

THE SUNDAY TIMES

NMC Health hits out after £2.7 billion is wiped off market value: More than £2.7 billion has been wiped off the market value of a private healthcare provider that was lambasted in a highly critical financial report by an American short seller.

Lloyds pledges special payout to victims of HBOS Reading scandal: Lloyds Banking Group has promised to award £35,000 each to nearly 200 fraud victims after criticism of how it treated small business owners whose livelihoods were damaged or destroyed by the HBOS Reading scam.

Ex-France Télécom head convicted of bullying staff into suicides: The former head of France Télécom and two executives were convicted and sentenced to prison for bullying staff into taking their lives in a brutal campaign to shed jobs. The company, since rebranded Orange, was also convicted of institutional moral harassment.

Takeaway.com can taste victory in Just Eat battle: Takeaway.com was close to securing victory in the £5.5 billion bidding battle for Just Eat after its rival for the British food delivery group threw in the towel. Naspers, bidding through its Dutch subsidiary Prosus, announced that it no longer planned to make market purchases of Just Eat shares in support of its 800p per share cash offer.

Woodford loses control of final fund Income Focus: Standard Life Aberdeen has clinched the mandate to manage the last of Neil Woodford's three investment vehicles, leaving the discredited fund manager no longer in control of the investments of any small savers in Britain.

M&C Saatchi hit by rip-off row in South Africa: M&C Saatchi has been hit by a row with a contractor who alleged it had overcharged a client by inflating the number of hours he and other staff had worked.

Data spooks tried to hire reporters for Bank snoop: Selerity, a New York-based tech company, asked financial reporters to attend press conferences held by the Bank of England and the European Central Bank (ECB), in return for payment.

Debenhams sparks fears as it seeks fresh rent cuts: Debenhams has spooked landlords by seeking fresh rent cuts just seven months after they were slashed in a restructuring, raising fears over its survival prospects.

INDICES THIS MORNING

	Current Value	(%) Change*	1W% Change
FTSE 100	7,603.3	0.3%	1.1%
DAX 30	13,308.3	-0.1%	1.7%
CAC 40	6,021.4	-0.003%	2.2%
DJIA**	28,455.1	-	3.1%
S&P 500**	3,221.2	-	0.3%
NASDAQ Comp.**	8,925.0	-	1.7%
Nikkei 225	23,821.1	0.02%	-0.9%
Hang Seng 40	27,906.4	0.1%	0.7%
Shanghai Comp	2,962.8	-1.4%	1.3%
Kospi	2,203.7	-0.02%	1.6%
BSE Sensex	41,642.7	-0.1%	1.6%
S&P/ASX 200	6,785.1	-0.5%	1.1%

Current Values as at 11:15 BST, *%Chg from Friday Close, ** As on Friday Close

ABOUT GOODMAN MASSON

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TSB disaster chief goes back to Spain: TSB's former IT Chief, who was at the heart of the challenger bank's technology disaster in 2018, has been moved back to its Spanish parent company as City watchdogs investigate his role.

Primark family's £100 million Christmas gift: The British branch of the billionaire Weston family's empire has paid a £101 million dividend as profits grew at Primark. Wittington Investments, the family's main operating vehicle in Britain, posted a slight rise in pre-tax profits to £1.3 billion on sales of £16 billion in the year to 14 September.

High street gloom spreads online after web sales fall: The gloom infecting the high street is spreading online, with more than 9,000 internet retailers reported to be suffering from significant financial distress.

Leadsom halts Chinese buyout of Mettis but allows Cobham: Andrea Leadsom gave the green light to a £4 billion takeover of Cobham by Advent International despite fears that important U.K. technological knowhow was being sold off.

Northern cities will lead way in house price rises, says Zoopla: The Conservative election victory will lift house prices in cities, with average prices in northern areas expected to rise by up to 4% next year. Zoopla's house price index, which covers 20 cities, is forecasting 3% growth and said that the highest rises would be in areas where the ratio of house prices to earnings was low.

THE FINANCIAL TIMES

Facebook bans pro-Trump media outlet over fake accounts: Facebook has banned a pro-Trump U.S. media outlet from its platforms after finding that the group conducted a first-of-its-kind influence operation that harnessed a network of hundreds of fake accounts with computer-generated pictures to push its content.

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Anglo seeks to ease fears over fossil fuel lobby groups: Anglo American, one of the world's biggest miners, has moved to head off a clash with shareholders over membership of powerful advocacy groups that engage in lobbying for the fossil fuel industry.

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U.S. envoy defends Nord Stream 2 sanctions as 'pro-European': The U.S. Ambassador to Berlin has defended U.S. sanctions against the Nord Stream 2 pipeline designed to supply the EU with Russian gas as "extremely pro-European", but Berlin condemned the legislation as "interference" in its internal affairs and Moscow threatened to "respond."

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Analyst alleges firm penalised her over maternity leave: A former Managing Director at Hong Kong brokerage CLSA has alleged that women were expected to work during their maternity leave at the firm and that its bonus system discriminated against mothers.

