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California rainfall is at historic lows, water restrictions handed down this week

March 25, 2021 sfgate.com reported: "It may feel like it's been pretty cold and wet in the Bay Area recently, but California is parched and drought restrictions are incoming. The State Water Board handed down drastic water supply notices this week, putting thousands of water users on notice that water draws may soon be cut off completely.

Data from the U.S drought monitor reveals that over 90% of California is suffering through a moderate drought or worse, and there isn't a lot of help coming from the mountains, with the snow water content across the Sierra running at 60% to 75% percent of average.

While Southern California is the most arid, the whole state is facing another dry year. San Francisco's precipitation between July 2020 and March 2021 was at just 38% of normal, per data from Golden Gate Weather Services.

Northern California is stuck in one of the worst two-year rainfall deficits seen since the 1849 Gold Rush, per The Guardian, and beyond the water restrictions this has raised the risk of another dangerous year of wildfires. The current precipitation in the state is only 30% to 70% of what the state would expect to have seen during a normal year, without much rainfall on the horizon.

To attempt to get ahead of the problem, the California Department of Water Resources has lowered initial allocations from the State Water Project for the 2021 water year following the second consecutive dry winter. The department said ...it expects to deliver 5% of requested supplies instead of the initial allocation of 10% announced in December." ..."

Report: Iranian Missile Strikes Israeli Ship

March 25, 2021 freebeacon.com reported: "An Israeli-owned cargo ship was reportedly struck by an Iranian missile on Thursday in the Arabian Sea, the latest escalation in an increasingly violent tit for tat between the nations.

According to multiple regional reports on the still-developing story, the ship was traveling from Tanzania to India when the missile, believed to be Iranian in origin, struck. There were no reported injuries. The ship is said to have sustained only minor damage and is continuing its way to India." ..."

China accuses EU of 'hypocrisy'; Invites Italian MPs to Xinjiang

March 25, 2021 spacewar.com reported: "Beijing accused the EU of 'hypocrisy' on Wednesday after the two sides summoned each other's envoys in an escalating row over the treatment of China's Muslim Uyghurs.

France, Germany and other EU nations called in Chinese ambassadors to protest against sanctions imposed by Beijing targeting their citizens, including five members of the European Parliament as well as two EU bodies and two thinktanks.

The sanctions were a tit-for-tat response after the EU, Britain and Canada blacklisted four former and current officials in China's Xinjiang region. China called in the EU and British envoys in Beijing over the coordinated move..."

China Quickly Closing Gap with US Military, Lawmakers Told

March 24, 2021 voanews.com reported: "The admiral tapped to command U.S. forces in the Indo-Pacific told lawmakers Tuesday the future of the world could come down to how the United States and its allies respond to an increasingly militarized and aggressive China.

'Global peace and prosperity depend on our presence in the Indo-Pacific,' Navy Adm. John Aquilino told members of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

'The United States Navy is the most powerful, greatest navy on the planet, still,' said Aquilino, who currently commands the Navy's Pacific Fleet." ..."



Adm. John Aquilino

Russia, China Want U.N. Security Council Meeting to Contain America

March 24, 2021 breitbart.com reported: "Russia and China issued a joint statement Tuesday calling for a summit of the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council. The statement implied – and the foreign ministers of the two authoritarian regimes clearly stated afterward – the meeting would be a forum for Russia and China to air their grievances against U.S foreign policy.

'At a time of increasing global political turbulence, a summit of the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council is particularly necessary to establish direct dialogue about ways to resolve humankind's common problems in the interests of maintaining global stability,' the joint statement from the Russian and Chinese foreign ministries asserted.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said in a press conference Tuesday that Moscow and Beijing want the U.N. Security Council to rein in the United States, as quoted by Reuters..."

RAF reportedly braced for 'Space War' over claims Russia tested 'anti-satellite weapons'

March 23, 2021 spacewar.com reported: "The head of the UK Space Directorate, Air Vice-Marshal Harvey Smyth, expressed concern in December 2020 over Russia having allegedly conducted a new space test of anti-satellite weapons, without providing any evidence, claiming the 'consequences of miscalculations and accidents have the potential to be catastrophic'.

Britain's Royal Air Force is facing an immediate need to 'catch up with its adversaries', and prepare itself for a potential 'space war', RAF senior officer Sir Mike Wigstone is cited as saying by the Daily Mail.

Falling behind in new defense technologies could result in the UK's 'complete reliance' on space being exploited by 'hostile states', warns Wigstone, underscoring that military communications are satellite dependent, with troops, military vehicles, and aircraft relying on GPS..."

Federal Reserve's Digital Dollar Push Worries Wall Street

March 22, 2021 bloomberg.com reported: "The financial services industry, braced for what could be its biggest disruption in decades, is about to get an early glimpse at the Federal Reserve's work on a new digital currency. Banks, credit card companies and digital payments processors are nervously watching the push to create an electronic alternative to the paper bills Americans carry in their wallets, or what some call a digital dollar and others call a Fedcoin.



As soon as July, officials at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which have been developing prototypes for a digital dollar platform, plan to unveil their research, said James Cunha, who leads the project for the Boston Fed.

A digital currency could fundamentally change the way Americans use money, leading some financial firms to lobby the Fed and Congress to slow its creation -- or at least ensure they're not cut out. Seeing the threat to their profits, the banks' main trade group has told Congress a digital dollar isn't needed, while payment companies like Visa Inc. and Mastercard Inc. are trying to work with central banks to make sure the new currencies can be used on their networks.

"Everyone is afraid that you could disrupt all the incumbent players with a whole new form of payment," said Michael Del Grosso, an analyst for Compass Point Research & Trading LLC.

Lawmakers, U.S. Treasury Department officials and the Fed haven't yet approved the rollout of a U.S. virtual currency, which could still be years away. Nor have they decided how a digital dollar would interact with the existing global payments network. Still, the U.S. and other countries seem committed enough to digitizing their currencies that it's making financial industry executives nervous.

"The fire has been lit," said Josh Lipsky, who has helped convene government officials from the U.S. and other countries working on digital currencies as director of the GeoEconomics Center at the Atlantic Council. "The world is moving very quickly on these projects."

At issue are forms of digital cash being considered by the U.S. and other governments. The growing popularity of Bitcoin, Ethereum and other cryptocurrencies, whose market value has grown to more than \$1 trillion, inspired the projects. Unlike those privately created tokens, the new currencies would be issued by central banks" ..."

France's Macron urges Iran to 'stop worsening' nuclear crisis

March 19, 2021 spacewar.com reported: "French President Emmanuel Macron on Thursday urged Iran to stop aggravating the already grave crisis over its nuclear programme by multiplying violations of the 2015 deal with world powers on its atomic programme.

'Iran must stop worsening the nuclear situation that is already serious by accumulating violations of the Vienna accord,' Macron told reporters alongside visiting Israeli President Reuven Rivlin. He said, 'Iran must make the expected gestures and behave in a responsible manner.'

The new administration of US President Joe Biden has indicated it is prepared to re-enter the nuclear deal after Donald Trump walked out in 2015, but so far there has been no sign of any breakthrough as Tehran ramps up its nuclear work..."