



PROPHETIC TIMES

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Weekly World News Briefs

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High-security Ebola burials spark dismay, anger in DR Congo

May 24, 2019 France24.com reported: "People in Ebola-hit eastern DR Congo are struggling to come to terms with high-security burials that are part of a hard-pressed strategy to roll back the disease.

Anyone who dies of the highly infectious hemorrhagic fever has to be buried in carefully-controlled conditions designed to minimize the risk of infection from body fluids.

But that means ceremonies are carried out in sanitized conditions, with relatives and friends kept at a distance -- for many, a traumatic break with traditions that demand the body of a loved-one be seen or touched.

"We're astonished she's being buried like this," said Denise Kahambu as she watched the specially-prepared burial in Butembo of her 50-year-old cousin, Marie-Rose.

"They said she died of Ebola," she said skeptically.

First declared last August, the epidemic has now claimed nearly 1,200 lives -- 200 of them in May alone.

The outbreak is the second deadliest on record, after an epidemic that killed more than 11,300 people in West Africa in 2014-16.

The burial in Butembo followed strict precautions. A pick-up truck delivered the coffin to the burial site, where a grave had been prepared, as the family stood by at a distance.

Gloved Red Cross workers handled the burial, which took place in silence and without a religious ceremony. A family member or loved one was allowed only to place a cross on the tomb, once they too had donned protective gloves. Half a dozen police officers escorted the convoy and remained on guard throughout." ..."

Christianity is dying in Germany while Islam rises

May 22, 2019 Arutz Sheva 7 reported: "In 2001, then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger told Peter Sewald: 'The church will be reduced numerically. In a city like Magdeburg the percentage of Christians is only 8 percent of the total population, including -- mind you -- all Christian denominations. The statistical data show irrefutable tendencies'.

Since 2000, the Catholic church in Germany has desecrated, demolished and sold 540 churches and chapels. Of these, 80 were in Magdeburg. In the diocese of Essen, Bishop Franz Hengsbach saw the number of Catholics halved, so 57 churches were abandoned. In the diocese of Hildesheim, as many as 51 churches have been deconsecrated since 2008.

17 years have passed since that Ratzinger interview and the data has almost collapsed everywhere. From 'irrefutable', the numbers seem to have become irredeemable.

In a study commissioned by the Bishops' Conference, researchers at the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität in Freiburg are even more pessimistic than Ratzinger: the total of Christian denominations -- adding up the Catholic and Protestant ones -- will fall from the current 45 million to 34 million in 2035 and will halve to 22 million within 40 years."..."

Iran Quadruples Uranium Enrichment

May 21, 2019 voanews.com reported: "Iran said Monday it has quadrupled its uranium enrichment capacity as the war of words between Tehran and Washington shows little sign of cooling off. Iranian officials say the uranium will be enriched for civilian energy uses, far below weapons grade as spelled out in the 2015 nuclear agreement.

Enriching uranium means concentrating the element's radioactive component. Natural uranium has less than one percent U-235, while uranium for electric power production is around four percent pure and weapons-grade material is refined to contain about 90% of this active ingredient. Iran could soon exceed the amount of material it is allowed to stockpile under the deal..."



EU defends military reforms against US attack

May 20, 2019 spacedaily.com reported: "The EU on Thursday defended its push to reform the European defense industry in a retort to US accusations that the overhaul would shut out allies such as Washington from European projects.

The skirmish over military spending comes as transatlantic ties are at a long-time low with fears running high that cooperation at NATO could be endangered.

In a letter seen by AFP, two senior officials said that the European Union 'remains fully committed to working with the US as a core partner in security and defense matters' despite the planned changes.

However, the EU officials also insisted that the mooted reforms are merely a reflection of rules already imposed by the US.

'The transatlantic trade balance is resolutely in favour of the US,' they insisted..."

U.S. official: Iranian missiles spotted in Persian Gulf

May 19, 2019 Arutz Sheva 7 reported: "A US official said on Thursday that Iranian missiles loaded on small boats in the Persian Gulf were among the 'threats' that have triggered a beefed-up military deployment in the region, AFP reported.

