

IN THE NEWS

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World News

Things are heating up in the Middle-East. An Israeli F-16 was shot down during operations over Syria [1]. Elsewhere in Syria, Eastern Ghouta was subjected to intense government and Russian aerial bombings [2]. Estimates are that at least 500 people were killed so far in the air campaign [3]. Additionally, there was an incident where US air strikes hit targets that included Russian fighters [4]. The attacks left dozens of Russians dead or wounded [5]. This comes as Russian forces in Syria deployed its newest stealth fighter, the SU-57 [6]. Meanwhile, during military parades, Iran introduced new nuclear capable ballistic missiles [7].

While much of the focus has been on Russia, the Chinese have been active. For instance, China conducted another test of its DN-3 anti-satellite missile [8]. In other military related areas; one piece suggests China is advancing faster than the US in the area of Genomic research [9].

One way to offset Chinese advances is to research ways to extend the life of current weapons systems. Recall that during the Reagan presidency, World War II battleships were modernized and recommissioned [10]. Fast forward, the US Air Force is seeking funds to research propulsion upgrades to the aging B-52 bomber [11].

1. NPR, *Israeli Airstrikes Kill 6 In Syria After Israel Says It Intercepted Iranian Drone*, February 10, 2018.
2. BBC News, *Syria war: Ghouta pounded as UN tussles over ceasefire*, February 23, 2018.
3. BBC News, *Syria war: Air strikes in Eastern Ghouta 'kill 500'*, February 24, 2018.
4. BBC News, *Syria conflict: 'Russians killed' in US air strikes*, February 13, 2018.
5. Jerusalem Post/Reuters, *Several Dozen Russian, Ex-Soviet Fighters Killed or Wounded in Syria*, February 20, 2018.
6. Boylan, Dan, Washington Times, *Russia tests new stealth fighter over*

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Security

On January 31, there was a truck on train crash in Virginia may have been the results of crossing gates that were not working correctly [1]. Next, in South Carolina, an Amtrak train was on the wrong track when it collided with a freight train [2]. The incident in South Carolina was the third recent train accident [3]. One piece suggests the tracks were manually switched and the switch box paddle locked [4]. An-

other report indicates the signals were turned off in preparation for installing the nationwide emergency-equipment system [5]. Lastly, an Amtrak train separated in Maryland while traveling at 125 MPH [6].

In other news, we are learning that Russian hackers penetrated the voter registration rolls of several states prior to the 2016 election [7]. What we don't know is if they were able to change any elections and who they

were supporting. Then, on February 13, the city of Savannah, Georgia, suffered a cyber-attack that required part of the city's computer system to be shut down [8].

Finally, the race to patch security vulnerabilities continues. Apple released patches to fix a text bomb vulnerability that could disable iMessages and other applications [9].

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Special points of interest:

- Train Crash in South Carolina

Security

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1. KMBZ, *Truck driver in last week's train crash was trying to go through a closed crossing, Amtrak president says*, February 5, 2018.
2. Caplan, David, et. al., CBS News, *Amtrak train on wrong track in deadly crash; it says freight line controls signals*, February 5, 2018.
3. CBS News, *Investigators recover data recorder from Amtrak train in South Carolina crash*, February 5, 2018.
4. Shapiro, Emily, ABC News, *Event data recorder reveals moments leading up to deadly head-on Amtrak collision in South Carolina*, February 6, 2018.
5. Shain, Andy, The Post and Courier, *Emergency order suggested after 'human decision' likely contributed to deadly S.C. Amtrak crash*, February 15, 2018.
6. Furfaro, Danielle, New York Post, *Amtrak train breaks apart at 125 mph*, February 6, 2018.
7. McFadden, Cynthia, et. al., NBC News, *Russians penetrated U.S. voter systems, top U.S. official says*, February 8, 2018.

8. Olenick, Doug, SC Magazine, *Savannah still suffering effects from cyberattack*, February 21, 2018.
9. Able, Robert. SC Magazine, *Apple patches 'Text Bomb' bug that causes system crashes*, February 20, 2018.

