

RUSSIAN MEDDLING IN US

# Facebook removes more pages, accounts

REUTERS, Washington

Facebook Inc said yesterday it had removed hundreds of Russia-initiated pages, accounts and groups that it judged to be involved in coordinated inauthentic behavior on its Facebook and Instagram platforms.

Facebook's head of cybersecurity policy, Nathaniel Gleicher, said in a blog post it had unearthed two separate operations which originated in Russia, with one active in multiple countries across eastern Europe and the other specific to Ukraine. <https://bit.ly/2W1h9LR>

The company said it had taken down about 364 Facebook Pages and accounts run by the first Russian network and operating in Baltic Sea states, Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Central and Eastern Europe, adding that these pages were linked to employees of Russian news agency Sputnik.

The company also said that based on a tip from U.S. law enforcement, it had separately removed 107 Facebook pages, group and accounts and 41 Instagram accounts that originated in Russia and operated in Ukraine.

"We didn't find any links between these operations, but they used similar tactics by creating networks of accounts to mislead others about who they were and what they were doing," the company said.

Facebook has been under fire for the last two years for its self-admitted sluggishness in developing tools to combat extremist content and propaganda operations.

Facebook and Twitter Inc took down millions of posts and shuttered accounts linked to influence operations by Russia, Iran and other actors in the run-up to U.S. mid-term elections in November.



Indian participants are hit by a charging bull at the annual bull-wrestling event 'Jallikattu' in Allanganallur village on the outskirts of Madurai in the southern state of Tamil Nadu yesterday. Dozens of young men were injured on the first day of a traditional bull-wrestling festival in southern India that has attracted the ire of animal activists.

PHOTO: AFP

## 'I never said there was no collusion' with Russia

Says Trump's lawyer Rudy Giuliani

AFP, Washington

US President Donald Trump's personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani, on Wednesday insisted he "never said there was no collusion" between Trump's 2016 presidential election campaign and Russia -- only that Trump himself was not involved.

Speaking to CNN's Chris Cuomo, the former New York mayor said he did not know if others involved in the campaign had worked with Russia.

"I never said there was no collusion between the campaign, or between people in the campaign," Giuliani said.

"I said the President of the United States," he added.

"There is not a single bit of evidence the President of the United States committed the only crime you can commit here, conspiring with the

## Urgent! Babies wanted

Birth rate falls in Nordic nations despite govt push

AFP, Oslo

"Norway needs more children! I don't think I need to tell anyone how this is done," Norway's prime minister said cheekily, but she was raising a real concern.

Too few babies are being born in the Nordic region.

The Nordic countries were long a bastion of strong fertility rates on an Old Continent that is rapidly getting older. But they are now experiencing a decline that threatens their cherished welfare model, which is funded by taxpayers.

In Norway, Finland and Iceland, birth rates dropped to historic lows in 2017, with 1.49 to 1.71 children born per woman. Just a few years earlier, their birth rates hovered close to the 2.1 level required for their populations to remain stable.

There's no single explanation, but financial uncertainty and a sharp rise in housing costs are seen as likely factors.

In the long term, this means there will be fewer people of working age to pay taxes that fund the generous state

welfare systems.

Experts present differing diagnoses and prescriptions to remedy the situation. In Norway, one economist concerned about the effect the slowing demographics will have on economic growth has suggested giving women 500,000 kroner (50,000 euros, \$58,550) in pension savings for each child born.

Finnish municipalities have already decided to loosen their purse strings to encourage locals to get busy under the covers. The town of Miehikkala, home to 2,000 people, is offering 10,000 euros for each baby born and raised in the municipality.

In Denmark, Copenhagen has meanwhile turned its attention to men, who are in less of a hurry to become parents than women, with a campaign aimed at raising awareness about how sperm quality declines with age.

But when all that is still not enough to encourage people to have more children, immigration can be a lifeline -- or a threat, depending on the point of view.

NAIROBI TERROR ATTACK

# Hunt on for attack planners

AFP, Nairobi

Kenyan security forces yesterday resumed their search of the hotel complex attacked by Islamists with sniffer dogs and bomb experts, as information emerged about one of the attackers who killed 21 people.

A police source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said they were confident there were no more people trapped inside the hotel or surrounding office buildings after the 20-hour assault, during which some 700 civilians were rescued.

Police warned the public there may be loud controlled explosions as they continued their sweep of the hotel.

Five gunmen with the al-Qaeda-linked Somali militant group al-Shabaab attacked the DusitD2 hotel and office complex on Tuesday afternoon.

Chilling CCTV footage showed one of the attackers lingering in front of the

terrace of the Secret Garden restaurant before blowing himself up.

Four other attackers were shot dead by police during the operation to secure the hotel.

Al-Shabaab said it was acting to avenge the decision by US President Donald Trump to declare Jerusalem as Israel's capital, according to the SITE monitoring group.

The Red Cross said that 19 people reported missing to them, had since been traced.

Police say one of the attackers was Ali Salim Gichunge, who was also known as Farouk.

He was traced through his car, which was used at the attack, to his home in the Ruaka suburb where he lived with a woman in her twenties named Violet Kemunto Omwoyo.

As the attack unfolded, scores of terrified civilians barricaded themselves inside toilets and offices for hours.

Some were killed at the Secret

Garden restaurant, while another six bodies were found on the third floor of the hotel, where one of the gunbattles took place.

Kenya's Daily Nation newspaper hailed the "sweet victory over terrorism" as praise poured in for the swift and professional response from security services.

This stood in stark contrast to the scorn heaped on disorganised police and army officers who staged a chaotic intervention when Shabaab attacked the Westgate mall in 2013, leaving 67 dead.

