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Modi declares India 'space superpower' as satellite downed by missile

March 28, 2019 spacedaily.com reported: India said it had destroyed a low-orbiting satellite in a missile test that proved the nation was among the world's most advanced space powers. In a rare address to the nation on Wednesday, just weeks before a national election, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said India had joined the United States, Russia and China in accomplishing the feat.

A missile fired from a testing facility in Odisha, eastern India, downed the satellite at an altitude of around 300 kilometres (185 miles) in "a difficult operation" that lasted around three minutes, Modi said.

"This is a proud moment for India," Modi added, in his first televised national address since late 2016.

"India has registered its name in the list of space superpowers. Until now, only three countries had achieved this feat."

It comes a month after Indian and Pakistani fighter jets engaged in a dogfight over the disputed border in Kashmir -- a serious military escalation between the nuclear-armed rivals.

Modi said the anti-satellite missile (ASAT) test was peaceful, and not designed to create "an atmosphere of war".

"I want to assure the world community that the new capability is not against anyone. This is to secure and defend... fast-growing India."

But analysts said it would not go unnoticed in China and Pakistan, India's chief rivals in the nuclear-armed region, and could be interpreted as a show of New Delhi's advancing military capabilities." ..."

Saudis excoriate US over recognition of Golan as Israeli

March 27, 2019 Arutz Sheva 7 reported: "The government of Saudi Arabia has formally condemned the US over the decision to recognize the Golan Heights as Israeli territory, claiming the move violates international law. On Monday, Saudi Arabia issued a statement emphasizing the Islamic kingdom's 'rejection and condemnation' of the move.

'Saudi Arabia expresses its firm rejection and condemnation of the US administration's declaration that it recognizes Israel's sovereignty over the occupied Syrian Golan Heights,' the statement reads.

"This will have negative effects on the Middle East peace process and security and stability in the region."..."

EU: No recognition of 'Israeli occupied' Golan Heights

March 27, 2019 Arutz Sheva 7 reported: "The European Union will not recognize Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights despite the US decision to alter its policy vis-à-vis the strategic plateau, the EU's foreign affairs chief Federica Mogherini's office said in a statement Wednesday.

'The position of the European Union as regards the status of the Golan Heights has not changed,' Mogherini's office said in a statement Wednesday afternoon.

The EU's foreign affairs office cited two United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding the Six Day War and Israel's annexation of the Golan in 1981. In line with the international law and UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 497, the European Union does not recognize Israeli sovereignty over the occupied Golan Heights.'..."



Macron, Xi call for greater EU-China cooperation

March 26, 2019 AsiaTimes.com reported: "Chinese President Xi Jinping and French leader Emmanuel Macron on Monday called for increased cooperation between the European Union and China. Speaking at the Elysee Palace following talks with Xi at a time of growing concern over Beijing's massive investments on the continent, Macron called for a 'strong Europe-China partnership,' adding that it must be based on 'strong multilateralism' and 'fair and balanced' trade.

China's leader emphasized that 'a united and prosperous Europe fits in with our vision of a multipolar world.'

In a statement to the media, Xi added, 'China will always back European integration and its development.'..."

US Navy, Coast Guard Ships Pass Through Strategic Taiwan Strait

March 25, 2019 voanews.com reported: "The United States sent Navy and Coast Guard ships through the Taiwan Strait on Sunday, the military said, as the United States increases the frequency of movement through the strategic waterway despite opposition from China.

The voyage risks further raising tensions with China but will likely be viewed by self-ruled Taiwan as a sign of support from Washington amid growing friction between Taipei and Beijing.

The two ships were identified as the Navy Curtis Wilbur destroyer and the Coast Guard Bertholf cutter, a U.S. military statement said. 'The ships' transit through the Taiwan Strait demonstrates the U.S. commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific,' the statement said. 'The U.S. will continue to fly, sail and operate anywhere international law allows,' it added.

Taiwan is one of a growing number of flashpoints in the U.S.-China relationship, which also include a trade war, U.S. sanctions and China's increasingly muscular military posture in the South China Sea, where the United States also conducts freedom of navigation patrols..."



Russia Deploys Troops, Equipment to Venezuela

March 25, 2019 usnews.com reported: Russian armed forces reportedly deployed to Venezuela over the weekend as the regime of President Nicolas Maduro continues to face intense pressure from a U.S.-backed political opposition.

