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House prices rising at fastest pace in 32 years

Australian house prices are rising at the fastest pace in 32 years, as the Sydney and Melbourne property markets stage a full recovery from the short-lived COVID downturn.

CoreLogic's monthly home value index rose 2.8 per cent in March — the biggest monthly growth since October 1988.

"It's just quite remarkable to see this rate of increase across Australia," CoreLogic's head of Australian research Eliza Owen said.

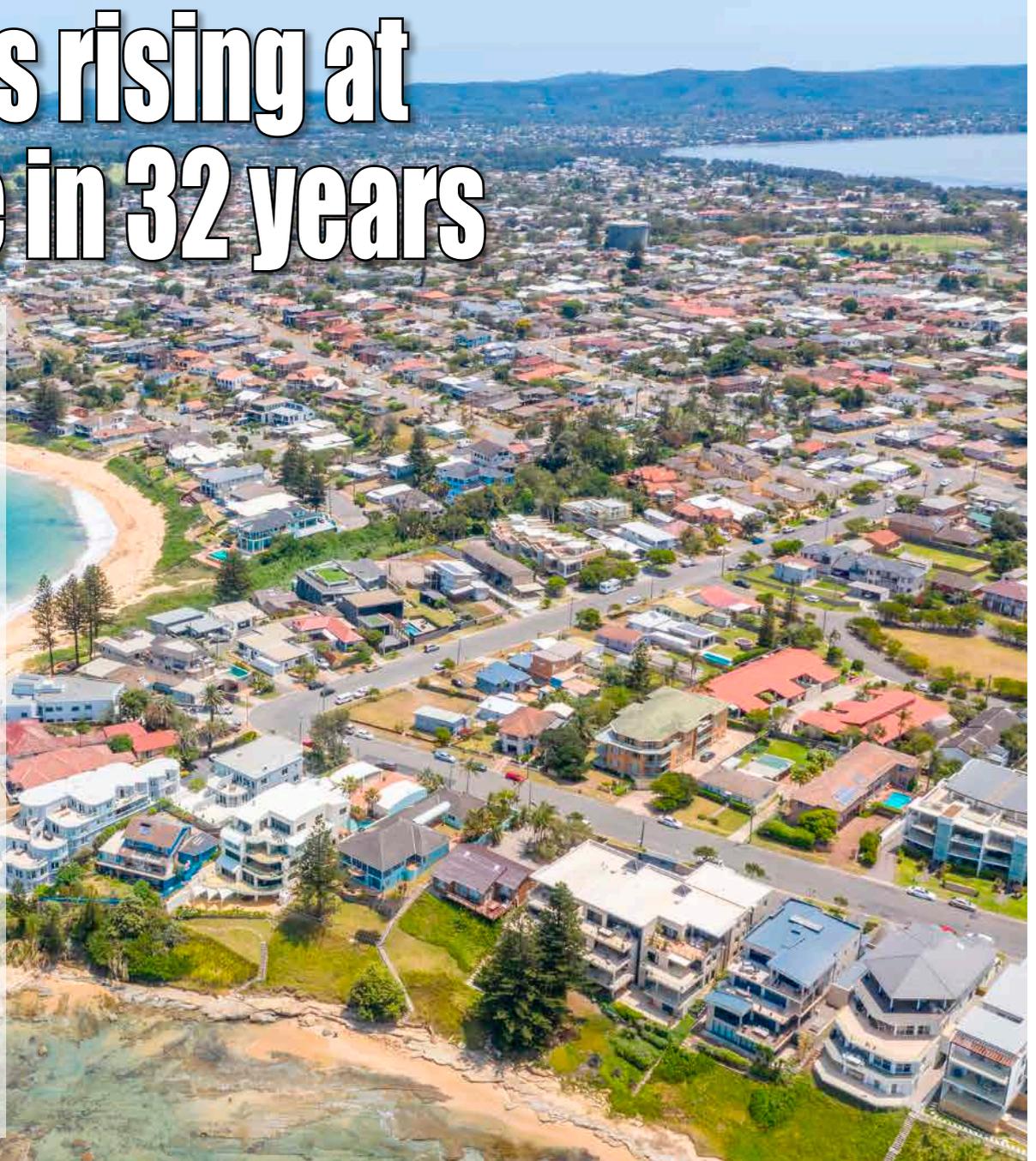
Sydney prices had the most rapid rise, up 3.7 per cent in the month and 6.7 per cent over the first quarter of the year — the strongest quarterly growth since mid-2015.

"That was a time when the property market was rising very rapidly off the back of a boom in investor lending," Ms Owen said.

"It's a little different this time around with a greater owner-occupier presence in the market." Prices in Sydney, Melbourne, Hobart, Canberra and Brisbane are all at record highs.

For the first time in the year, growth in capital

Continued page 15



Scott Morrison announce latest cabinet reshuffle

Christian Porter and Linda Reynolds have been dumped from their senior ministerial positions, switched to other Cabinet roles as Scott Morrison seeks to stabilise his scandal-plagued government. After weeks of shocking revelations about workplace culture and

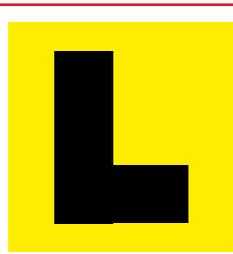
Continued page 15



The World Health Organization warns that the introduction of the Covid-19 vaccine is unacceptably slow in Europe

Vaccines offer the best way out of this pandemic. Not only does it work, it is also very effective in preventing infection. However, the deployment of these vaccines is unacceptably slow. She said Dr. Hans Kluge Who is the Regional Director for.

