reminiscent of Glenn Hoddle selecting Graeme Le Saux as England's only left-back at the 1998 World Cup, the head coach has not named an obvious deputy for Shaw. He simply has to hope that he will not encounter the same problem



as Hoddle did all those years ago. Perhaps Southgate will even recall that he was the player who had to come on and play out of position on the left when Le Saux was forced off in the second half of England's defeat by Argentina in the last 16.

Of course, the intention is not to criticise Kieran Trippier, who is likely to fill in at left-back if Shaw is not back for England's opening game against Serbia on 16 June. Even so, the situation is clearly less than ideal. Trippier has many strengths. He is experienced, dependable, tenacious and a fine crosser of the ball from the right. What he is not, though, is leftfooted and so, for all his willingness and determination to support the attack, his instinct will always be to turn inside and move back on to his stronger right side.

Does it mean England are doomed? No. They reached the semi-finals of the 2018 World Cup with the right-footed Ashley Young playing at left wing-back. Players can thrive in unfamiliar positions



Bosnia and Herzegovina. England were too narrow and congested. Every time the fearless, impressive Eze went on one of his daring dribbles and ghosted inside from the left, it was crying out for someone to charge down the inside. Faced by a deep, burly, often cynical defence, they needed to vary the angles and play with more width.

The mind went back to Shaw's fizzing low deliveries at Euro 2020; his assist in the last-16 win over Germany. Trippier, though, plays a more restrained game. He was reluctant to burst into the final third here. It made it harder for Eze, who needed more support.

Not that Eze had a bad game. There was one beautiful, slaloming run from the Palace playmaker, who was quick to combine with Palmer, and ultimately this went down as a positive exercise from Southgate's perspective. He will be pleased with England's response after half-time. There was more intensity, more bite. Palmer, who created an early chance for the disappointing Ollie Watkins, grew in influence. It was not a coincidence that England's improvement coincided with Palmer getting on the ball more in the final third.

This was a night for seizing opportunities. Palmer was nerveless when he had the chance to score his first England goal from the spot. Jarrod Bowen was lively on the right. Doubts over their places in the final 26 ensured that Jack Grealish and James Maddison were full of motivation when they came on in the second half.

Questions persist, though. Maddison was imaginative in the second half and it was a boost for Grealish to set up Trent Alexander-Arnold's stunning late volley. Yet the overall balance of the team was unconvincing. Some players toiled. Marc Guéhi's distribution at the back was poor at times, Watkins did not link the play well up front and it was hard to tell if Alexander-Arnold, whose goal came after he shifted to rightback, is the right player to fill the third midfield spot.

Bosnia and Herzegovina were limited opposition. Alexander-Arnold had plenty of the ball and did not do much with it alongside Conor Gallagher. Southgate will dwell on that lost, timid first half. He will spend the next few days fretting about Shaw. England need his driving runs down the left. They could be the difference between success and failure this summer.

Player ratings England 4-2-3-1



6

6

6

8

Jordan Pickford His Sunderland heritage was set aside on a quite night; the Gallowgate End sang "England's number one".

Ezri Konsa Lacked a certain chemistry with Jarrod Bowen but won penalty before relocating to central defence.

Lewis Dunk A chance for atonement following some recent wobbles, and was steady if not exactly spectacular.

Marc Guéhi Auditioning on the left of Southgate's centre-back pairing but one first-half pass almost gifted the visitors a goal.

Kieran Trippier The Newcastle right-back captained England from left-back. Leadership personified.

Trent Alexander-Arnold Passing range and defence real highlights. Ultimately switched to right-back and scored.

Conor Gallagher Neat, tidy, industrious and tackled well but initially played within himself. Improved later.

Jarrod Bowen A slightly disappointing night when it didn't quite happen down the right for the winger.

Cole Palmer Converted a penalty - his first senior England goal. Not at his very best but a potentially class act.



▲Eberechi Eze All balance, dropped shoulders, sweet touches and a killer change of pace.

Ollie Watkins Did not capitalise on an inviting early chance, and that served as a microcosm of his evening.

Subs: Jarrad Branthwaite (for Guéhi 62) 5. Harry Kane (for Watkins 62) 8. James Maddison (for Palmer 61) 7. Adam Wharton (for Trippier 62) 7. Jack Grealish (for Eze 63) 7. Joe Gomez (for Dunk 73) 6.

