

## Super Moon



An airplane silhouettes against the Super Moon in Nuremberg, southern Germany. Supermoons occur when the Moon's orbit brings it to the closest point to Earth while the Moon is full. The Moon is 221,734 miles from Earth during the super snow moon, according to EarthSky, its closest full moon to Earth in 2019. The average distance between Earth and the Moon is 238,855 miles.

## Britain to strip IS teen of citizenship



A video grab taken from CCTV, received from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) on February 23, 2015, shows (L-R) British teenagers Amira Abase, Kadiza Sultana and Shamima Begum at Gatwick Airport, south of London (file)

### London, United Kingdom

Britain will strip citizenship from a UK teenager who joined the Islamic State group in Syria but now wants to return home with her newborn baby, a lawyer for her family said Tuesday.

Shamima Begum's fate has stirred controversy since she and two friends fled London to join the terror network four years ago when she was aged just 15.

The case points to a dilemma facing many European countries, divided over whether to allow jihadists and IS sympathisers home to face prosecution or barring them over security concerns as the so-called "caliphate" crumbles.

A lawyer for her family, Tasnime Akunjee, said on Twitter that they were "very disappointed with the Home Office's intention to have an order made depriving Shamima of her citizenship," and that they were considering "all legal avenues".

ITV News reported that the Home Office has sent a letter to Begum's mother, received Tuesday, notifying the family of the decision which it said the teen had the right to appeal. Britain's Home Office reportedly believes that Begum, who is of Bangladeshi heritage, is entitled to claim citizenship there.

"In order to protect this

country, (the home secretary) has the power to deprive someone of their British citizenship where it would not render them stateless," the Press Association reported the Home Office as saying, adding it would not comment on individual cases.

Begum is currently in a refugee camp in northeast Syria where she fled to escape fighting in the east of the country along with hundreds of other people with links to IS.

At the weekend she gave birth to her third child, and appealed to British authorities to show "compassion" by allowing her to raise the baby in Britain -- while expressing no regret over having joined IS.

She has previously given birth to two other children after marrying in Syria. Both children have died, apparently from illness and malnutrition.

"I'm afraid he might even die in this camp," Begum said of her newborn. "I feel a lot of people should have sympathy for me, for everything I've been through," she told Sky News, adding that "I didn't know what I was getting into when I left".

However, in an interview with the BBC on Monday, she compared the Manchester Arena bombing to military strikes on IS strongholds, calling the terror attack "retaliation".

# Venezuela on alert

## Suspends links with Curacao to block aid

### Caracas, Venezuela

Venezuela's military said Tuesday it was on alert at its frontiers following threats by US President Donald Trump and suspended air and sea links with the island of Curacao ahead of a planned aid shipment.

Opposition leader and self-declared interim president Juan Guaido has vowed to bring aid in from various points Saturday "one way or another" despite military efforts to block it.

But commanders doubled down on their allegiance to President Nicolas Maduro after Trump urged them to abandon him.

"The armed forces will remain deployed and on alert along the borders... to avoid any violations of territorial integrity," said Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino.

Regional commander Vladimir Quintero later confirmed media reports that Venezuela had ordered the suspension of air and sea links with Curacao and the nearby Netherlands Antilles islands of Aruba and Bonaire.

Aid is being stored in Colombia near the Venezuelan border and Guaido aims also to bring in consignments via Brazil and Curacao, which is off the coast of Venezuela.

A Brazilian presidential spokesman said the country was cooperating with the United States to supply aid to Venezuela but would leave it to Venezuelans to take the goods over the border.

Maduro says the aid plan is a smokescreen for a US invasion. He blames US sanctions and "economic war" for Venezuela's crisis.

### 'No safe harbor'

Guaido, the 35-year-old leader of the Venezuelan legislature, has appealed to military leaders to switch allegiance to him and let the aid through.

He has offered military commanders an amnesty if they



Venezuelan Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino (R) gestures surrounded by military men as he delivers a speech in Caracas



**Shipments of food and medicine for Venezuelans suffering in the country's economic crisis have become a focus of the power struggle between Maduro and Guaido.**

military leaders commanding border posts to abandon Maduro.

He has branded Maduro illegitimate, saying the elections that returned the socialist leader to power last year were fixed. The United States and some 50 other countries back Guaido as interim president.

Trump has refused to rule out US military action in Venezuela. He raised the pressure on Monday, issuing a warning to the Venezuelan military.

He told them that if they continue to support Maduro, "you will find no safe harbor, no easy exit and no way out. You will lose everything."

Padrino rejected Trump's threat, branding the US president "arrogant."

If foreign powers try to help install a new government by force, they will have to do so "over our dead bodies," Padrino said.

Venezuela's deputy military attache at the UN announced Tuesday he was siding with Guaido.

"I declare myself to be in total and absolute disobedience to

the illegally constituted government of Mr. Nicolas Maduro," Colonel Pedro Jose Chirinos said in a video posted on social media.

Since Guaido declared himself interim president on January 23, he has received the support of an army colonel and an air force general, neither of whom actually have any troops under their command, a retired air force major general and a number of lower-level officers.

### 'Pack of lies'

Despite sitting on the world's biggest oil reserves, Venezuela is gripped by an economic and humanitarian crisis, with acute shortages of food and medicine.

It has suffered four years of recession marked by hyperinflation that the International Monetary Fund says will reach a mind-boggling 10 million percent this year.

An estimated 2.3 million Venezuelans have left the country since 2015.

Guaido says 300,000 people face death without the aid but Maduro denies there is a humanitarian crisis.

## Storm warning



This handout photo from Rainbow Beach Towing shows a vehicle at Rainbow Beach swamped by waves in a large swell created by Cyclone Oma. Cyclone Oma intensified to a damaging category three storm, Australia's Bureau of Meteorology said on February 20, warning that it could bring severe weather to the continent after hitting the Pacific Islands.