"There was a sense of triumph despite adversity," read the newspaper's editorial.

"Security teams were well-coordinated under the General Service Unit; there was a centralised chain of command ... clearly lessons have been learned."

Al-Shabaab has repeatedly targeted Kenya over the presence of its troops in Somalia.



Russians to hack the DNC."

A day earlier, Trump had insisted he "never worked for Russia" following two bombshell reports.

"It's a disgrace that you even ask that question," he told reporters on the White House's South Lawn. "It's all a big fat hoax."

In the first report, The New York Times said the FBI opened an investigation into whether Trump was acting on Russia's behalf soon after he became president.

Meanwhile, The Washington Post detailed what it said were the unusual lengths taken by Trump to hide the contents of his conversations with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

## Disgraced guru gets life for killing journo

AFP, New Delhi

A disgraced religious sect leader was sentenced to life imprisonment yesterday for murdering a journalist who exposed rampant sexual abuses by the powerful guru.

Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh, who headed the Dera Sacha Sauda sect with millions of followers worldwide, was convicted by the court last week on charges of ordering the killing in 2002.

"The sentence will come into effect once he completes his ongoing jail term of 20 years on charges of rape," HPS Verma, prosecution lawyer, told AFP.

Verma said three other people along with the guru were also given life imprisonment by the court.

Ram Chander Chhatrapati was shot outside his home after his local newspaper published



Syrian children sit in their tent look out at the muddy path at the Cordoba camp for internally displaced Persons (IDP), close to Batabu town, along the highway leading to the Syrian Bab al-Hawa border crossing with Turkey, in the northern Syrian Idlib province on Wednesday

PHOTO: AFP

CLIMATE CHANGE

# 250,000 deaths a year a 'conservative estimate'

CNN ONLINE

Climate change could "halt and reverse" progress made in human health over the last century.

The grim analysis comes from one of the authors of a new report in the New England Journal of Medicine that suggests rising global temperatures could lead to many more deaths than the 250,000 a year the World Health Organization predicted just five years ago.

In 2014 the WHO said that climate change will bring with it malaria, diarrhea, heat stress and malnutrition, killing that many more people annually around the world from 2030 to 2050.

In reviewing the research on the topic, study co-author Sir Andrew Haines thinks our health is much more vulnerable to climate change -- and he believes 250,000 deaths is a "conservative estimate."

"We think the impact is more difficult to quantify because there is also population displacement and a range of additional factors like food production and crop yield, and

the increase in heat that will limit labor productivity from farmers in tropical regions that wasn't taken into account among other factors," said Haines, a British epidemiologist and former director of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine.

Due to climate change-related food shortages alone, the world could see a net increase of 529,000 adult deaths by 2050, the report said. Climate change could force 100 million people into extreme poverty by 2030 and poverty makes people more vulnerable to health problems.

Haines adds that climate change, "while the most important environmental threat facing humanity," is not the only environmental problem that threatens our health.

The depletion of freshwater resources, the unprecedented biodiversity loss, ocean acidification, overfishing, pollution, deforestation and the spread of invasive species, that are related to climate change, but are environmental problems on their own, all compound these public health threats he said.

## US bills pile pressure on Huawei, ZTE

Beijing slams 'hysteria' as legislations seek to ban chips sale to China IT giants

REUTERS, Washington/Beijing

A bipartisan group of US lawmakers introduced bills on Wednesday that would ban the sale of US chips or other components to Huawei Technologies Co Ltd, ZTE Corp or other Chinese telecommunications companies that violate US sanctions or export control laws.

The proposed law drew sharp criticism from China where Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying called the US legislation "hysteria", intensifying a bitter trade war between Beijing and Washington.

The bills were introduced shortly before the Wall Street Journal reported federal prosecutors were investigating allegations that Huawei stole trade secrets from T-Mobile US Inc and other US businesses.

The Journal said that an indictment could be coming soon on allegations that Huawei stole T-Mobile technology, called Tappy, which mimicked human fingers and was used to test smartphones.

Huawei said in a statement the company

and T-Mobile settled their disputes in 2017 following a US jury verdict that found "neither damage, unjust enrichment nor willful and malicious conduct by Huawei in T-Mobile's trade secret claim".

Hua urged US lawmakers to block the bills.

The legislation is the latest in a long list of actions taken to fight what some in the Trump administration call China's cheating through intellectual property theft, illegal corporate subsidies and rules hampering US corporations that want to sell their goods in China.

Many US lawmakers and intelligence sources claim Huawei as an effectively intelligence-gathering arm of the Chinese Communist Party.

Meanwhile, German government yesterday said it is debating whether to follow the United States and allies like Australia in restricting China's Huawei Technologies from accessing its next-generation mobile networks on national-security grounds.

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ



Manzura Shameem

22<sup>nd</sup> September, 1956 - 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

It is with deep regret we announce the passing of **Manzura Shameem**, loving wife of **Mohammad Shameem (Kabul)**.

Mrs. Shameem left us on the 15<sup>th</sup> of January, 2019 at 11:30 pm in Dhaka, Bangladesh due to a sudden cardiac arrest.

She was an extraordinary mother to her children Maria, Farah, Joy and Sami. Moreover, a doting grandmother to Summer, and Aiden, the most caring mother in law to Razeed, Asif, Nowshin & Megan.

Manzura's warmth and presence will be missed by all her siblings, family members and friends she left behind.

Her Kulkhani will be held on Friday, **18<sup>th</sup> January badh Asr at Westwood, Road 56, House 5, Gulshan 2.**

We request you to remember her in your prayers.