

'Making an Example of us': French Journalists Face Jail for Exposing Govt Lies about Yemen War

PARIS - French journalists are being threatened with jail time for reporting on leaked documents revealing the country's complicity in the Saudi-led war in Yemen after they refused to answer questions from anti-terror police.

"They want to make an example of us because it's the first time in France that there have been leaks like this," Geoffrey Livolsi, co-founder of investigative news outlet Disclose, told the Intercept, referring to the classified Directorate of Military Intelligence briefing, meant for President Emmanuel Macron's eyes only, that revealed the government had lied to the public about how the weapons it was selling would be used.

Livolsi, his Disclose co-found-



er Mathias Destal, and Radio France reporter Benoit Collombat could face up to five

years in prison and a €75,000 fine for merely handling classified documents without

authorization under a 2009 law that prohibits "attacks on national defense secrets" after the General Directorate for Internal Security (DGSI), France's domestic intelligence service, accused them of "compromising the secrecy of national defense."

The DGSI hauled them in for questioning this week after a story they published last month based on the leaked document showed top government officials were fully aware that military equipment they sold to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates - including laser-guided missile systems and tanks - was being used "offensively" in Yemen in violation of a 2014 arms treaty. The ...*(More on P4)...(10)*

Once Again, Iraq Caught Up in Tensions Between US and Iran

BAGHDAD - When U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo sat down with Iraqi officials in Baghdad last week as tensions mounted between America and Iran, he delivered a nuanced message: If you're not going to stand with us, stand aside. The message, relayed to The Associated Press by two Iraqi government officials, underscores Iraq's delicate position: Its government is allied with both sides of an increasingly contentious confrontation.

As tensions escalate, there are concerns that Baghdad could once again get caught in the middle, just as it is on the path to recovery. The country hosts more than 5,000 U.S. troops, and is home to powerful Iranian-backed militias, some of whom want those U.S. forces to leave.

"The big question is how Iraqi leaders will deal with (their) national interests in a country where loyalty to external powers is wide ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

Venezuela's Socialist Collapse Is Worse Economic Failure Than Soviet Union, Zimbabwe, Experts Say

CARACAS - Venezuela's socialist regime failure is the single largest economic collapse outside war in over four decades, beating the fall of the Soviet Union or Zimbabwe's collapse under Robert Mugabe, economists say.

The country's economy - once touted as an example of a working socialist system - turned into a basket case over the years amid corruption and mismanagement by the socialist government that relied on oil revenues to pay

for expensive government programs and prop up other industries. Following the collapse in oil prices, the government's corruption and lack of competency became apparent, leading to an unprecedented economic collapse that caused a humanitarian crisis and put the country on the verge of a civil war.

"It's really hard to think of a human tragedy of this scale outside civil war," Kenneth Rogoff, an economics professor at Harvard University



and ex-chief economist at the International Monetary Fund (IMF), told the New York Times. "This will be a touchstone of disastrous policies for decades to

come." IMF economists say that similar levels of economic devastation can only be found in war-torn countries such as ...*(More on P4)...(11)*

Indian Navy Test Fires Medium Range Air Defense Missile, Boasts 'Enhanced Combat Effectiveness'



NEW DELHI - The Indian Navy has successfully tested a Medium Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM) developed by the national military research agency

in cooperation with Israel Aerospace Industries. "The firing was undertaken on the Western Seaboard by Indian Naval Ships Kochi and Chennai, wherein the

missiles of both ships were controlled by one ship to intercept different aerial targets at extended ranges," the country's maritime force said, praising the "maiden cooperative engagement" between the Indian Navy, Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI). The medium-range anti-air missile, co-developed with Israel, where it's known as Barak-8, was manufactured by Bharat Dynamics Lim-

ited, India. It is designed to tackle a wide array of airborne threats from up to 70 km away, including enemy aircraft and hostile drones as well as anti-ship and ballistic missiles. "This capability will significantly enhance the combat effectiveness of the Indian Navy," the maritime force boasted. Last year, Israel's major aerospace and aviation manufacturer signed a \$777 million deal with India to provide New Delhi with long-range ...*(More on P4)...(12)*

CANBERRA, Australia - Votes were being counted in Australia's general election on Saturday, with senior opposition lawmakers gaining confidence that they will form a center-left government with a focus on slashing greenhouse gas emissions. A Galaxy exit poll found that the opposition Labor Party could win as many as 82 seats in the 151-seat House of Representatives, where parties need a majority to form government. "I feel positive. I feel

Counting Starts in Australian Poll with Opposition Confident

like we are ahead, but I am more cautiously optimistic than confident," Labor deputy leader Tanya Plibersek said. Voting in Australia's eastern states, where most of the 25 million population lives, ended at 6 p.m. (0800 GMT). Polls close on the west coast two hours later. Opinion polls suggest the conservative Liberal Party-led coalition will lose its bid for a third three-year term and Scott Morrison ...*(More on P4)...(16)*

Escalating U.S.-China Trade Tensions Does Good to None: Expert

GENEVA - The United States' escalation of trade tensions with China does good to neither party and no one else, said an international trade expert.

For the United States, negative effects on the economy come from the fact that tariffs are paid by importers, and most likely passed on to consumers, said Ricardo Melendez-Ortiz, founder and former CEO of the International Center for Trade and Sustainable Development, in a recent written interview with Xinhua. "As importers seek to substitute vendors from China and shift outsourcing contracts, a first wave of price impacts may take place through both increase in prices and lowering of import volumes," Melendez-Ortiz said. ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

Council of Europe FMs Pave Way for Continued Russian Membership

HELSINKI - The meeting of Council of Europe (CoE) Foreign Ministers in Helsinki on Friday made progress towards facilitating the continued membership of Russia in the CoE.

Finnish Foreign Minister Timo Soini, the outgoing chairman of the Council, told a press conference that "some common ground was found".

Soini described the results of the meeting in Helsinki as a positive development, but said the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE (PACE) must take its own decisions. The PACE some years ago restricted the voting rights of Russia as a protest against Russian actions in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine. Russia then later suspended its payments to the Council. ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

Ex-CIA Agent Gets 20-Year Sentence for Spying for China

WASHINGTON - An ex-CIA officer was sentenced to 20 years in prison Friday for spying for China in a case called part of an "alarming trend" in the US intelligence community.

Kevin Mallory, 62, was convicted under the Espionage Act for selling classified US "defense information" to a Chinese intelligence agent for \$25,000 during trips to Shanghai in March and April 2017.

"Your object is to gain information, and my object is to be paid," he told the Chinese agent in a May 5, 2017 message.

The fluent Mandarin speaker had served in



the US army, then as a special agent for the security service of the State Department, before becoming a covert case officer for the Central Intelligence Agency. Mallory is one of several US officials with high-level security clearances arrested and charged over unsanctioned deal-

ings with Chinese intelligence. Former Defense Intelligence Agency official Ron Hansen faces 15 years in prison after pleading guilty in March to charges of attempting to sell classified information to the Chinese. In ...*(More on P4)...(13)*

Political Pitfalls: Iran Tests 'America First' Pledge

WASHINGTON - President Donald Trump won the White House pledging to wind down the nation's many foreign entanglements and put "America First." But as his administration in recent days has sent mixed signals on the prospects of a military conflict with Iran, Trump's campaign trail promise is being put to the test.

With the 2020 election approaching, the political pitfalls ahead for the first-term Republican president could be serious.

While Trump enjoys overwhelming support from his party, there is little appetite among his loyalists for a new military conflict in the Middle East. Many are willing to give him the benefit of the doubt for now, but a string of recent moves has sparked concerns that the administration was beating the drums toward war. Among the possible precursors to military conflict: new sanctions on Iran's Revolutionary ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

Neighbor News

Critics of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Apply Double Standards, Says Pakistani Official

ISLAMABAD - The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has delivered benefits to both China and Pakistan, a Pakistani official said, questioning the double standards of certain countries on investment and rebutting the "debt trap" allegations. The unfounded charges hurled at China's investment in foreign countries are designed to create ill feelings among people by attempting to cast aspersions on motives of Chinese investment, said Asad Umar, chairman of Pakistan's National Assembly Standing Committee on Finance.

