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TOP OF THE WORLD



Maria Butina. Reuters

RUSSIA

'Agent' freed by US: 'Russians don't surrender'

Moscow: Maria Butina clutched bouquets and exclaimed that "Russians don't surrender" as she arrived in Moscow on Saturday after serving nine months in a US jail for acting as a Russian government agent. Butina flew into Moscow's Sheremetyevo airport after being deported from Miami following her release Friday. "I didn't give up because I know I simply didn't have the right," Butina told a waiting crowd of journalists. "Russians don't surrender!" She was arrested in July 2018 on allegations of engaging in espionage.

JAPAN

Rescuers hunt for missing as landslides kill 10

Tokyo: Rescuers worked by hand to clear debris from a landslide triggered by heavy rains in central Japan on Saturday, as the toll from the storms rose to 10 dead with a further three people reportedly missing. Aerial footage showed emergency workers removing wreckage from two houses that were swept away in Chiba, just two weeks after a deadly typhoon barreled through the area. Nine people were killed by landslides and floods in the region, including two elderly men found dead in submerged cars, officials and news reports said.

PAKISTAN

Sharif suffers angina attack at hospital

Islamabad: Former Pakistan prime minister Nawaz Sharif on Saturday suffered angina pain while undergoing treatment at a Lahore hospital, according to a media report. Sharif suffered angina pain in the morning while undergoing treatment at the hospital, the Dawn News reported quoting Services Institute of Medical Sciences (SIMS) Principal Dr Mahmood Ayaz. Earlier, Sharif's lawyer Khawaja Haris claimed the former premier had suffered a "minor heart attack" last night and that his "life is in danger".



TOLL IN IRAQ PROTEST CROSSES 40

Demonstrators during a protest over corruption, lack of jobs and poor services, in Baghdad on Saturday. Reuters

US meets China, Russia, Pakistan to talk about peace in Afghanistan

ASSOCIATED PRESS
ISLAMABAD, OCTOBER 26

REPRESENTATIVES OF Russia, China, the United States and Pakistan agreed Friday that negotiation is the only road to peace in Afghanistan, including an early resumption of direct US talks with the Taliban.

The day-long talks in Moscow came ahead of an intra-Afghan dialogue to be hosted by China. The Beijing talks, which are to be held next week, were postponed, according to officials familiar with the talks. Speaking on condition they not be identified because of they were not authorized to talk about the subject, they said the postponement would be brief but no new date was given.

There has been no official announcement of a postponement, but previous intra-Afghan talks have been delayed while both sides squabbled over participants. Earlier on Friday, a government official, who also spoke on condition of anonymity for the same reason, had said Ghani



At the site of suicide attack in Jalalabad. The Taliban claimed the attack. AP

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EXPLAINED

Picking up from talks in July, September

THE MOSCOW talks are a prelude to the China-hosted dialogue, which will be the first time the warring Afghan forces will meet face-to-face since July. Since then, a US attempt to finalise a peace deal too fell apart in September.

Afghanistan's President, Ashraf Ghani, who had objected to any talks not led by his government, is also likely to send envoys. As the conflict has led to over 8,000 civilian casualties this year alone, the most pressing demand is likely to be a reduction of violence while a post-war future is discussed.

was opposed to participation in the talks.

It wasn't clear what changed Ghani's mind or whether he had requested a postponement, but a number of prominent Afghans from Kabul are expected to attend the China meeting, including former President Hamid Karzai, who has been a strong proponent of direct talks with the Taliban. He participated in earlier sessions of talks with the Taliban held in Moscow.

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FROM JAPAN JEWELLERY FAIR

DIAMOND WORTH \$1.84 MILLION STOLEN

Japanese police are investigating a 200 million yen (\$1.84 million) diamond allegedly stolen from an international jewellery trade show near Tokyo. The 50-carat diamond was last seen sitting inside a glass showcase at 5 pm Thursday. An hour later, the diamond was gone and the jewellery case was unlocked, according to police.

'RULING AFFIRMS HOUSE AUTHORITY'

Trump impeachment probe legal, release Mueller papers: Judge

JAN WOLFE & SARAH N LYNCH
OCTOBER 26

A US judge on Friday validated the legality of the Democratic-led impeachment inquiry against President Donald Trump and ordered his administration to hand over an unredacted copy of former special counsel Robert Mueller's report detailing Russian meddling in the 2016 election.

US District Judge Beryl Howell, handing a major victory to the Democratic-led House of Representatives, undercut an argument that Trump's fellow Republicans have made in attacking the impeachment inquiry. The judge said the House need not approve a resolution formally initiating the effort.

The US Constitution gives the House wide latitude in handling impeachment. Democrats began the inquiry without putting such a resolution to a vote. The judge gave the Justice Department until next Wednesday to provide the blacked out material from the Mueller report that was subpoenaed by the House Committee.

"The reality is that DOJ and the White House have been openly stonewalling the House's efforts to get information by subpoena and by agreement, and

GIULIANI ACCIDENTALLY CALLS REPORTER TWICE; SPOKE ABOUT CASH, BIDENS

RUDOLPH GIULIANI

President Trump's personal lawyer, and a key figure in the impeachment inquiry, managed to inadvertently telephone an NBC News reporter and leave a voice message filled with snippets of an overheard conversation



NOT THE FIRST TIME

In an earlier voice mail message left in September, he can be heard railing against the family of Joseph R Biden Jr, suggesting with no evidence that he knows of corrupt activities by the former vice president

'WE NEED SOME MONEY' In the recording, Giuliani is heard discussing business in Turkey and Bahrain. At one point, he declares: "The problem is we need some money... We need a few hundred thousand"

the White House has flatly stated that the Administration will not cooperate with congressional requests for information," the judge wrote, using an acronym for the Justice Department.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi called the ruling "another blow to President Trump's attempt to put himself above the law."