Continued page 15

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Queensland MP Andrew Laming won't be charged for allegedly taking photo of woman bending over



Queensland police have cleared federal government MP Andrew Laming over allegations he inappropriately photographed a woman while she was bending over. Crystal White, 29, made a formal complaint to police on Tuesday over a photograph taken by Dr Laming while Ms White was filling a fridge at a bayside Brisbane landscaping business in 2019.

It came on the heels of Dr Laming delivering an apology in Federal Parliament to engaged in aggressive behaviour online with two female constituents.

Dr Laming, who is on medical leave and undergoing "empathy training"

after his behaviour was deemed unacceptable by the Prime Minister, has since announced he will not contest the seat of Bowman at the next election.

Ms White and her colleague Sean Blinco said the store manager had forced Dr Laming to delete the photo.

Dr Laming has apologised for the photo but denied it was unsavoury, saying his "goal was to show a challenging work situation ... an incredibly hardworking employee who was simply kneeling in normal work attire and stacking a fridge with an impossible amount of soft drink cans".

Disgraced NSW MP Michael Johnsen resigns from parliament amid rape allegations



Embattled NSW Nationals MP Michael Johnsen has resigned from office amid allegations that he texted a sex worker lewd messages while in NSW Parliament's Question Time and then later raped her.

NSW Deputy Premier John Barilaro confirmed Johnsen had resigned in a statement on Wednesday.

"Last week I sought the resignation of the Member for Upper Hunter Michael Johnsen as Parliamentary Secretary, removed him from the Nationals and Coalition Party Rooms and he was suspended from the National Party in light of serious allegations and an active police investigation," Barilaro said.

"Yesterday, following further reports, I told Mr Johnsen his position as a Member of Parliament was untenable and called for his resignation.

"Today I welcome Mr Johnsen's resignation from the NSW Parliament."

Barilaro cited the reason for his resignation as a matter of integrity and common decency.

"My message to the people of the Upper Hunter is I will always put integrity before politics, which is why I called for Mr Johnsen's resignation," the politician continued.

The news comes a week after Johnsen went on leave and moved to the crossbench after denying allegations he raped the woman at the Blue Mountains in 2019.

Last Wednesday, Labor shadow Minister for Women Trish Doyle told parliament she had been contacted by a sex worker claiming

that a NSW politician had raped her 18 months ago. However she did not name the MP.

"It was an arrangement for oral sex only," Doyle said.

"She tells me that she made herself clear that she was not willing to have penetrative sex with him."

Michael Johnsen soon identified himself as the man at the centre of the allegations.

"Any investigation will conclude I am an innocent party," his statement read.

The sex worker claimed she was sent lewd text messages and an obscene video while Johnsen was sitting in the parliamentary chamber.

She had responded to his online advertisement for sex in August, 2019.

Other coalition MPs expressed their disgust at Johnsen's alleged acts - NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian among them.

The allegations against Johnsen are the latest in a string of accusations engulfing the Liberal and National parties, particularly in federal parliament, since former staffer Brittany Higgins said she was raped in a government minister's office in March 2019.

Following her claims, revelations came to light that a woman who died by suicide last year had alleged she was raped by Attorney-General Christian Porter when the two were teens in 1988.

Porter strenuously denies the claims and has commenced legal action against the ABC over its coverage of them.



Published by: The World Observer Media Pty Ltd
ABN: 82 150 619 239

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By Mamdouh
Sukkarieh

Letter for the Pope and Patriarchs

my daughter Natalie Sukkarieh few years ago wrote a passionate letter to the Pope and Patriarchs hoping they will listen to her or at least consider her voice and all the voices of the younger generation to be heard. It's regarding the Easter celebration date to be the same for all Christians but unfortunately nothing came from the letter as of yet but as you can read below she amongst many others who share this sadness in one of the most holy times of the year.

I have been asked by friend are you celebrating Easter on this Sunday or after, I said our Easter not this week then she asked why? I told her I really don't know, the only thing I know is we follow the eastern calendar, then she tried to joke saying after one week, everything would be too late you won't even find any Easter eggs.

After I went home I went to Google search hunting for what the big reason behind this midterm I have found is that: By the 1700's, though, most of Western Europe had adopted the Gregorian Calendar. On the Gregorian calendar (the one that we use), Easter is the first Sunday after the Paschal full moon which is the first full moon on or after March 21. Easter thus always falls between March 22 and April 25. The Eastern Christian churches still determine the Easter dates using the older Julian Calendar method. The usual statement, that Easter Day is the first Sunday after the full moon that occurs next after the vernal equinox, is not a precise statement of the actual ecclesiastical rules.

What I have found not important for me and for other young and old people, As Christian we crucified Jesus and Rose him twice once in the Western calendar and the second in the Eastern Calendar, so what is the problem if the pope and the patriarchs meet and decide a day for everyone. My belief about the meaning of Easter is not about when, where and how we deal with historical issues in celebrating Easter.

It's the spirit of resurrection and continuation of new life, with love and peace. It's giving and making sacrifices for others, but his resurrection represents something even more powerful: the potential for rebirth, salvation, and renewal of faith.

In conclusion I would like the religious leaders to take our concern into consideration and set up a one date for us all to celebrate Easter together. I wish everyone a happy festive season, hoping they have a wonderful and safe Easter with family and friends.

Australians rush to take advantage of half price airfares



Australians who want to take advantage of the Federal Government's half price airfares are being warned to get in quick, with up to 35 per cent of flights have already been sold. Up to 800,000 flights are being offered as part of the government's

\$1.2 billion scheme designed to boost domestic travel and help struggling tourism destinations in the pandemic. Speaking to Today, co-founder of Australian Traveller Magazine Quentin Long said Queensland is the biggest winner from the scheme.

Blood-clotting case in Australian AstraZeneca vaccine recipient being taken 'very seriously' by Therapeutic Goods Administration

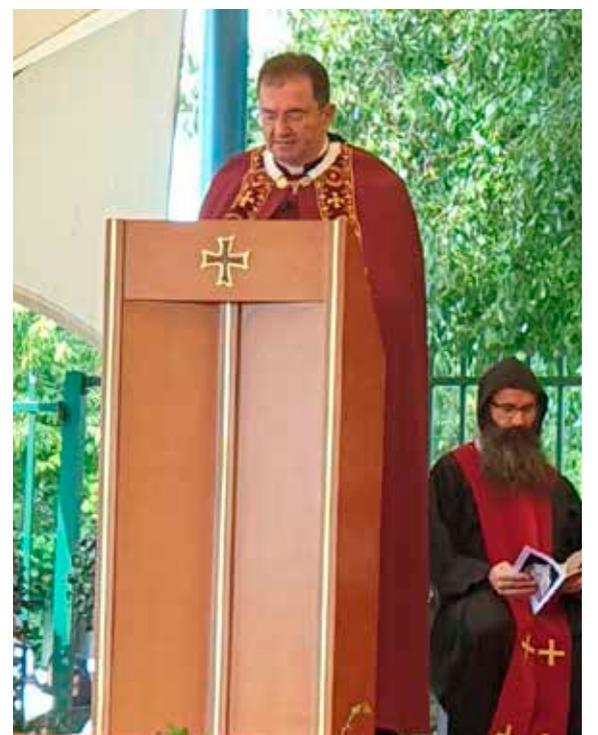
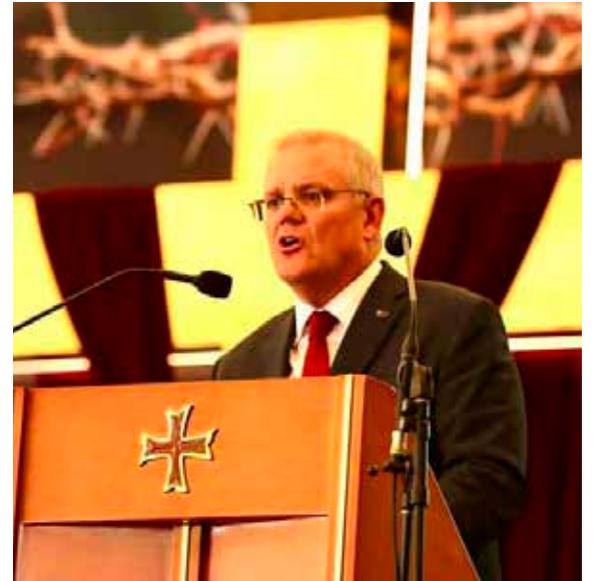


Australia's Acting Chief Medical Officer Michael Kidd has confirmed authorities are investigating a "probable" case of a rare clotting disorder in an Australian man who received the AstraZeneca vaccine. Professor Kidd said the matter was being taken "very seriously" and was being investigated by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). The TGA's vaccine safety investigation group will meet tomorrow and will seek to determine whether the disorder is linked to the AstraZeneca vaccine. The blood clots were recorded in a

44-year-old man who is now being treated in Melbourne's Box Hill Hospital. The man received the AstraZeneca vaccine on or around March 22 and was admitted to hospital with serious thrombosis and a low platelet count. "He had low platelets, but he had clots in his liver, in his spleen and in his gut in general," Coronacast host Dr Norman Swan told ABC News. "So, he fits the description of vaccine-induced prothrombotic thrombocytopenia. He fits the case description." Professor Kidd said medical officials were taking the case very seriously.



Prime Minister Scott Morrison is attending a Good Friday Church Service at St Charbel's Church



The Prime Minister Scott Morrison attended at a service at St Charbel's Catholic Maronite Church in Punchbowl in Sydney's south-west with former Prime Minister Tony Abbott.

The Prime Minister read a traditional Good Friday Bible passage chosen by the church, before reflecting on the Easter message of love, humility and selflessness.

It's in Labor frontbencher Tony Burke's Sydney seat of Watson, Who represented the opposition leader.

Before leaving the church Mr Morrison posed for photos with his Excellency Bishop Antoine Tarabay, Father Superior Charbel Aboud and members of the St Charbel's Youth Association.

Mr Morrison also shared a more in-depth Easter message.

"I was pleased to join our wonderful Maronite community in Punchbowl today with Jen and the girls for their Good Friday service. Easter can be a great time of reflection and renewal, regardless of whether you are a religious person.

For those who share the Christian faith it is a time of thanksgiving for the grace and peace extended to us all through the Easter message of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Faith is an important part of the life of millions of Australians. It brings them comfort, peace, community and assurance. This is especially true for our Australian Maronite community. They are dear friends of ours and we love sharing these special times with them". He said

Aged care CCTV trial starts in South Australia after delays and tweaks



After years of delays, an Australian-first trial of CCTV cameras inside the rooms of aged care residents has finally started.

The program is being piloted at two South Australian homes and follows the shocking findings of the Royal Commission into Aged Care and Quality, which uncovered disturbing cases of abuse and mistreatment of some of our most vulnerable.

The South Australian Government announced it would trial the idea two years ago.

Five state-run sites were meant to be involved by the end of 2019, but that has shrunk to two.

The cameras have been switched on at

the Mount Pleasant District Hospital's aged care home in the Adelaide Hills. Adelaide's Northgate House is also involved in the trial.

Mount Pleasant resident Peg Roesler previously volunteered at the hospital and recently moved into the same facility after some recent health challenges.

"I've been in the place [Mount Pleasant] for 70 years, the same place, and it's not easy to get up and leave it," she said.

Ms Roesler, 97, said she felt safe at the nursing home, but her family was nervous about moving her into care after hearing the royal commission's harrowing findings.

Women's World Cup 2023 host cities named, including Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Adelaide



Football's world governing body, FIFA, has selected the host cities for the 2023 Women's World Cup.

Of the 12 bidding cities in Australia and New Zealand, nine were successful, with Newcastle, Launceston and Christchurch missing out.

In Australia, matches will be played in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth with the final scheduled for August 20 at Sydney's Olympic stadium.

The tournament will begin at Eden Park in Auckland on July 10.

The nine hosting cities include: Adelaide, Auckland, Brisbane, Dunedin, Hamilton, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney and Wellington.

The Women's World Cup, the ninth edition of the tournament, will be the first to have 32 teams competing. Both the Matildas and Football Ferns will qualify automatically, representing the host nations.

The full match schedule will be announced later this year, but Australia and New Zealand will each host one semi-final.

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Tony Burke MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR WATSON

Wishing you a very

HAPPY EASTER

- Tony Burke Member for Watson

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Chris Bowen MP

Federal member for McMahon

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المسيح قام حقاً قام

Happy Easter

Wishing you and your family
a Happy Easter and good health

فصح مجيد

مع أحر التهاني وأطيب التمنيات

Authorised by Chris Bowen MP, ALP, Shop 3&4/ 398 Hamilton Rd, Fairfield West NSW 2165



Authorised by L.Burney, ALP, 203/13A Montgomery Street, Kogarah NSW 2217

**A HAPPY
& HOLY
EASTER!**

Wishing you and your family
a safe, loving and joyous
Easter.

Linda Burney MP
Member for Barton

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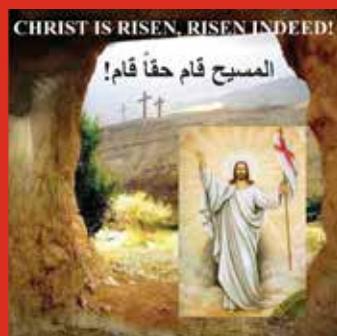
Guy Zangari MP

State Member for Fairfield

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Christians around the world
will stop this Easter to celebrate
the resurrection of Jesus Christ
I wish you all a good health and happiness

يتوقف المسيحيون في جميع أنحاء العالم بمناسبة
عيد الفصح المجيد للاحتفال بقيامة المخلص يسوع
المسيح ورسالته في زرع الأمل والمحبة في النفوس.



**Happy
Easter**

Authorised by Guy Zangari MP, 55A Smart St Fairfield NSW 2165
using Parliamentary entitlements, April 2021



Julia Finn MP

Member for Granville
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happy Easter
Blessings to you and your family
Christ has risen

أتمنى لكم ولعائلاتكم

عيد فصح مجيد

وكل عام وأنتم بخير

Authorised by Julia Finn MP Member for Granville
using parliamentary entitlements

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JASON CLARE MP
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR BLAXLAND

WISHING ALL THE READERS OF THE WORLD OBSERVER A HAPPY EASTER

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Authorised by Jason Clare MP, ALP, Suite 7, Level 1, 400 Chapel Road Bankstown

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WISHING YOU AND YOUR FAMILY ALL THE BEST FOR EASTER.

ED HUSIC MP FEDERAL MEMBER FOR CHIFLEY

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Labor

فصح مجيد

NSW Labor wishes you and your family a happy and blessed Easter

يتمنى حزب العمال في نيو ساوث ويلز لكم ولعائلاتكم عيد فصح مبارك وسعيد



Jodi McKay MP
NSW Labor Leader
Member for Strathfield



Jihad Dib MP
Member for Lakemba



Sophie Cotsis MP
Member for Canterbury



Lynda Voltz MP
Member for Auburn



Jo Haylen MP
Member for Summer Hill



Nick Lalich MP
Member for Cabramatta



Guy Zangari MP
Member for Fairfield

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By **Natalie Sukkarieh** 🌸🌸🌸

Easter

Easter time

A time of love

A time of sacrifice

When Jesus payed a high price

He died on the cross

And his mother dealt with his loss

To save us from our sins

In the nails went

Like pins in his skin

The heavy cross he carried,

Only to be later buried.

He died out of love for us

And in him we put our trust

He fell three times

But not for his crimes.

He was innocent

Yet his love was infinite

He was resurrected

And the good word he subjected

To the people believed

He promised them to be free

He suffered pain

But for no personal gain.

Out of love he died,

In order to guide

His pride, of people

To the heavenly land of God.



Wishing you and your family a
safe and happy Easter.

Please take care on the roads
this holiday period and enjoy
this special time with your
family friends.



