

**Hammond tries to protect City**

Philip Hammond will go over the head of the EU's chief Brexit negotiator and appeal directly to member states to agree a trade deal that includes the City of London. **Page 4**

**BBC's male stars facing pay cut**

The BBC's highest-earning male stars are preparing to receive pay cuts as the corporation attempts to contain a scandal over gender discrimination. **Page 7**

**Vigilante groups a 'new industry'**

Three paedophile-hunting groups helped to catch a man who tried to groom young girls. A court was told that vigilante groups were a "cottage industry". **Page 10**

## COMMENT

**More vice-chairmen won't help the Tories if they cannot reverse people's pessimism**

DANIEL FINKELSTEIN, PAGE 27

**Land is ours, say victorious Kurds**

American-backed Kurdish troops have vowed to resist any attempts to retake control of the 25 per cent of Syria they now hold after defeating Islamic State. **Page 32**

**Boss defends £110m bonus**

The chief executive of Persimmon, one of Britain's biggest housebuilders, has defended a bonus scheme that is set to pay him more than £110 million. **Page 39**

**'Homophobic tweets' inquiry**

The Everton defender Mason Holgate is facing the threat of suspension after the FA opened an investigation into allegedly homophobic tweets. **Page 72**

COMMENT 27  
LETTERS 30  
LEADING ARTICLES 31

WORLD 32  
BUSINESS 39  
REGISTER 55

SPORT 61  
CROSSWORD 72  
TV & RADIO TIMES2

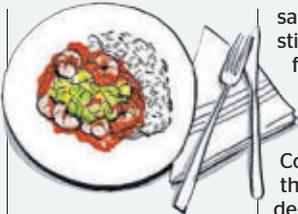
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**DINNER TONIGHT****Brazilian prawns with avocado salsa**

Fresh and vibrant, this red pepper, onion and tomato stew is finished with prawns and an avocado salsa. Serve over rice or couscous. **Serves 2 Prep 20 min Cook 20 min**  
**Ingredients:** 1 red onion; 2 tbsp olive oil; 1 large pointed red pepper; 4 vine tomatoes; 180g large king prawns; 25g coriander

**For the salsa:** 1 small red onion or shallot; 2 tomatoes; 1 small red chilli; 1 avocado; 1 tbsp red wine vinegar  
Boil the kettle. Slice the onion. Heat 2 tbsp



olive oil in a lidded pan and stir in the onion with a generous pinch of salt. Cook, stirring often, for 5 minutes then reduce the heat slightly, cover and cook for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, slice the pepper lengthways in quarters then across into ribbons. Place the tomatoes in a bowl, cover with boiling water, count to 30, drain and chop. Stir the pepper into the onion with another pinch of

salt. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, for about 10 minutes. Add the chopped tomato and cook for 5 minutes.

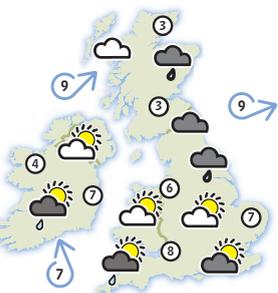
Cover and leave (off the heat) while you de-vein the prawns by running a knife along the black line, then swiping it away. Make the salsa by finely chopping the onion, tomato and chilli. Remove stone and skin from avocado and dice. Mix all ingredients with vinegar and generous pinch of chopped coriander. Mix the prawns into the hot sauce, stir until cooked. Add coriander. Dump salsa over the prawns. **Lindsey Bareham**

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## THE WEATHER



Feeling milder, with sunny spells in central and western areas. Cloudier in the east. **Full forecast, page 60**

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# Peers hijack data bill to attack free press through back door

**Matthew Moore** Media Correspondent  
**Patrick Maguire**

An inquiry into the press similar to that by Lord Leveson could be required by law after Labour indicated it would support back-door plans that critics say threaten free speech.

A group of peers has been accused of hijacking government legislation to restrict the media after they tabled a series of amendments to the Data Protection Bill in the Lords.

The amendments, which are due to be voted on tonight, include one that would force ministers to set up a statutory inquiry into all news publishers that hold personal data.

Campaigners say that the amendment is an attempt to pre-empt the government's imminent decision on whether to approve the second part of the Leveson inquiry, which was due to look into the relationship between the press, police and politicians.

The inquiry demanded by the amendment would cover all media organisations, both print and broadcast, and could be exploited by criminals and politicians seeking to block investigations into allegations of wrongdoing, critics say.