"This critical court ruling affirms Congress's authority to expose the truth for the American

people," Pelosi said in a statement.

The Justice Department had argued that the redacted information could not be disclosed because it contained material from grand jury proceedings that was required to be kept secret, but the judge strongly disagreed.

"DOJ is wrong," Howell said, adding that the committee's need for disclosure of the materials "is greater than the need for continued secrecy." REUTERS

US plans in Syria international banditry: Russia



Recep Erdogan

Will clear 'terrorists' from border if deal fails: Erdogan

REUTERS
ANKARA, OCTOBER 26

PRESIDENT RECEP Tayyip Erdogan said on Saturday that Turkey would "clear terrorists" on its border in northern Syria if Syrian Kurdish militia did not withdraw by the end of a deadline agreed with Russia.

"If the terrorists are not cleared at the end of the 150 hours, we will take control and clean it ourselves," Erdogan said during a televised speech.

Erdogan and Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed a deal in the Black Sea resort of Sochi in which Moscow will "facilitate the removal" of the fighters and their weapons from within 30 km (18 miles) of the border.

Erdogan said Turkey had "to a large extent" reached its goal in terms of setting up a "safe zone" to protect against attacks from the IS extremist group and the Kurdish YPG militia.

REUTERS
MOSCOW, OCTOBER 26

RUSSIA'S DEFENCE ministry on Saturday attacked US plans to maintain and boost the American military presence in eastern Syria as "international state banditry" motivated by a desire to protect oil smugglers and not by real security concerns.

US Defense Secretary Mark Esper said on Friday Washington would send armoured vehicles and troops to the Syrian oil fields in order to prevent them from falling into the hands of Islamic State militants.

His comments came after President Donald Trump earlier this month pulled some 1,000 US military personnel out of northeast Syria, a move that prompted Turkey to launch a cross-border incursion targeting the Kurdish YPG militia, a former US ally against Islamic State.

Trump's decision drew an angry backlash from Congress, including key Republicans who saw the pullout as a betrayal of the Kurds and a move that could bolster Islamic State.

In a statement, Russia's defence ministry said Washington had no mandate under international or US law to increase its military presence in Syria and

HEADED TO SYRIA

■ The US will send armoured vehicles and troops to eastern Syria to keep oil fields from falling into the hands of IS militants, Defense Secretary Mark Esper said

■ Adding armored reinforcements could mean sending several hundred US troops to the region

■ Sending an armored force to eastern Syria would partially reverse the ongoing shrinkage of the United States' troop presence in Syria.

said its plan was not motivated by genuine security concerns in the region.

"Therefore Washington's current actions – capturing and maintaining military control over oil fields in eastern Syria – is, simply put, international state banditry," it said.

US troops and private security companies in eastern Syria are protecting oil smugglers who make more than \$30 million a month, the statement said.

TECHNOLOGY DOMINATES TOP 10, OVERTAKES INVESTMENTS TO GET THIRD PLACE

In China rich list: Jack Ma retains top spot; pork producers jump to top 20

SOWMIYA ASHOK
BEIJING, OCTOBER 26

SELLING 5.8 million pigs in a China riddled by African Swine Fever catapulted a pig farmer-couple into the top 20 spot of the 2019 Hurun China Rich List, released in early October.

Qin Yinglin (54) and his wife Qian Ying (53), owners of Shenzhen-listed Muyuan, broke into the higher echelons of the country's rich list when their wealth tripled after selling pigs in a market where pork prices shot up due to an outbreak of swine fever. The list is the ranking of the richest individuals in China with a wealth cut off of

CNY 2 billion (\$290 million).

While 'Hotpot King' Zhang Yong and his wife Shu Ping who own Haidilao, a chain of hotpot restaurants, made it to the top 10, 'Soya Sauce King' Pang Kang saw his wealth grow as well. As many as 1,819 individuals made the wealth cut-off of CNY 2 billion, with an average age of 54. Eleven people born in the 90s made the list, of them two self-made 27-year-olds: Chen Xiaoliang of online advertiser Duiba and Ge Yuesheng of Bitcoin miner Bitmain.

Over a week after the list was released, a Credit Suisse report revealed that the US (\$3.8 trillion), China (\$1.9 trillion) and Europe (\$1.1 trillion) contributed the

most to global wealth growth. Moreover, China now accounts for 100 million of the richest 10 per cent of people in the world.

Technology dominated the top 10 of the Hurun China Rich List this year. Specifically, the top two spots of the list: former chairman of Alibaba Group Jack Ma remained the richest man on the Chinese mainland with a net worth of \$39 billion according to the list released annually.

He was followed by Chairman and CEO of Tencent Holdings Pony Ma – not related to Jack – with a net worth of \$37 billion.

Though tech overtook investments to assume third place, manufacturing and real estate



Jack Ma retained the top spot with a net worth of \$39 billion

still make up just under 40 per cent of the list. Of the proportion of women on the list, 70 per cent

are self-made, according to Hurun Research Institute. The country's richest woman is Yang

