

Your SNP government: getting on with the job

This week the SNP in government has been getting on with the job: investing in communities, protecting the most vulnerable in society, and delivering the best public services anywhere in the UK.

Here's how.

John McDonnell responds to news of Google's tax bill only amounting to just £36.4 million

John

McDonnell MP Labour's Shadow Chancellor, responding to news of Google's tax bill only amounting to just £36.4 million, said:

"This revelation only further proves that Philip Hammond and Theresa May are more interested in cutting Google's taxes, than making sure they are paying their fair share.

"It seems that the so called "successful" tax deal with Google that George Osborne boasted about last year has meant that they are still not paying their fair share under his successor Philip Hammond. We urgently need clarity on HMRC's relationship with Google and what reassurances have been provided to the company.

"It is a national disgrace that by paying just £36 million in tax Google could have an effective tax rate lower than many working families in our country. And it exposes the complacency at the heart of this Tory Government, which is allowing this to still continue despite last year's scandal.

"It's time that the Tories got a grip of big corporations not paying their way, instead of going ahead with £70 billion in tax giveaways to big business and the super-rich, while cutting in-work benefits for the low paid, and

threatening to turn our country into a tax haven.

“The truth is that the Tories have no interest in standing up for working people, only Labour with our Tax Transparency and Enforcement Programme will bring in full, public, country-by-country reporting.

[Nicola Sturgeon's Section 30 letter to Theresa May](#)

Dear Theresa

When we met in Glasgow on Monday, I wished you well for the negotiations that lie ahead now that you have formally invoked Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty. I want to reiterate those good wishes now.

[In Iraq, UN chief Guterres urges more support for those who have 'suffered enormously'](#)

31 March 2017 – Highlighting the lack of resources for United Nations programmes assisting those displaced by the fighting in Iraq’s Mosul [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres urged the international community to do more to help the people who have “suffered enormously and go on suffering.”

“This is a moment in which the Iraqi people [and] the people of Mosul need the solidarity of the international community,” Mr. Guterres [told the press](#) at the Hassan Sham camp, located about 30 kilometres east of Mosul.

“Solidarity with those liberating Mosul [and] with the civilians who are suffering [...] to guarantee protection of those civilians and, at the same time, solidarity with the victims and creating the conditions for reconciliation,” he added.

In his remarks, he also drew attention to the severe lack of funding for UN programmes assisting the displaced. Currently, the funding stands at eight per cent.

“[This] shows how limited our resources are compared to the tragedy these people are facing,” noted the UN chief.

According to estimates, there are about 11 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in the country. Of this figure, about three million are internally displaced. In Mosul, more than 285,000 individuals have been displaced due to the military operations to retake the city from Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh) terrorists, including some 122,000 over the past month. Cumulatively, more than 350,000 individuals have been displaced since the operations began on 17 October 2016.

Mr. Guterres further spoke of efforts by the regional government of Kurdistan as well as by non-governmental organizations and stressed that international solidarity is vital to improve the conditions of those affected as well as to create conditions for reconciliation within the communities and at the national level once Mosul is fully liberated.

Also highlighting that terrorism is a global threat and terrorist groups are interlinked, greater support from the international community was in everyone's interest.

“Because the terrorist threats we see in Mosul are the same as the terrorist threat we see everywhere in the world,” he said.

[News story: Headley Court partners with Loughborough University for research study](#)

The Biomechanical Associations and Efficacy of Injectable Therapies in Tendinopathy (BEFIT) study is funded with a grant from the Higher Education Funding Council for England and brings together university academics and MOD collaborators to investigate risk factors and treatment of tendon pain in our regular armed forces.

The main focus of the project is a randomised controlled trial investigating the effect of high volume injection therapy in Achilles and patellar tendinopathy. There have been some encouraging results from other centres but currently there is no controlled study to provide evidence for the use of these injections in military personnel.

Commenting on the importance of this programme the Director of Defence Rehabilitation, Col John Etherington, said:

Reducing musculoskeletal injuries (MSKI) remains our main effort in improving the health and operational readiness of our personnel. We

know that approximately 60% of medical downgradings and 60% of medical discharges are associated with MSKI. Getting the very best treatment at the right place and at the right time is key to us helping our personnel fulfil their potential. I am delighted that we have been able to pool resources in this type of project to drive forward best practice.

The research has made good use of the Help for Heroes motion tracking laboratory at Headley Court together with Loughborough University biomechanics. Factors which may predict tendon pain and its response to treatment are also being analysed.



BEFIT study clinic. Crown Copyright. All rights reserved

Gp Capt Alex Bennett the Head of Research at Headley Court and Defence Professor for Rehabilitation described the need for this research within defence:

This well designed clinical trial has been approved not only by the MOD Research Ethics Committee but also the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and gives us the best opportunity to test fully whether these injections can benefit our patients.

Professor Mark Lewis, Dean of the School of Sport Exercise and Health Sciences at Loughborough University said:

The relationship between Loughborough University and the Academic Department of Military Rehabilitation at Headley Court via the National Centre for Sport and Exercise Medicine is of critical importance to the university. This project not only cements that relationship but, more importantly, has the potential to deliver huge benefits to tendinopathy sufferers in the UK military and more widely to the general public. We are grateful to the HEFCE for supporting this project through a Catalyst fund.

A dedicated BEFIT study clinic has been established at DMRC Headley Court. Anyone with questions about the research programme should email Sqn Ldr Robert Barker-Davies at DMRC-SEM3@mod.uk or phone 95238 ext 7497 or 01372371310.