Louise Taylor



▲ Kieran Trippier, England's captain and stand-in left-back, vaults a tackle MATT MCNULTY/THE FA/GETTY IMAGES

Injury alert Djokovic doubt over fitness after epic win at French Open

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At last ... Real Madrid finally confirm Mbappé joining 'for five seasons' Page 37 →

England begin T20 defence **Archer out** The Guardian Tuesday 4 June

2024



to wow Barbados in opener Page 34 →



England

Palmer 60pen

Alexander-Arnold 85

Bosnia and Herzegovina

'Difficult to cut squad' Southgate admission as Palmer and Eze shine

marks his first international goal, a second-half penalty, with his trademark celebration at St James' Park MATT MCNULTY/ THE FA

Louise Taylor

St James' Park

Kane 89

Gareth Southgate admitted it is going to be "difficult" to axe seven players from his squad by Friday's midnight deadline after England's 3-0 win against Bosnia and Herzegovina produced strong auditions for Euro 2024.

Southgate is preparing for the tournament with 33 players but can submit only 26 names to Uefa by the Friday deadline. The victory at St James' Park last night only added to his dilemmas as Cole Palmer and Eberechi Eze ranked among those making strong cases for inclusion.

"Eberechi played with real freedom and swagger," said Southgate, who watched Palmer score his first goal for England from the penalty spot before Trent Alexander-Arnold volleyed a stunning second and Harry Kane stepped off the substitutes' bench to register the third. "And I thought Cole linked play very well. It was lovely to see his first goal. Trent's was a beautiful finish, he made a very difficult finish look straightforward."

Alexander-Arnold began in central midfield before reverting to right-back but impressed in both roles and his manager said he could be "highly effective" deployed in either position in Germany this month.

By then seven players will have been disappointed. "Of course, it's going to be difficult," Southgate said. "I want to make fair and brave decisions but those decisions are always going to be subjective. We're spinning a lot of plates."

England struggled initially to deconstruct their stubborn opponents. "I'm pleased with the intensity of the game," Southgate said. "It was important to play against a back five, we might face that in Germany, especially in the first two games.

"But if you keep patient and keep probing the game will open up as it did. I think, in the end, the scoreline reflected the performance. There

were numerous good individual performances. Eberechi caught the eye and I thought Conor Gallagher was important in midfield."

Kane was preparing to come on when the penalty was awarded just after the hour and Southgate revealed he had the "audacity" to ask to be sent on in time to take it. "That was never going to happen," he said.

Jack Grealish did well after stepping off the bench but could struggle to make the final cut. "We love having him in the group, he's a great character," said Southgate, singling out another substitute, Adam Wharton, for praise: "I think he showed in that cameo what we've seen in training." *

Five-year deal for Maresca as he lives 'dream' at Chelsea

David Hytner

Chelsea have confirmed the appointment of Enzo Maresca on a five-year contract, the new manager having accepted the challenge of returning the club to the Champions League as a bare minimum. The 44-year-old Italian led Leicester to the Championship title last season - his only full campaign as a head coach - and he succeeds Mauricio Pochettino, who left Chelsea by mutual consent two weeks ago.

Maresca becomes the fifth manager in the two-year Chelsea ownership of Behdad Eghbali and Todd Boehly, after Thomas Tuchel, Graham Potter, Frank Lampard and Pochettino. The list does not include Bruno Saltor, who took interim charge for one game in April 2023 after Potter's departure.

The length of Maresca's contract which has a club option of a further year - is significant; Pochettino was given two years, plus a one-year club option, and it is part of the owners' desire to go in a different direction.

The season under Pochettino ended with five successive Premier League wins, a sixth-placed finish and Europa Conference League qualification, an improvement on 12th place from 2022-23. Yet turbulence was rarely far away, the feeling Pochettino was an imperfect fit for the owners hard to ignore.

Maresca, who officially starts on 1 July, has bought into his role in the club's structure. Whereas Pochettino sought greater power, including over recruitment, Maresca is happy to concentrate on coaching and seeking to fulfil the owners' ambitions, which they outlined in the programme for the final game of the season, against Bournemouth.

A message talked about a need to be "consistently winning or contending for the Premier League" and "playing in the Champions League". Chelsea will play in the revamped Club World Cup



▲ Enzo Maresca led Leicester to the Championship title last season