



# PROPHETIC TIMES

January, 1998

Weekly World News Briefs

February 23, 2019

## **NATO condemns 'unacceptable' Putin missile threats**

*February 21, 2019* spacedaily.com reported: "NATO on Wednesday condemned as 'unacceptable' threats by Russian President Vladimir Putin to deploy new missiles against Western capitals, as a key Cold War arms control treaty crumbles.

The Russian leader struck a combative note in a state of the nation address, warning Washington against deploying new missiles in Europe after the collapse of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty, saying Moscow would install its own weapons targeting 'decision making centres'.

'Russian statements threatening to target Allies are unacceptable. We call on Russia to focus on returning to compliance with the intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty,' NATO deputy spokesman Piers Cazalet said in a statement..."

## **Putin warns: Russia will target US with new weapons if it deploys missiles to Europe**

*February 20, 2019* FoxNews.com reported: "Russian President Vladimir Putin, speaking during his state-of-the-nation address Wednesday, warned that Russia will aim new hypersonic missiles at the U.S. should it deploy new intermediate-range missiles in Europe.



Russia's new Zircon missiles, which Putin claimed fly at nine times of the speed of sound and have a range of 620 miles, are part of its ongoing effort to upgrade its defensive capabilities against what it regards as an increasingly hostile U.S.

The announcement follows the U.S.' recent withdrawal from a key arms control pact. During his address, Putin rejected the U.S.' claim that its withdrawal from the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces treaty was prompted by Russian violations of the pact. He charged that the U.S. made false accusations against Russia to justify its decision to opt out of the pact..."

## **China data leak exposes mass surveillance in Xinjiang**

*February 19, 2019* spacewar.com reported: "A Chinese technology firm has compiled a range of personal information on 2.6 million people in Xinjiang -- from their ethnicity to locations -- according to a data leak highlighting the wide extent of surveillance in the restive region.

Xinjiang is home to most of China's Uighur ethnic minority lives and has been under heavy police surveillance in recent years after violent inter-ethnic tensions.

Nearly one million Uighurs and other Turkic language-speaking minorities in Xinjiang are reportedly held in re-education camps, according to a UN panel of experts.

The leak was discovered last week by security researcher Victor Gevers, who found that Chinese tech company SenseNets had stored the records of individuals in an open database "fully accessible to anyone".

The records included information such as their Chinese ID number, birthday, address, ethnicity, and employer.

The exposed data also linked individuals to GPS coordinates -- labelled with descriptions such as "mosque" -- captured by tracking devices around the region.

Within a 24-hour period, more than six million locations were saved by SenseNets' tracking devices, according to Gevers, who works at Dutch online security non-profit GDI Foundation and posted his findings on Twitter.

"You can clearly see they have absolutely no clue about network security," he told AFP, describing SenseNets' IT skills as belonging "to the early 90s".

"Who in their right mind runs a database which is completely open and gives any visitors full administrative rights so then those database records can be manipulated by anyone with an internet connection?" he said.

"It simply does not compute."

The database had been exposed since last July but was closed last Thursday, after Gevers reported the leak to SenseNets, he said." ..."

## **Pakistan Warns of Swift Retaliation if Attacked by India**

*February 19, 2019* voanews.com reported: "Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan warned Tuesday his country will retaliate swiftly against any military action by India.

Khan issued the warning in a nationally televised address amid dangerously escalating tensions between the two nuclear-armed rival nations following last week's deadly suicide bombing attack on Indian military forces in the dispute Kashmir region.

'If you are thinking of carrying out any kind of attack on Pakistan, Pakistan will not just think about retaliating, Pakistan we will retaliate. There will be no other way for us but to retaliate,' Khan warned..."

## **Iran to unveil submarine equipped with guided cruise missile system**

*February 19, 2019* timesofisrael.com reported: "Iran said Saturday a new submarine being developed by its military would be outfitted with guided cruise missiles.

---

Iranian Defense Minister Amir Hatami said the Fateh-class submarine was undergoing final tests before being integrated into the Islamic Republic's fleet.

