

# Spectacular lightning strikes hit parts of UK

More than 200 flights were delayed at Stansted Airport

AP | London

British meteorologists said thousands of lightning strikes hit the UK during a powerful overnight thunderstorm, and a London-area airport reported flight disruptions yesterday after an aircraft refuelling system was damaged.

London Stansted Airport said that a lightning strike disabled the fuelling system "for a period this morning."

Engineers have been on site and have now restored the system, however flights may still be subject to diversion, delay or cancellation.

More than 200 flights were delayed at Stansted. Another 31 departures and 18 arrivals were cancelled, according to Flight-Stats, which provides data on



A lightning strike during a storm in London

## 15,000

lightning strikes were recorded in four hours on Saturday night

regrettably been cancelled at Stansted Airport this morning due to an earlier airport fuelling system failure, caused by a lightning strike," a Ryanair spokesman said. "All affected customers are being contacted and advised of their options of a full refund, a free transfer on to the next available flight or a free transfer on to an alternative routing."

Meteorologist Charlie Powell said information suggested there were "around 15,000 strikes across the UK during the overnight period."

commercial aviation.

London-area airports were busier than usual, since Britain is in the middle of a long holiday weekend, and many schoolchildren also have a half-term break this coming week.

Budget airline Ryanair, which has a big presence at Stansted,

couldn't say how many of its flights had been affected at the airport, but was offering full refunds to some.

The Ireland-based airline apologized to those affected, but said the disruptions were beyond the company's control.

"A number of flights have

## Trump welcomes American freed from Venezuela



US President Donald Trump shake hands with Josh Holt

AFP | Washington

An American and his wife held nearly two years in a Venezuelan jail received a hero's welcome at the White House as they returned home Saturday following their release -- a move by sanctions-hit Caracas in a bid to spur dialogue with Washington.

But US officials immediately squelched any suggestion that punitive measures against Venezuela would be eased after the release of Joshua Holt, 26, and his wife Thamara Caleno.

"Very glad that Josh Holt is now back home with his family -- where he has always

belonged. Sanctions continue until democracy returns to Venezuela," Pence said in a tweet.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said "US policy toward Venezuela remains unchanged."

In a statement, he added that "the United States stands steadfast in support of the Venezuelan people and their efforts to return to democracy."

The couple's release followed a two-year effort by Utah Senator Orrin Hatch and after Senator Bob Corker, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, met in Caracas Friday with Maduro.

## 48 killed as Uganda bus rams into tractor and truck

AFP | Kampala

At least 48 people including 16 children died in northern Uganda when a bus hit a tractor driving with no lights at night and then a truck, the Red Cross said Saturday.

"Evacuation teams are working tirelessly to rescue the injured", said Ugandan police spokeswoman Emilian Kayima, adding that all three drivers had died.

"The death toll is now at 48 including 16 children," Red Cross spokeswoman Irene Nakasiita told *Agence France-Presse*.

The accident happened on Friday night in Kiryandongo, about 220 kilometers (140 miles) north of the capital Kampala.

The bus collided first with the tractor before hitting a truck transporting beer. Local media said the death toll exceeded 30.

# Seven firemen injured in major blaze at German theme park

AFP | Frankfurt

Seven firefighters were injured in efforts to put out a massive blaze at Germany's largest amusement park, police said yesterday, as it reopened to visitors despite extensive damage to some areas.

The fire at Europa-Park started early Saturday evening in a storage facility before engulfing the Pirates of Batavia boat ride, completely destroying the attraction.

It took some 250 firefighters until the next morning to extinguish the inferno, which sent huge columns of black smoke into the air.

Dramatic images of the raging fire were widely captured by visitors to the theme park in Rust, southwestern Germany and shared on social media.

Some 25,000 people had to be evacuated from the park, but none suffered any injuries.



A black column of smoke rises from a warehouse in flames above Europa-park in Rust, southern Germany

The local Offenburg police said in a statement that the blaze had left seven firefighters "lightly injured", without giving details. All of them were able to leave hospital after receiving medical attention.

Europa-park opened its doors as normal yesterday, although large sections of the Dutch and

Scandinavian-themed areas remain closed because of fire damage.

Europa-park's chief executive Michael Mack tweeted his thanks for the rescue services, saying Saturday had been "a sad day" for the park.

The cause of the fire is still unknown. Police said some fire-



Europa-Park the second most popular theme park resort in Europe, following Disneyland Paris

## 125-year-old jeans sold for nearly \$100,000



A portion of a pair of 125-year-old Levi Strauss & Co., denim blue jeans

Xinhua | Washington

A pair of 125-year-old jeans has sold for nearly 100,000 US dollars, setting a record for vintage denim, US media said Saturday.

The pants, manufactured by Levi Strauss & Co., were sold by an auction house in Maine on May 15 to a buyer in Southeast Asia. Daniel Soules of the auction house said: "It's somebody who loves old Levis."

At this old age, the jeans come with a fascinating backstory. The fabric was produced by a mill in New Hampshire on the East Coast, but the pants were manufactured in San Francisco on the West Coast. The first owner of the pants was Solomon Warner, a store owner in Arizona who purchased them in 1893.

Warner had barely worn them before his death, so the jeans stayed in good condition as they were passed down in the family throughout the years, helping preserve their value.

Levis had offered to buy back the pants for 50,000 dollars.

Several features of the pants were distinctively different from today's model, such as their single back pocket, and their lack of belt loops due to the popularity of suspenders in the 19th century.

# Baby 'Miracle' born on rescue ship as Italy arrivals surge

Reuters | Catania, Italy

A baby boy named Miracle has been born on board a humanitarian ship - a bright spot as the tide of migrants risking sea crossings from Libya to Italy has increased as the weather has improved.

There have been more than 1,800 migrants rescued by humanitarian ships, and Italy's navy and coastguard vessels over the past three days, and one body was recovered, an Italian coastguard official said.

Arrivals from Libya, a staging post for people smugglers, have plummeted 85 percent this year from last as Italy provided support to the Libyan coastguard



A woman (L), who just gave birth on board the Aquarius, reacts as she takes her newborn baby son, called Miracle, on board the ship

and to municipalities along the coast to stop migrant boats. factors seem to have reversed that trend, for now.

But good weather or other Migrants rescued by the



When Miracle was brought onto deck by the midwife, the migrants on board celebrated his birth by singing and dancing

Aquarius spoke of horrific conditions and violence in Libya, including the mother of the baby

born on Saturday.

"Both the mother and baby are doing very well," Amino Soulemane, the midwife on the Aquarius, said. Miracle, weighing 2.8 kg, was the sixth baby born on the rescue ship, but the first this year, King said.

When Miracle was brought onto deck by the midwife, the migrants on board celebrated his birth by singing and dancing -- a far cry from the conditions they said they had come from in Libya.

The mother, whose name was not given, told MSF she had been "held captive, beaten, given very little food and extorted for money for release" during the year she was in Libya.