'The missiles on civilian boats are a concern,' said the official, who asked not to be named.

The official was confirming reports in The New York Times saying that Washington reacted to aerial photos from US intelligence agencies showing traditional boats carrying Iranian missiles in the Gulf, one of the world's most strategic waterways.

The fully-assembled missiles were loaded on the boats by Iran's Revolutionary Guards, which the US has designated a 'foreign terrorist organization,' the newspaper reported..."

Saudi Arabia says it seeks to avert war, ball in Iran's court

May 19, 2019 The jpost.com reported: "Saudi Arabia said on Sunday it wanted to avert war in the region but stood ready to respond with 'all strength' following last week's attacks on Saudi oil assets, telling Iran that the ball was now in its court.

Riyadh has accused Tehran of ordering Tuesday's drone strikes on two oil pumping stations in the kingdom, claimed by Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthi group. Two days earlier, four vessels, including two Saudi oil tankers, were sabotaged off the coast of the United Arab Emirates.

In response, countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) began 'enhanced security patrols' in the international waters of the Arabian Gulf area on Saturday, the US Navy's Bahrain-based Fifth Fleet said on Sunday.

Iran has denied involvement in either operation, which come as Washington and the Islamic Republic spar over sanctions and the US military presence in the region, raising concerns about a potential US-Iran conflict.

'The kingdom of Saudi Arabia does not want a war in the region nor does it seek that,' Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Adel al-Jubeir told a news conference.

'It will do what it can to prevent this war and at the same time it reaffirms that in the event the other side chooses war, the kingdom will respond with all force and determination, and it will defend itself and its interests.'..."

China's new 'social credit system' is a dystopian nightmare

May 18, 2019 nypost.com reported: "Imagine calling a friend. Only instead of hearing a ring tone you hear a police siren, and then a voice intoning, "Be careful in your dealings with this person."

Would that put a damper on your relationship? It's supposed to. Welcome to life in China's "Social Credit System," where a low score can ruin your life in more ways than one.

Say you arrive at the Beijing airport, intending to catch a flight to Canton 1,200 miles south. The clerk at the ticket counter turns you away because — you guessed it — your social credit score is too low.

Not only are you publicly humiliated in the ticket line, you are then forced to travel by slow train. What should have been a three-hour flight becomes a 30-hour, stop-and-go nightmare.

All because the government has declared you untrustworthy. Perhaps you defaulted on a loan, made the mistake of criticizing some government policy online or just spent too much time playing video games on the internet. All of these actions, and many more, can cause your score to plummet, forcing citizens onto the most dreaded rung on China's deadbeat caste system, the laolai.

And the punishments are shocking. The government algorithm will go as far as to install an "embarrassing" ring tone on the phones of laolai, shaming them every time they get a call in public.

But an embarrassing ring tone, flight bans and slow trains are just the beginning of the dystopian nightmare that is now daily life in China for tens of millions of people.

A low social credit score will exclude you from well-paid jobs, make it impossible for you to get a house or a car loan or even book a hotel room. The government will slow down your internet connection, ban your children from attending private schools and even post your profile on a public blacklist for all to see...

Of course, as the state progresses ever closer toward its goal of monitoring all of the activities of its citizens 24 hours a day, seven days a week, society itself becomes a virtual prison."..."

'Weapons in our hands' Venezuelan Military warns it is ready to slaughter US troops

May 18, 2019 dailystar.co.uk reported: "Troops in the South American country took part in what was dubbed a "march of loyalty" to show their support for President Nicolas Maduro.

The embattled Socialist leader visited Aragua State to watch the fawning show, in which soldiers pledged their allegiance.

"Only the ones who fight have a right to be. You will never invade my country. Listen to us small gringo. We are ready. With weapons in our hands ... we are waiting for you," the personnel shouted during the parade.

It has been suggested the United States could stage a military intervention to oust Maduro, with the Trump administration repeatedly voicing their opposition to him.

Just days ago, the US Department of Transportation ordered the suspension of all commercial passenger and cargo flights between the countries, saying "conditions in Venezuela threaten the safety and security of passengers, aircraft, and crew travelling to or from that country."..."