Wendy LINDSAY MP

State Member for **East Hills**

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**A true
LOCAL**



Clr George Zakhia

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من الجميع بأطيب الأمنيات بمناسبة حلول

عيد الفصح المجيد

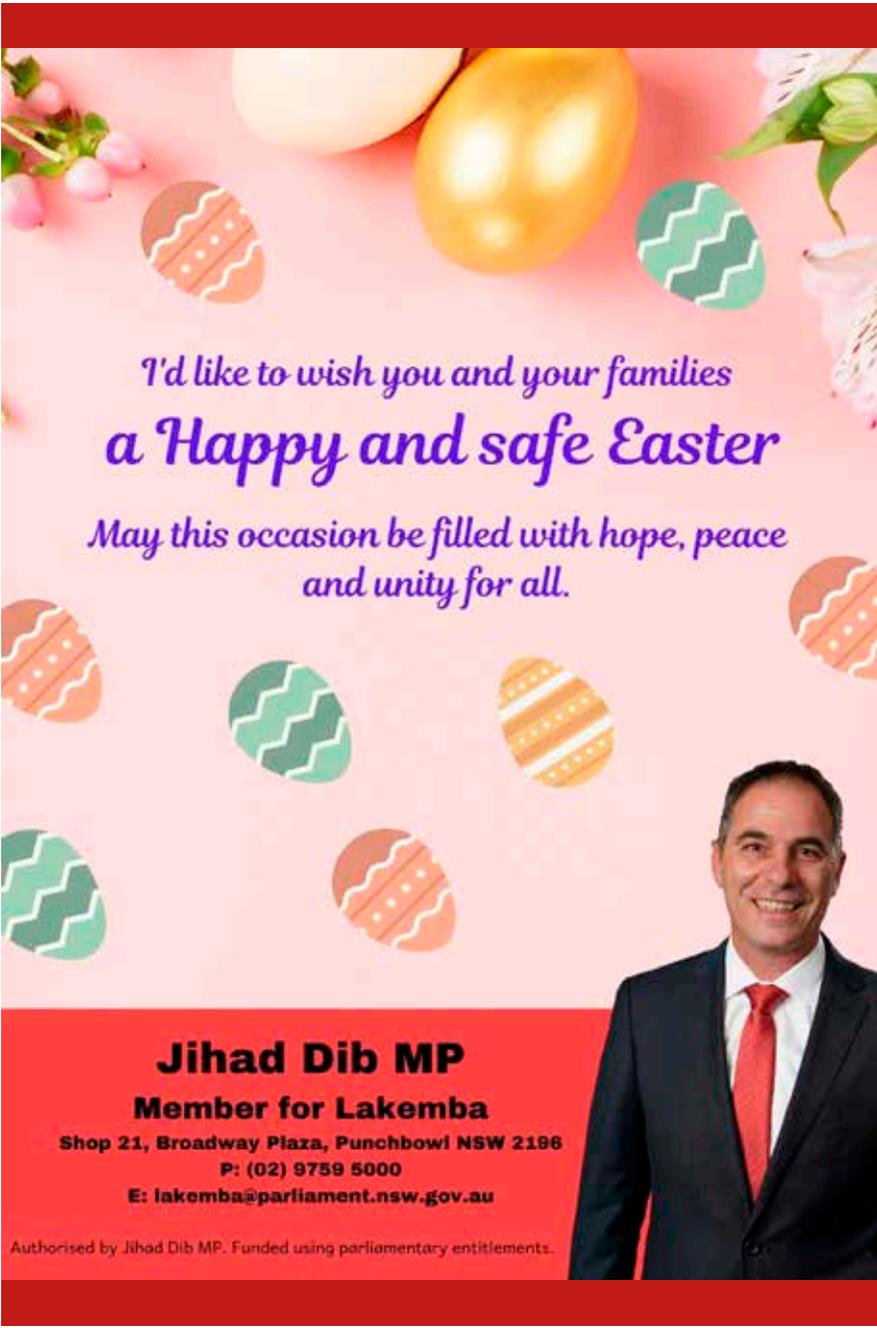
أعاده الله على الجميع بالخير واليمن والبركات

Clr George Zakhia hope you have

a wonderful and

Happy Easter

with your family and friends

*I'd like to wish you and your families
a **Happy and safe Easter**
May this occasion be filled with hope, peace
and unity for all.*



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Authorised by Jihad Dib MP. Funded using parliamentary entitlements.



**Wishing You and
Your Family
A Joyous and
Blessed Easter**

**عيد
فصح مجيد**



The Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane MLC





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Happy Easter
Best wishes for a happy,
healthy and prosperous Easter

عيد فصح مجيد
متمنياً للجميع السعادة والأمان والنجاح

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**Wishing you and your family
a very
Happy Easter**

**بمناسبة حلول
عيد الفصح المجيد
أتمنى لكم ولعائلاتكم
عيداً سعيداً ومباركاً**



Australian fitness star shares unedited post-birth pictures as she urges fans not to compare themselves to celebrities



Australian fitness star Emily Skye is urging new mums to stop comparing themselves to others. Credit

Australian fitness star Emily Skye is urging new mums to stop comparing themselves to others.

“Recently a celebrity showed off her super flat belly 11 days after having her baby,” Skye, 35, began an Instagram post on Tuesday. “I’ve seen so many people, especially mothers upset by it & compare their own bodies.”

Though Skye doesn’t name the celebrity, model Emily Ratajkowski, who welcomed her first child earlier this month, posted a picture of her enviable abs just over a week after giving birth. Hilaria Baldwin was also

criticised for a similar postpartum photo last December. Most people don’t “snap back” Skye assured her more than two million followers. Skye, who shares three-year-old daughter, Mia, and nine-month-old son, Izaac, with longtime partner Declan Redmond, noted that she has “excess belly skin”.

“Comparing & feeling inferior to people who seem ‘perfect’ is unhealthy,” Skye wrote. “We can’t control what other people choose to put out there, but we can take control of how we allow them to affect us.”

