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Weekly World News Briefs

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'Mass casualty' attack on White House foiled

January 17, 2018 World Net Daily reported: "An Atlanta-area man has been accused of plotting to destroy the White House and other government buildings in Washington, D.C."

The Atlanta Journal Constitution reported the suspect is Hasher Jallal Taheb of Cumming, Georgia. The report said all threats were neutralized and the suspect, who was arrested in Gwinnett County and briefly appeared in court Wednesday, apparently was working alone. The FBI's criminal complaint accuses him of plotting terror in Washington.

It explained a community member contacted law enforcement last march to warn that Taheb was radicalized. Then in August, an FBI informant reached out to him when he apparently put his vehicle up for sale.

'Taheb allegedly said he planned to travel to 'hijra,' a term said to refer to Islamic State territory and he was selling the car to fund the trip. But he didn't have a passport,' the report said. Then he allegedly said he wanted to attack the White House and Statue of Liberty..."

China takes lead in some military tech: Pentagon

January 16, 2019 spacedaily.com reported: "China is on the cusp of fielding some of the world's most advanced weapons systems — and in some cases already has surpassed its rivals, a Pentagon assessment released Tuesday found."

An unclassified report by the Defense Intelligence Agency says Beijing has made enormous military strides in recent years, thanks partly to domestic laws forcing foreign partners to divulge technical secrets in exchange for access to China's vast market.

As a result of 'acquiring technology by any means available,' China now is at the leading edge on a range of technologies, including with its naval designs, with medium- and intermediate-range missiles, and with hypersonic weapons — where missiles can fly at many times the speed of sound and dodge missile-defense systems.

'The result of this multifaceted approach to technology acquisition is a PLA (People's Liberation Army) on the verge of fielding some of the most modern weapon systems in the world,' states the report, entitled 'China Military Power.'..."

General Warns U.S.: China Will Recolonize Taiwan 'at All Costs'

January 16, 2019 Breitbart.com reports: "General Li Zuocheng of China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) echoed the sentiments of Communist Party leader Xi Jinping in remarks Tuesday urging America not to retain ties to Taiwan and that any attempt to protect it from Chinese invasion would be met with military force."

'If anyone wants to separate Taiwan from China, the Chinese military will safeguard the national unity at all costs so as to protect China's sovereignty and territorial integrity,' Li, the PLA's chief of the Joint Staff Department, reportedly said following a meeting with U.S. Admiral John Richardson, the U.S. chief of naval operations, who is in Beijing for in-person talks with Chinese military leaders.

Chinese state media reported that Li 'stressed that no external interference would be allowed in China's internal affairs, concerning China's core interests and the national bond of the Chinese people.'

Despite the tense language, the government claims that the discussion was productive and that Li claimed 'that the common interests between the two countries are much more than contradictions and disputes, thus cooperation is the best choice for both sides.'

The South China Morning Post, which carried the menacing quote about Taiwan, also noted that Li emphasized cooperation outside of the context of Taiwan..."

Report raises fresh doubts over Trump's NATO commitment

January 15, 2019 spacedaily.com reported: "Fresh doubts surfaced Tuesday over President Donald Trump's commitment to NATO, after he was reported to have discussed a desire to pull out of the trans-Atlantic military alliance."

Last year, Trump repeatedly told senior officials that he did not see the point of NATO -- the historic alliance that

forms the backbone of the West's post-World War II security order -- and that he wanted to withdraw, The New York Times reported. He has often blasted members of the 29-nation partnership for not paying more into their national defense budgets.

Before taking office, Trump called NATO "obsolete" and soon after a tumultuous summit in July, he questioned whether the US would honor the alliance's founding principle of mutual defense for newest member Montenegro.

Eric Pahon, a Pentagon spokesman, said the US remains "100 percent" committed to NATO. At the summit the president said the US "commitment to NATO is very strong" and "tremendous progress has been made" by allies and partners.

"That has not changed," Pahon said in a statement. "NATO remains the cornerstone of transatlantic security."..."

U.S., Japan participate in joint deployment in East China Sea

January 15, 2019 spacedaily.com reported: "The United States and Japan conducted a joint two-day deployment in the South China for communication and maneuvering drills."



2NATO

Participating Friday and Saturday were ships assigned to the U.S. Wasp Amphibious Ready Group and the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force amphibious transport dock ship Kunisaki, the U.S. Navy said in a news release. The Wasp ARG has been deployed as part of U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations in support of security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

The U.S. ships include the USS Wasp, amphibious transport dock USS Green Bay and amphibious assault ship USS Ashland.