"It is blatant hypocrisy, designed simply to malign China," he said. "China's investment in other countries is a two-way thing. It is good for China and it is good for other countries." The former finance minister defended the CPEC, a major project within the framework of the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), in his interview with Xinhua. Umar said that early projects of the CPEC have been completed, but there are still projects under construction such as port infrastructure, power plants and road networks. ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

Pakistan Urges More Global Efforts to Combat Illicit Financial Flows

UNITED NATIONS - Pakistan called for stepped up efforts to plug loopholes that impede the international community's ability to combat illicit financial flows. Speaking at the high-level meeting on International Cooperation to Combat Illicit Financial Flows at the United Nations, Pakistan's ambassador Maleeha Lodhi said that the illicit financial flows were a key contributory factor for the economic underperformance of developing countries and a major obstacle to poverty eradication.

"Illicit Financial Flows have a catastrophic impact on societies; they stifle opportunities, deny vulnerable people access to infrastructure, and condemn them to a life

of inequality and inequity," Ambassador Lodhi pointed out. Pakistan's UN peacekeeping role shows strong support for multilateralism: Lodhi She also stated that despite a plethora of institutions and initiatives dealing with illicit financial flows, significant challenges and gaps remain. "These include lack of an agreed definition; difficulties in reliable measurement due to their disguised nature; increasing use of information and communication technologies and cryptocurrencies by criminals; inadequate participation of developing countries in multilateral initiatives and their lack of capacity in combating illicit flows". (Monitoring Desk)

Envoy Rejects UK Warning for Iranians Not to Visit Iran

TEHRAN - Iran's ambassador to London has dismissed Britain's travel warning for dual UK-Iranian nationals, saying all citizens are safe during their visit provided that they do not work for foreign intelligence agencies.

In a post on his Twitter account on Friday, Hamid Baedinejad said that people holding dual British and Iranian nationality "are all welcomed to visit their country and families."

"Every day thousands of Iranian dual nationals and Iranian nationals working in the UK are travelling safely to Iran. Iranian dual nationals and Iranians working in the UK are all respected Iranian citizens and are all welcomed to visit their country and fami-

lies," he said. The remarks came hours after the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office warned dual nationals against all travel to Iran, claiming that they faced an "unacceptably higher risk of detention and mistreatment." The Foreign Office's previous advice had warned against all but essential travel to Iran.

Additionally, British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt urged Iranians living in the UK to exercise "caution" when returning to Iran to visit their family or friends. Earlier this week, Iran's judiciary spokesman Gholamhossein Esmaili said an Iranian woman had been convicted after she was found guilty of spying for Britain. (Press TV)

President Accepts Resignation of Ukraine's Ambassador to Finland, Appoints Ambassador to Tajikistan

DUSHANBE - Incumbent President Petro Poroshenko has accepted the resignation of Ambassador of Ukraine to the Republic of Finland Andrii Olefirov.

Relevant decree No.232/2019 has been posted on the president's website.

"In line with Clause three of Part one of Article 29 of the Law of Ukraine 'On the diplomatic service of Ukraine' to accept the resignation of Andriy Volodymyrovych Olefirov, Ukraine's Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador to the Republic of Finland, who combines the post of Ukraine's Extraordi-

nary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador to the Republic of Iceland," reads the document.

Poroshenko also signed decree No.233/2019 to appoint Vasyl Servatiuk as Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Ukraine to the Republic of Tajikistan.

Earlier, State Secretary of the Foreign Ministry Andriy Zayats said that Ambassador Andriy Olefirov had been hospitalized in Finland. According to Zayats, the diplomat has been undergoing treatment in Ukraine over the past months and he can't perform official duties. (Agencies)