Skye went on to reveal that it took her roughly a year to “get fit again” after Mia was born in 2017.

“I wondered why so many other fitness professionals snapped back fast after giving birth & I didn’t. I felt like an imposter as a ‘Fitness Expert’ because I didn’t look ‘fit,’” Skye shared.

But Skye is learning to be kinder to herself.

“This time around I knew better than to compare & beat myself up. I needed to practice what I preach & focus on my own journey & not get distracted by others,” Skye wrote. “I am SO proud of myself & have so much appreciation for my body & what it’s done & keeps doing for me & my babies.”

Skye was inundated with comments.

“Every postpartum journey is different and you are one hell of a woman to stand up and remind us all of that. Thank you,” wrote one person.

Added another, “You are a legend ... Making us all ‘non-snap back’ mommas feel normal and empowered.”

Skye has been sharing unedited images of herself since giving birth to Izaac in June.

“You see pictures of women straight out of the hospital in skinny jeans and you think, ‘How is this possible?’” Skye previously told TODAY Health. “I’d compare myself, which is evil. It’s horrible. It takes away joy.”

“I’ve been talking about this for a long time, how you shouldn’t compare yourself, but now I’m actually taking my own advice,” Skye said. “I’m focusing on my own journey and feeling good.”



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HAPPY Easter

This Easter, we join Christians around the world to proclaim the joy and grace at the centre of the Christian faith.

Jesus’ example of love, sacrifice and service to others is one that inspires us all.

It is a reminder that Easter is also a time to remember and reach out to those in need, the less fortunate, the homeless, the lonely and the sick.

May all of us be encouraged in our commitment to serve others and to uphold the values that we celebrate today.

For many of us, regardless of our faith, Easter is an opportunity to spend time with family and friends.

I hope that you have a safe, peaceful and inspiring holiday, shared with the people you love.

May you feel your faith renewed with the hope Easter brings.

Happy Easter.



Mayor

Steve Christou



On behalf of the staff of Bayside Council, myself and my fellow Councillors, I wish everyone a happy and safe Easter break.

Mayor Joe Awada

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Christians around the world and in our City will stop this Easter to reflect on the resurrection of Jesus Christ and his message of hope and peace.

May we be inspired by His sacrifice and compassion for others.

Happy Easter!

Khal Asfour



Clr Khal Asfour
MAYOR
City of Canterbury Bankstown



May this special time renew our spirits and strengthen our commitments. God bless you, your family and loved ones.

Clr Rachelle Harika
Deputy Mayor



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10am-6pm

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Happy Easter

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Kim Kardashian

gives pal Gwyneth Paltrow's new Goop vibrator a bit of buzz as lifestyle guru gifts her lube and a custom 'Kim's ORGASM' candle



Kim Kardashian posted a unique unboxing video to her Instagram, showing a collection of gifts from high-end lifestyle brand

Some say she found fame via a very NSFW home video.

So Kim Kardashian wasn't afraid to be a bit provocative as she shared a very unique unboxing video of a high-end gift from friend Gwyneth Paltrow's lifestyle brand Goop.

The reality superstar, 40, gave Goop's latest offerings a bit of buzz as she opened an unassuming package labeled 'Kim's box of tricks,' which was filled with sexy-time supplies like a vibrator, lube and a cheeky candle called 'Smells like Kim's orgasm.'

On the inside, she found a 'double-sided wand vibrator' from Goop Wellness, along with two bottles of lubricant.

The wand was a hot commodity, selling out almost immediately after its February release.

One was an aromatic concentrate labeled simply 'Love,' while the other was a 'sex gel' labeled with the French word *Nécessaire*.

Finally, the box contained a personalized perfumed candle from Goop x Heretic, labeled 'This Smells Like Kim's Orgasm.'

The candle was inspired by Goop's now-viral 'This Smells Like My Vagina' candle.

As the mother of four opened the gift, she said, 'I've never been more excited, honestly, for... a candle...'

Kim then gasped at the site of the lubricant and vibrator, before exclaiming, 'Thank you Gwyneth, I love you, thanks Goop!'

The gift comes as the middle Kardashian sister continues to navigate divorce proceedings from her estranged husband Kanye West.

Artwork from world's largest canvas painting created in Dubai sells for \$62 m



British artist Sacha Jafri, who partnered with UNICEF and UNESCO looking to raise up \$30 million from selling a painting and donating them to children's charities,

An artwork created from the world's largest canvas painting has sold for \$62 million in Dubai, the second most expensive painting sold at auction by a living artist.