"We understood each other's radio calls very clearly, and they were very quick with their responses," said Operations Specialist 1st Class Jose Gonzales of the Amphibious Squadron, or PHIBRON 11, navigation assessor, said in a news release. "It was a routine operation just like working with another U.S. vessel."

Capt. Jim McGovern, commodore of PHIBRON 11, met with Kunisaki crew during a tour of the ship. "It was a great opportunity to visit Kunisaki and see in person how well she and the ships of the Wasp ARG can operate together," McGovern said. "..."

World's 2nd-deadliest Ebola outbreak reaches 600 confirmed cases

January 15, 2019 abcnews.go.com reported: The second-largest, second-deadliest Ebola outbreak in history has reached 600 confirmed cases in five months, health officials said.

Since the outbreak was declared in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on Aug. 1, a total of 649 people have reported symptoms of hemorrhagic fever in the country's northeastern provinces of North Kivu and Ituri. Among those cases, 600 have tested positive for Ebola virus disease, which causes an often-fatal type of hemorrhagic fever, according to Monday night's bulletin from the country's health ministry.

The growing outbreak has a case fatality rate of around 61 percent. There have been 396 deaths thus far, including 347 people who died from confirmed cases of Ebola. The other deaths are from probable cases, the ministry said. "..."

What new LifeWay Research survey says about why young adults are dropping out of church

January 15, 2019 Tennessean.com reported: Large numbers of young adults who frequently attended Protestant worship services in high school are dropping out of church. Two-thirds of young people say they stopped regularly going to church for at least a year between the ages of 18 and 22, a new LifeWay Research survey shows.

That means the church had a chance to share its message and the value of attending with this group, but it didn't stick, said Scott McConnell, executive director of LifeWay Research.

"That's a lot of folks saying, 'No, that's not for me' or 'It's not for me right now' at that young age," McConnell said.

LifeWay Research released its student dropout survey on Tuesday. The Nashville-based entity interviewed 2,002 U.S. adults ages 23 to 30 who attended a Protestant church two times or more a month for at least a year in high school. The interviews were conducted from Sept. 15 to Oct. 13, 2017. LifeWay Research is a ministry of LifeWay Christian Resources, which is the publishing arm of the Southern Baptist Convention. "..."

Satellite photos show Iranian missile depot allegedly leveled by Israeli strike

January 14, 2019 timesofisrael.com reported: "Hours after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu confirmed Sunday that Israel bombed an Iranian weapons depot in Syria, satellite photos were published showing what appeared to be the demolished storehouse at the Damascus International Airport. At the weekly cabinet meeting in Jerusalem, Netanyahu said Israel was behind the Friday evening airstrike in Syria, a rare acknowledgement of such a raid.

'The Israel Defense Forces has attacked hundreds of Iranian and Hezbollah targets,' he said. 'Just in the past 36 hours, the air force attacked Iranian depots full of Iranian weapons in the Damascus International Airport.'..."

Report: 'Evidence of Ongoing Operations' at North Korea Nuclear Facility

January 13, 2019 Breitbart.com reported: "North Korea's largest and most important nuclear research facilities remain well-maintained and operational, the monitor site 38 North revealed this week.

Citing images taken in December, the site's analysts say facilities at the Yongbyon Nuclear Scientific Research Center do not appear to be currently in use, apart from a uranium enrichment plant. Enriched uranium features more unstable molecules, which emit radiation and can be used to fuel nuclear energy plants and make nuclear warheads.

'Commercial satellite imagery of North Korea's Yongbyon Nuclear Scientific Research Center from December 2018 indicates that while the site remains operational and is still well maintained, the main facilities do not appear to be operating,' write analysts Frank V. Pabian and Jack Liu.

'The one possible exception is the Uranium Enrichment Plant (UEP), although if it is operating, in what capacity remains unclear.'

One of the clearest signs that the site is being properly maintained is the absence of snow from two of the main gas centrifuges, although this could be merely a result of exposure to sun..."



ISIS Threat Depicts Exploding Capitol to Coincide with Start of 116th Congress

January 11, 2019 PJMedia.com reports: "An ISIS-allied media group continued threats against the U.S. Capitol in a violent image released as new lawmakers were sworn into office. In the image, a white jihadist wearing military gear and a black ski mask stands outside the front of the Capitol as an explosion detonates in the dome. Both the House and Senate ends are depicted in flames.

'And fight them until there is no fitnah,' states the text on the image.

Fitnah means a test or trial. Islamic scholars have clarified the term as separating the bad from the good and 'burning them with fire' and a word 'often used to describe tests in which something disliked is eliminated': 'Fitnah means testing, fitnah means trial, fitnah means wealth, fitnah means children, fitnah means kufr, fitnah means differences of opinion among people, fitnah means burning with fire.'..."

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