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U.K. corporate pension transfer market set for record year: The pension transfer market is on course for a record year in 2019 as U.K. companies offload ever bigger retirement schemes to life insurers.

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Corporate Japan posts record number of M&A deals: Japan hit a record tally of domestic merger and acquisition deals in 2019 after Hitachi agreed to the \$4.5 billion sale of one of its largest subsidiaries and the country's conglomerates continue a historic restructuring.

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Pentagon wants open-source 5G plan to take on Huawei: The Pentagon is urging U.S. telecoms equipment makers to join forces on 5G technology in a drive to offer a homegrown alternative to China's Huawei.

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Vodafone nears full-fibre deal with Goldman-backed telecoms group: Vodafone and CityFibre, the Goldman Sachs-backed telecoms company, are on the verge of a new deal that would pave the way for a huge investment in full-fibre lines.

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Heathrow shows detailed costings for third runway: Heathrow Airport has for the first time laid out detailed costings for its contentious third runway expansion, including an option to spend an additional £3 billion over the first 15 years to improve rail links and passenger service.

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THE MAIL ON SUNDAY

Fortnum & Mason is heading for a record Christmas as shoppers turn back to traditional festive fare: Fortnum & Mason is expecting a record Christmas this year thanks to a Boris boost for traditional fare. Ewan Venters, Chief Executive of the luxury London grocer, said shoppers who had in previous years flirted with different types of food for their festive lunch have returned to old favourites, perhaps in reaction to the turmoil over the General Election and Brexit.

Lord Hall insists viewers still trust the BBC as he rejects furious claims of 'biased' General Election coverage: The BBC's Director-General has claimed viewers still trust the public broadcaster despite furious backlash over its General Election coverage.

Board bust-up at Aviva over Chief Executive's decision not to split firm: A boardroom bust-up has broken out at Aviva after its chief executive backtracked on a plan to split the insurer into two.

Peter Hargreaves receives £10 million windfall as Blue Whale fund he backed returns 40% in two years: Billionaire Brexit backer Peter Hargreaves has made £10 million from a fund he set up to hold his vast wealth. Its holdings are up more than 40% since its launch two years ago, swelling Hargreaves' investment to around £35 million.

THE INDEPENDENT

Andrew Bailey named next Bank of England Governor as Mark Carney steps down: Andrew Bailey, the current head of the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), has been named as the next Governor of the Bank of England. The 60-year-old replaces incumbent Mark Carney, who steps down from the position on 15 March after more than six years of service.

Tories urge Boris Johnson to 'change course' on HS2 amid fears project could reach 12-figure cost: Boris Johnson has been urged to "change course" on High Speed 2 by more than 20 of his own MPs, weeks after he admitted the controversial project could end up costing the taxpayer more than £100 billion.

Boeing Starliner spacecraft lands in U.S. desert after botched mission: Boeing's Starliner spacecraft has landed successfully in a U.S. desert after aborting a botched mission.

Tesco shuts down production at China factory amid claims Christmas cards 'packed by prison slaves': Tesco has shut down production at a factory in China alleged to have used forced labour to make charity Christmas cards, after a south London schoolgirl discovered a desperate message from a "foreign prisoner" inside her card.

THE GUARDIAN

Persimmon's ex-chief yet to set up promised 'bonus' charity: Jeff Fairburn, the former Chief Executive of the housebuilder Persimmon, has failed to set up a charity almost two years after pledging to do so in an attempt to assuage public and political anger at his "obscene" £85 million bonus.

FTSE leaves coal and oil firms and G4S on ethical investment list: Some of the world's biggest fossil fuel companies, including Russia's state oil giant Rosneft, have been added to the London Stock Exchange's "ethical" investment lists.

Saclà recalls pesto products over peanut contamination fears: The Italian sauce company Saclà is recalling dozens of pesto products, including those sold as own brand by Waitrose and Aldi, over fears they may contain peanuts without declaring their presence.

Disney's stable of heroes dominates the big-screen galaxy: Disney will confirm its utter dominance of the global box office this week as the final Star Wars film looks set to pass \$1 billion (£767 million) in ticket sales, capping a year at the movies that will be hard to beat.

Average annual salary of Premier League players tops £3 million for first time: The average salary for a Premier League footballer has exceeded £3 million a year for the first time, according to the latest Global Sports Salary Survey, which also highlights the financial muscle and worldwide popularity of English football's top flight.

THE WEEK AHEAD

	Key Economy Releases	Key Corporate Releases
Monday, 23 December 2019	US: Chicago Fed National Activity Index, Durable Goods Orders, New Home Sales (MoM)	Interim Results: Zoetic International
Tuesday, 24 December 2019	US: Richmond Fed Shipments Index, Richmond Fed Manufacturing Index	-
Wednesday, 25 December 2019	US: MBA Market Index EU: ECB Balance sheet	-
Thursday, 26 December 2019	US: MBA Mortgage Applications, Initial Jobless Claims, Secondary Credit Borrowings	-
Friday, 27 December 2019	US: Baker Hughes US Rig Count EU: ECB Publishes Economic Bulletin	-

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