'The advanced Fateh submarine will soon join the Islamic Republic of Iran's Navy after success in final tests,' Hatami said, according to Iran's semi-official Fars news site.

According to the Mehr news site, the sub will be officially unveiled on Sunday by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani. He said the vessel would be equipped with guided undersurface to surface missiles, as well as a missile defense system and other 'advanced' equipment..."

### **China's social credit system shows its teeth, banning millions from taking flights, trains**

*February 19, 2019* South China Morning Post reported: "Millions of Chinese individuals and businesses have been labelled as untrustworthy on an official blacklist banning them from any number of activities, including accessing financial markets or travelling by air or train, as the use of the government's social credit system accelerates.

The annual blacklist is part of a broader effort to boost "trustworthiness" in Chinese society and is an extension of China's social credit system, which is expected to give each of its 1.4 billion citizens a personal score.

The social credit system assigns both positive and negative scores for individual or corporate behaviour in an attempt to pressure citizens into behaving.

Human rights advocates, though, worry that the arbitrary system does not take into account individual circumstances and so often unfairly labels individuals and firms as untrustworthy.

Over 3.59 million Chinese enterprises were added to the official creditworthiness blacklist last year, banning them from a series of activities, including bidding on projects, accessing security markets, taking part in land auctions and issuing corporate bonds, according to the 2018 annual report released by the National Public Credit Information Centre." ..."

### **Venezuelan soldiers to guard border ahead of aid entry, minister says**

*February 19, 2019* Reuters reported: "Venezuelan troops will remain stationed along the country's borders to prevent territorial violations, the defense minister said on Tuesday, ahead of the opposition's plan to bring in humanitarian aid to alleviate an economic crisis.

President Nicolas Maduro has rejected offers of foreign food and medicine, denying there are widespread shortages and accusing opposition leader Juan Guaido of using aid to undermine his government in a U.S.-orchestrated bid to oust him.

Guaido has said that aid will enter Venezuela from neighboring countries by land and sea on Saturday. The United States has sent tons of aid to Colombia's border with Venezuela, but Maduro has refused to let it in.

In comments broadcast on state TV, Defense Minister Vladimir Padrino said the opposition would have to pass over "our dead bodies" to impose a new government. Guaido, who has invoked the constitution to assume an interim presidency, denounces Maduro as illegitimate and has received backing from some 50 countries.

U.S. President Donald Trump on Monday warned members of Venezuela's military who remain loyal to Maduro that they would "find no safe harbor, no easy exit and no way out."

"You'll lose everything," Trump told a crowd of Venezuelan and Cuban immigrants in Miami.

Guaido has beseeched the armed forces to disavow Maduro, promising them future amnesty, though only a few officers have so far done so.

Padrino said it was unacceptable for the military to receive threats from Trump, and said officers and soldiers remained "obedient and subordinate" to Maduro.

"They will never accept orders from any foreign government ... they will remain deployed and alert along the borders, as our commander in chief has ordered, to avoid any violations of our territory's integrity," Padrino said.

"Those that attempt to be president here in Venezuela ... will have to pass over our dead bodies," he said, referring to what he called Guaido's efforts to create a "puppet government."..."

### **EU, Germany reject US call to leave Iran nuclear deal**

*February 18, 2019* SpaceDaily.com reported: "Germany and the EU on Friday rejected an appeal by US Vice President Mike Pence for Europeans to withdraw from the Iranian nuclear deal and isolate Tehran.

Foreign Minister Heiko Maas defended the 2015 agreement under which Iran drastically scaled back its nuclear programme in return for sanctions relief.

EU diplomatic chief Federica Mogherini said the bloc was determined to preserve the 'full implementation' of the deal, saying it was vital to European security.

'Together with the Brits, French and the entire EU we have found ways to keep Iran in the nuclear agreement until today,' Maas told the Munich Security Conference.

A day earlier, Pence accused Tehran of planning a 'new Holocaust' with its opposition to Israel and regional ambitions in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen..."



3 European Union Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium