

world

Heavy rain hits parts of UAE

Khaleej Times | Dubai

Light to heavy rain has been reported in the UAE, according to the National Centre for Meteorology (NCM).

"Light rain over Al Saa," the NCM tweeted at 4.40pm yesterday.

The NCM had earlier said the Cyclone Mekunu - that is tearing through Salalah in Oman - will not reach the UAE. "However, the medium and high clouds and moist air mass may lead to rain convective cloud formations in the eastern and southern parts of the country," the authority had said.

The NCM has predicted "partly cloudy and hazy" weather with chances of rain for the next two days. "Temperatures tend to decrease slightly, clouds will appear over eastern and southern areas and may develop to convective clouds with rainfall at times," the NCM predicted.

Blowing dust will be caused by "light to moderate winds freshening at times".

Jailed UK-Iran aid worker to face 2nd trial on new security charges

Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, a project manager with Thomson Reuters, was arrested in April 2016

● She was convicted of plotting to overthrow Iran's clerical establishment

Reuters | Dubai

A detained British-Iranian aid worker sentenced to five years in jail in Iran is to face a second trial on new security charges, the semi-official Tasnim news agency yesterday quoted Tehran Revolutionary Court's head Musa Ghazanfarabadi as saying.

Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, a project manager with the Thomson Reuters Foundation, was arrested in April 2016 at a Tehran airport as she was heading back to Britain with her two-year-old daughter after a family visit.

She was convicted of plotting



Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe poses for a photograph with her daughter, Gabriella (Courtesy of RadioFreeEurope)

to overthrow Iran's clerical establishment, a charge denied by her family and the Foundation, a charity organisation that is independent of Thomson Reuters and operates independently of Reuters News.

British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson discussed

Zaghari-Ratcliffe's case with Iranian officials after flying to Tehran in December to try to seek her release.

"Ghazanfarabadi said the charge against Zaghari in the new case is security-related but did not say whether it was espionage or another charge," Tasnim



Iran does not recognize dual citizenship, which limits the access foreign embassies have to their dual citizens held there. Iran's Revolutionary Guards have arrested at least 30 dual nationals during the past two years, mostly on spying charge

reported.

"Zaghari is to present an attorney and then the court will

convene," Ghazanfarabadi said.

Britain's Foreign Office, when approached for comment, said it would not provide a commentary on "every twist and turn".

On Monday, British media reported that Zaghari-Ratcliffe had been told to expect another conviction after being taken to court last Saturday "for spreading propaganda against the state".

In a statement on Monday, the Thomson Reuters Foundation said it totally rejected "the renewed accusations that Nazanin is guilty of spreading propaganda" and said it continued to assert her full innocence.

In response to an urgent question in parliament on Tuesday about her situation, British Foreign Office minister Alistair Burt said Prime Minister Theresa May had raised all consular cases with President Hassan Rouhani in a call earlier this month.

Venezuela frees US missionary Josh Holt after two years



Holt was in Caracas to marry his Venezuelan girlfriend Thamy Candelo (BBC)

Reuters | Washington/Caracas

American missionary Josh Holt, held by Venezuela without trial on weapons charges since 2016, was heading home with his wife yesterday after the country's government unexpectedly released him.

The freeing of the Mormon missionary from Utah came despite deepening US-Venezuelan tensions that in the last week saw tit-for-tat expulsions of diplomats, Washington's refusal to recognize the May

20 re-election of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, and the imposition of new US sanctions on Caracas. Speaking at a news conference, Communications Minister Jorge Rodriguez said Holt and his wife, Thamy, were freed as part of efforts by Maduro's government to maintain "respectful diplomatic relations" with Washington.

Holt and his wife had been charged with espionage, violence and spreading activities against Venezuela's constitutional order, he said.

Leaders of two Koreas hold surprise meeting

Reuters | Seoul/Washington

South Korean President Moon Jae-in held a surprise meeting with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un yesterday to ensure the upcoming high-stakes summit between Kim and US President Donald Trump is a success, South Korean officials said.

The unannounced meeting is the latest dramatic turn in a week of diplomatic flip-flops surrounding an unprecedented summit between the United States and North Korea, and the strongest sign yet that the two Korean leaders are trying to keep the on-again off-again summit on track.

Their two-hour talks at the Panmunjom border village came a month after they held the first inter-Korean summit in more than a decade at the same venue on April 27 and declared they would work toward a nuclear-free Korean peninsula



South Korean President Moon Jae-in shakes hands with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un during their summit

and formally ending the 1950-53 Korean War.

"The two leaders candidly exchanged views about making the North Korea-US summit a successful one and about implementing the Panmunjom Declaration," South Korea's presidential spokesman said in a statement. He did not confirm how the secret meeting was

arranged or which side asked for it.

Moon, who returned to Seoul on Thursday morning after meeting Trump in Washington earlier this week in a bid to keep the summit on track as initially planned, for June 12 in Singapore, was due to announce details of the meeting with Kim early on Sunday.

Nipah mystery deepens, bats not the reason



Representative picture (Courtesy of AFP)

India Times | Kerala

The deadly Nipah Virus outbreak in Kerala which has claimed 12 lives so far many not have been caused by fruit bats, experts have said.

After the blood and serum samples of 21 bats was tested at the National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases in Bhopal, this claim has turned out to be negative.

The samples from other animals like cow, goat, rabbit, dog and cat which were also sent for testing also turned out to be negative, indicating that the virus has not spread to animals in the area, where the deaths have been reported.

Suspicion of fruit bats spreading the virus started making rounds due to the past history of the virus outbreak in countries like Malaysia and Bangladesh.

There are also reports that Mohamed Sabith, the first member of the family to die of Nipah was sent back home from Saudi Arabia after falling ill. Some locals had claimed that he had traveled to Malaysia, where Nipah was first reported.

Puppy diplomacy: Japan's Abe presents puppy to skater



Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe poses with an Akita Inu puppy

● The three-month old puppy has been offered to the Winter Olympic gold medallist

Moscow

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, on a three-day visit to Russia, took part yesterday in the handing over of an Akita puppy to Russian Olympic

champion figure skater Alina Zagitova.

The three-month old female puppy has been offered to the teenage Pyeongchang Winter Olympic gold medallist by a group dedicated to preserving the Japanese breed.

Abe, who arrived in Russia on Thursday for an economic forum in St Petersburg, is due to hold talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin later on Saturday in the Kremlin.

Accompanied by his wife, Abe

petted the fluffy dog before it was handed over to the 16-year-old Zagitova.

Zagitova fell in love with the breed while training in Japan before and during the Olympics

Zagitova fell in love with the breed and asked her parents to let her have an Akita puppy if she won the Games

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The puppy is called Masaru, which is a male name that means "win" or "victory".