The costly inquiry could also result in

recommendations that damage freedom of expression, according to the News Media Association (NMA) which represents national and local papers.

The amendment has been tabled by Baroness Hollins, a crossbencher, Lord Stevenson of Balmacara and Lord Lipsey, both Labour, and Lord McNally, a Liberal Democrat.

A separate set of amendments tabled by Earl Attlee, a Conservative peer, would require all publishers not covered by the state-recognised regulator Impres to pay the costs of data protection legal actions, even if a court vindicates their reporting.

Most newspapers have declined to join Impres out of opposition to state regulation, and are instead regulated by Ipso, an independent body.

Last night Labour and Liberal Democrat sources indicated that they would back the amendments unless ministers gave assurances about government plans to improve media standards.

A Labour source said: "It's in the government's gift now. It is not just about historic issues, it is about the direction of travel of how to defend quality news from threats from fake news."

A Lib Dem source said that talks with ministers had stalled and indicated that the government would need to offer

more concessions to avoid a vote. "It may be the case that only when the minister is on his feet and speaking that we know if they have done enough to hold us off pushing for a division or not," the source said.

There are enough Labour and Lib Dem peers in the Lords to defeat the government. However, it may be difficult for the opposition parties to muster enough peers to pass the amendments given that any vote will take place late in the evening.

One senior opposition peer cautioned against predictions of defeat for the government, citing Baroness Hollins's decision to abruptly withdraw a similar amendment to the bill before Christmas.

Even if approved, the amendments could be removed from the legislation in the Commons.

The NMA said that the inquiry proposed by Baroness Hollins would be of "no public value" but would "come at an enormous cost to the public purse and be open to exploitation by those seeking to curtail freedom of speech".

It added: "Both these amendments, which seek to use the Data Protection Bill as a convenient vehicle to pursue a different agenda by the back door, should be rejected."

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**  
Cancer treatment

## Q&A

**Is this all about cost-cutting?**

Not primarily. Shortages of trained staff have emerged as one of the biggest problems facing the NHS and a survey of hospital bosses found two thirds citing staffing as the main challenge to patient care.

**Why has this become such a problem?**

An ageing population has meant demand for all kinds of treatment is growing, but training of new staff has not kept up. Because it takes years to train doctors and nurses, ministers of all parties have had little incentive to plan for what will happen when they have moved on.

**How bad are things?**

Nursing is worst hit, with about 40,000 vacancies, but GPs, psychiatrists and radiologists are in short supply. While staff numbers are rising, those in charge of

training warn that we could need another 190,000 frontline posts over the next decade.

**Why is cancer badly hit?**

There are about 2.5 million people living with cancer in Britain, up almost half a million in five years. The number is predicted to hit four million by 2020 as more people get cancer and survival improvements mean they need treatment for longer.

**Are there are enough cancer nurses?**

There are about 6,000 nurses working in cancer services, but only about half of them are thought to be trained oncology specialists. This includes some Macmillan nurses and others who help patients with symptoms outside hospital. A report last year by Macmillan found widespread pressure from growing patient numbers, with nurses looking after 50 per cent more patients than originally planned.

**How can we find more?**

It takes about five or six years to train a specialist nurse, so in the meantime hospitals are resorting to recruiting from overseas and paying high fees to tempt agency staff into extra shifts. However, plans to control costs have led to a clampdown on spending on temporary staff.

**Is this about Brexit?**

The number of EU nurses is down about 4.5 per cent since the Brexit vote, to 21,237, but there are signs that the problem could get worse worsen with a 32 per cent year-on-year decline in new arrivals of EU staff and three times as many leaving.

**Why else are nurses leaving?**

British nurses are abandoning the job, citing workloads and staff shortages. Last summer the nursing regulator reported a 50 per cent jump in people quitting the profession compared with four years ago.

help them. If taken forward, these measures will be another example of reducing access to treatments and services across the country."

Bosses at the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust said that a final decision would have to be made by the medical director and other top executives. It attributed staff shortages to the high cost of housing in the city. "Any decision to change the approach to cancer treatment so significantly would require a thorough assessment of the potential impact on the quality and safety of treatment and

care provided to cancer patients," a spokesman said. "Any changes to treatment would also need to comply with national guidance and evidence from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence."

The Department of Health and Social Care said: "Last month we announced the first ever cancer workforce strategy, which set out plans to increase the numbers working in cancer care to speed up diagnoses and get more people into treatment more quickly."

**Leading article, page 31**