Two Russian military planes touched down outside the capital Caracas on Saturday carrying nearly a hundred troops and military staff, and 35 tons of cargo, according to media reports. Russian state news service Sputnik, citing an anonymous source, dismissed the deployment as "nothing mysterious" and said the officials were planning to discuss "defense industry cooperation" with their Venezuelan counterparts.

The escalation raises the likelihood of a standoff between Russia and the U.S. for influence in the strategically significant Latin American power as rumors continue to circulate the Trump administration may escalate its direct involvement there.

It's unclear what was included in the cargo the Russian planes brought. The political crisis in Venezuela in recent months has been defined by intense shortages, and widespread power and communications blackouts.

Russia and Venezuela have maintained a close relationship since the administration of former Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, and the two countries remain significant trading partners, particularly for the vast oil resources Moscow needs." ..."

The end of school: AI 'Google brain' implants to REPLACE education and 'supercharge IQ'

March 24, 2019 dailystar.co.uk reported: "Top AI expert Nikolas Kairinos believes artificial intelligence will improve people's lives on a mass scale and dramatically transform the way we learn. The CEO and Founder of Fountech.ai exclusively told Daily Star Online he is working on a revolutionary AI to "personalise education".



"The current area of focus is personalised education - trying to demarketise and de monetise learning so that anyone can learn almost anything using AI," he told Daily Star Online.

"Anyone between the age of 8 and 80, anywhere on the planet, at their own pace can learn almost anything."

"And it's highly personalised, so the more the AI gets to know you the more it adapts its teaching style, its voice, the time of day it speaks to you - all to optimise learning."

Nick said the new learning tool could end school as we know it - getting rid of "rogue memorisation" where facts are learned and repeated and eventually forgotten.

"That's not learning," Nick said.

3Artificial Intelligence

"This AI will enable anyone in the world, no matter who or how old they are, to log on to their smart tv or their computer or their phone their smart glasses the AI in their car, and say 'teach me about this'.

"You won't need to memorise anything. Learning will not be about memorising anything."

Nick says the need to learn things in "parrot fashion" as we are taught in schools will disappear completely and will free up our brains to think in new, innovative ways - skyrocketing our IQs." ..."

British Government Rules Christianity Is Not a Religion of Peace, Rejects Convert

March 24, 2019 Breitbart.com reported: "The Home Office has rejected the asylum application of a Christian convert from Iran who said they had been drawn to the faith by its peaceful nature, due to a Government official ruling that Christianity is not peaceful.

The applicant indicated that they had converted to Christianity from Islam because of its peaceful nature, stating that 'In Islam there is violence, rage and revenge. In Christianity in the contrary it is talking about peace, forgiveness and kindness.'

This earned the ire of the Home Office bureaucrat or bureaucrats charged with assessing the application, the Times reports.

The official cobbled together six passages from the King James Version and New International Version of the Old and New Testaments — such as Matthew 10:34, in which Christ proclaims he 'came not to send peace, but a sword' — in an effort to prove that the applicant's view of Christianity was wrong, and that Christian scripture is in fact 'filled with imagery of revenge, destruction, death and violence'.

'These examples are inconsistent with your claim that you converted to Christianity after discovering it is a 'peaceful' religion, as opposed to Islam which contains violence, rage and revenge,' the rejection letter to the applicant admonishes passive-aggressively; an implicit ruling that Christianity is not peaceful — certainly not relative to Islam — and indeed is so clearly not peaceful that the Home Office does not consider perceived peacefulness a credible reason for conversion..."

U.S., Israel announce successful test of 'David's Sling'

March 24, 2019 spacedaily.com reported: SpaceDaily.com reports: "The United States and Israel announced the successful completion of testing of an advanced missile interception system known as 'David's Sling.'

The test series completed Tuesday in southern Israel was the sixth series of David's Sling tests, and the Missile Defense Agency, a division of the U.S. Defense Department, and the Israel Missile Defense Organization each called the tests a success.

David's Sling was developed by the U.S. company Raytheon and Israel's Rafael Advanced Defense Systems; it employs two-stage Stunner interceptor missiles. Repeated testing has proven the system's ability to destroy large torrents of high-caliber rockets and short-range ballistic missiles, Raytheon said.

The system is an element of Israel's multi-tier layered missile defense architecture, offering mid-tier regional missile defense with a hit-to-kill defense against tactical ballistic missiles, medium- to long-range rockets, enemy planes, drones and cruise missiles." ..."