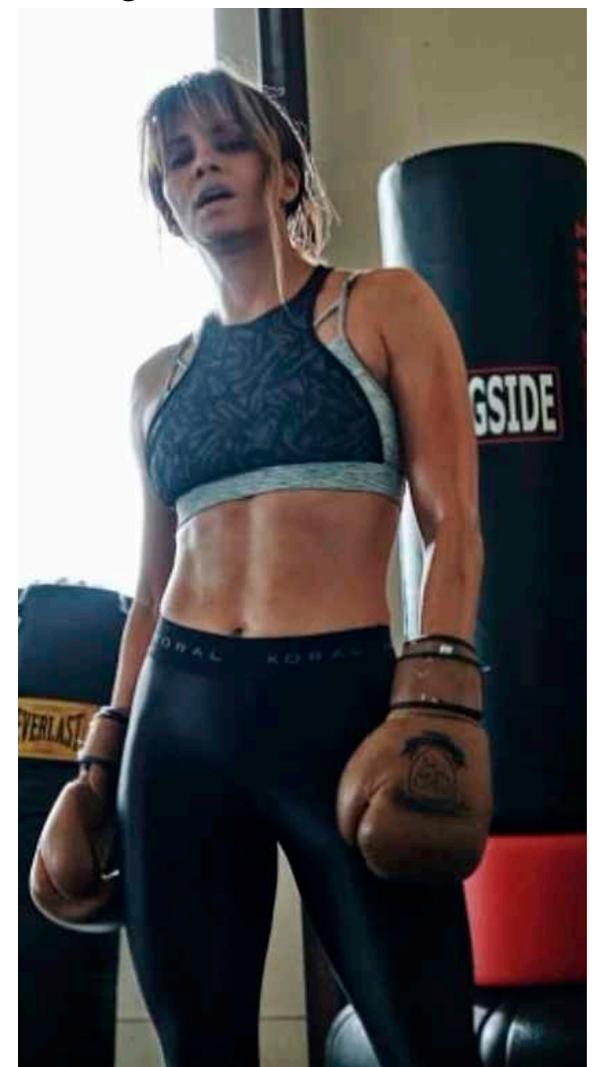
The original painting, "The Journey of Humanity" by British artist Sacha Jafri, holds the Guinness World Record for the largest art canvas.

Painted on one large canvas on the ballroom floor of the Atlantis hotel in Dubai over seven months of the coronavirus pandemic, the canvas was split into 70 lots for sale. They were all bought together by Andre Abdoune, a French national living in Dubai who has a cryptocurrency business.

Jafri's aim had been to raise \$30 million for charities by auctioning the 1,800 square meters of canvas in sections, but Abdoune put in a bid for the entire work. Abdoune said he is planning a "second step" for the painting, hoping to raise even more money for charity, without giving further details. For now, he intends to leave the painting in Dubai. The artist used 1,065 paint brushes and 6,300 liters of paint. The most expensive painting by a living artist sold at auction was David Hockney's 1972 "Portrait of an Artist (Pool with Two Figures)" which in 2018 sold for \$90.3 million.

Halle Berry

shows off her hot body and washboard abs after finishing up a boxing workout



She's widely known for taking on physically demanding roles in films such as Catwoman and John Wick: Chapter 3 – Parabellum.

And on Friday morning, Halle Berry proved that she still has what it takes to keep her figure in fighting-fit shape as she posted a smoldering snap to her Instagram.

In the picture, the Oscar-winning actress was seen placing much of her impressively toned body on full display after finishing up a boxing routine at one of her usual gyms.

Putting in work: Halle Berry showed off her impressively sculpted abs and toned arms in a photo shared to her Instagram account

Prince Harry

to be chief impact officer at mental health firm BetterUp, says report



Britain's Prince Harry will become chief impact officer of coaching and mental health firm BetterUp Inc, the Wall Street Journal reported on Tuesday. In his new role, Harry is expected to have input into initiatives such as product strategy decisions and charitable contributions, and advocate publicly on topics related to mental health, the report said.

BetterUp did not immediately respond to Reuters request for comment. Earlier this month, Oprah Winfrey's television interview with Queen Elizabeth's grandson and his

American wife Meghan plunged the British monarchy into its biggest crisis since the death of Princess Diana, the mother of Harry and elder brother William, in 1997. Harry, 36, and Meghan, 39, sent shockwaves through the monarchy in January 2020 when they announced their intention to step back from royal duties and embark on a new life across the Atlantic. Last month, Buckingham Palace announced that Harry and Meghan had made a final split with the royal family, and would not be returning as working members and would lose their patronages.

NZ woman gets mistaken for someone HALF her age so can you guess how old she is?

A stunning 56-year-old says she's regularly mistaken for someone almost half her age - and says her youthful looks are despite drinking a glass of red wine every day. Sheena Cole says she often has to explain to red-faced 20-something men that she's been happily married for 25 years when they try out their best chat up lines on her.

And she says even women often assume she's only in her early 30s - when in reality, she's actually already retired.

The former marketing manager credits her youthful glow to her healthy lifestyle and wearing lots of SPF - despite drinking a glass of wine every day.

Sheena, from Auckland, New Zealand, insists there is no secret behind her youthful skin.



Sheena Cole says she's regularly mistaken for someone almost half her age

Hot to trot! Candice Warner stuns as she shows off her trim pins in a \$1,750 butterfly embellished minidress



Hot to trot! On Saturday, Candice Warner stunned as she showed off her trim pins in a \$1,750 butterfly embellished minidress as she and husband David led red carpet arrivals

Cricket WAG and former SAS Australia star Candice Warner absolutely stunned on Saturday, as she attended the Longines Golden Slipper Day in Sydney.

The 36-year-old former Ironwoman looked incredible as she showed off her trim pins in a \$1,750 butterfly embellished minidress, by the brand Zimmermann.

Candice cosied up to husband David on the day, as they led red carpet arrivals at the coveted event, which was held at Rosehill Gardens Racecourse.

Candice's gorgeous frock featured a high ruffled neck, a cut-out at the back, billowing sleeves and a short A-line skirt.

It was a striking mix of colours and featured a light blue design, with an eye-catching red and blue floral bottom.

In a unique twist, the dress had small colourful butterfly embellishments.



The Australian Arab Business Council monthly dinner



Earlier this month, AABC Australian Arab Business Council hosted two great minds of the Sydney property market, Robert Klaric from The Property Expert International and Dr Shane Geha from EG. In discussing their journey to becoming a property expert, one of the major

takeaways was to write down your goals to help them become a reality. AABC Australian Arab Business Council in the same night elected new Board members at the annual general meeting (AGM) held at Waterview.

Photos by Abu George

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House prices...

city markets outpaced regional areas, which performed strongly as people moved outside the major cities during the pandemic.

"Housing values in regional areas are 11.4 per cent higher over the past year, demonstrating the earlier stronger growth trend," CoreLogic's research director Tim Lawless said.

Listings can't keep up with buyer FOMO

Buyer demand has been spurred by record low interest rates, which have increased people's borrowing capacity and encouraged first home buyers to enter the market. But listing numbers remain low, with advertised housing stock over the month more than 25 per cent below the five-year average.

The high demand and lack of supply means new listings are being snapped up rapidly — for every new listing added, 1.1 homes are sold.

"Such a rapid rate of absorption is keeping overall inventory levels low and adding to a sense of FOMO [fear of missing out] amongst buyers," Mr Lawless said.

Ms Owen said listings were particularly low in regional areas, with fewer people moving away to the capitals during the pandemic.

What would slow things down?

In recent months, attention has turned to what measures regulators may take to remove some heat from the housing market and slow the lending boom.

In March, Reserve Bank governor Philip Lowe said that while low interest rates were certainly contributing to higher housing prices, the central bank wouldn't raise rates to explicitly target lower house prices.

"There are various tools, other than higher interest rates, to address these concerns, leaving monetary policy to maintain its strong focus on the recovery in the economy, jobs and wages," Dr Lowe said.

One of those tools would be limits on lending, imposed by the banking regulator APRA, which a number of economists are now predicting could be introduced this year.

APRA chair Wayne Byres this week said that while he was watching developments closely, there was not "cause of immediate alarm".

"At this stage, I think it's unlikely that we're going to see any regulatory intervention, that might be something that happens in the longer-term if lending conditions deteriorate," CoreLogic's Eliza Owen said.

However, AMP Capital chief economist Shane Oliver thinks regulators will step in soon.

"Past experience indicates that surging house prices leads to a deterioration in lending standards and increasing financial stability risks," he said.

Dr Oliver notes there has been an increasing share of lending at high loan-to-value ratios, and an increase in interest-only loans, although off a low base.

"The first thing to do would be to increase interest rate buffers but limits on high loan-to-valuation-ratio lending and high debt-to-income-ratio lending may make sense too."

Other potential changes Ms Owen thinks would put the brakes on property prices include banks lifting mortgage rates and an increase in listings.

"The other factor that we'd need to look out for is just affordability constraints.

"An asset price can't continue to rise at an accelerating rate if people can't afford to buy them."

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Scott Morrison...

the treatment of women in federal politics, the Prime Minister has been forced to rearrange his front bench.

Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton moves into the defence portfolio, a role he has long coveted.

Karen Andrews, formerly industry minister, has been promoted to replace Mr Dutton at Home Affairs.

"Karen has done an outstanding job in her role. She is a woman of great talent, great experience and great practicality," Mr Morrison said.

The Prime Minister also announced a new taskforce, which Marise Payne, the Minister for Women and Foreign Affairs, was to lead.

In announcing the change, Mr Morrison said Senator Payne would be the "prime minister for women", a remark he later had to clarify as the "primary minister for women".

The taskforce will oversee the government's policies on women's equality, safety, economic security, health and wellbeing.

"Bringing a gender equality lens, if you like, to the whole-of-ministry approach enables us to really focus in on those issues right across government in a way that I have never seen before," Senator Payne said.

"I think it's very powerful."

Porter no longer the top law official

Mr Porter moves from attorney-general to take on Ms Andrews' former role, while Senator Reynolds takes on government services and the NDIS.

Michaelia Cash moves from employment ministry to become Attorney-General and Industrial Relations Minister.

Mr Porter and Senator Reynolds both remain on medical leave.

The Prime Minister sought advice from the solicitor-general after Mr Porter launched defamation action against the ABC and journalist Louise Milligan. Mr Morrison said moving Mr Porter would allow him to remain in the Cabinet while he pursued the legal action.

"This fully addresses all the issues relate to the advice received from the solicitor-general, as well as the Prime Minister and Cabinet regarding the ministerial guidelines," he said.

"He's a very capable minister and I'm sure he'll apply his talents to that portfolio to the best of his abilities."

Cabinet returns to record numbers of women

Social Services Minister Anne Ruston will add Minister for Women's Safety to her responsibilities and join a broader leadership group within the Cabinet.

Defence Industry Minister Melissa Price retains her portfolio but returns to the Cabinet, having been demoted after the last election.

It means there are now seven women in Cabinet, a record previously held before Bridget McKenzie lost her leadership role in the so-called sports rorts scandal last year.

Assistant Minister to the Attorney-General Amanda Stoker would take on additional assistant ministry positions supporting women's and industrial relations' policies.

Stuart Robert, a close ally of Mr Morrison, moves from government services to take on Senator Cash's former roles.

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The World Health...

Among the world's regions, Europe is the second most affected Covid-19. Total deaths are fast approaching a million, and the number of cases is set to exceed 45 million.

New cases are increasing in all age groups, except for people aged 80 years or over, which "reflects early signs of the effect of vaccination," according to the United Nations agency.

Dr. Dorit Nitzan, Director of Regional Emergencies at the World Health

Organization, said: "Just five weeks ago, the weekly number of new cases in Europe decreased to less than a million, but the situation in the Region is now more alarming than what we witnessed several months ago."

There are risks associated with the increased movement and gatherings during religious holidays. She added that many countries are taking necessary new measures and everyone should follow them as much as possible.



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