In 1939, Germany established gun control. From 1939 to 1945, six million Jews and seven million others unable to defend themselves were exterminated.—Joe Wurzelbacher

(Continued from page 1)

7. Kredo, Adam, Washington Free Beacon, *Iran Unveils New Homemade Nuclear-Capable Ballistic Missiles Amid Massive War Celebrations*, February 12, 2018.
8. Gertz, Bill, Washington Free Beacon, *China ASAT Test Part of Growing Space War Threat*, February 23, 2018.
9. Weisman, Steven R., New York Times, *Reagan Hails Navy Led by Battleship*, December 29, 1982.
10. Ehrlich, Richard S, Asia Times, *China spirals past US in genome research*, February 25, 2018.
11. Drew, James, Aviation Week and Space Technology, *Eight for Eight*, February 26, 2018.

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Hails Navy Led by Battleship, December 29, 1982.

10. Ehrlich, Richard S, Asia Times, *China spirals past US in genome research*, February 25, 2018.
11. Drew, James, Aviation Week and Space Technology, *Eight for Eight*, February 26, 2018.

Terrorism

In spite of setbacks in Syria and Iraq, the Islamic State (IS) is still a terrorist organization operating globally. For instance, the IS claimed responsibility for a shooting at a Russian Orthodox church, located in the Dagestan city of Kizlyar where the gunman killed at least 5 people [1]. In Kabul, Afghanistan, the IS claimed responsibility for an explosion near the US Embassy killed at least 2 people [2]. In Yemen, the IS claimed responsibility for twin suicide attacks that killed at least 14 people [3].

In other parts of the world, acts of terrorism also continue. For example, in Montenegro, a terrorists threw an explosive at the US Embassy before blowing himself up [4]. In Somalia, double car bombings near the presidential palace killed at least 18 people [5]. And in Afghanistan, Taliban militants attacked a base killing at least 22 soldiers [6].

1. AP/ABC News, *IS claims responsibility for church*

shooting in Russia, February 19, 2018.

2. Reuters/Fox News, *Explosion rocks Kabul, near US Embassy and NATO headquarters*, February 24, 2018.
3. Reuters, *Yemen attack: at least 14 killed in raid on Aden counter-terrorism headquarters*, February 24, 2018.
4. Washington Free Beacon/Reuters, *Explosive Device Thrown at U.S. Embassy Building in Montenegro: Report*, February 21, 2018.
5. BBC News, *Somalia al-Shabab: Deadly double car bombing near presidential palace*, February 23, 2018.
6. BBC News, *Afghanistan: Soldiers killed in wave of attacks*, February 24, 2018.

*The assassinations of
Martin Luther King, Jr.,
and Robert F. Kennedy led
directly to the passage of a
historic law, the Gun
Control Act of 1968.—
Jeffrey Toobin*

Economy

The stock market fell over 1000 points on February 4 and many robo-advisor websites crashed cutting off access to accounts [1]. The overall correction resulted in the worse weekly loss since January 2016 [2].

However, the jobs report offered more encouraging news. For the week ending February 3, the number of first time unemployment claims was 221,000 [3]. Then for the week ending February 10, the number reported was 230,000 [4]. Finally, for the week ending February 17, the number of claims fell to 222,000 [5].

1. Kochkodin, Brandon, et. al., Bloomberg, *Robo-Adviser Websites Crash, Cutting Off Access to Accounts*, February 5, 2018.
2. Shell, Adam, USA Today, *Dow rebounds 330 points but suffers worst weekly loss since Jan. 2016*, February 9, 2018.
3. Mutikani, Lucia, Reuters,

U.S. jobless claims drop to near 45-year low, February 8, 2018.

4. RTT News, *U.S. Jobless Claims Rise In Line With Estimates To 230,000*, February 15, 2018.
5. Nunn, Sharon, and Chaney, Sarah, Wall Street Journal, *U.S. Jobless Claims Fell Last Week*, February 22, 2018.

*Maybe we can show
government how to operate
better as a result of better
architecture. Eventually, I
think Chicago will be the
most beautiful great city
left in the world.—Frank
Lloyd Wright*
