Military strikes won’t end Iran’s nuclear program - Obama

President Barack Obama defended nuclear negotiations with Iran, arguing that military action would not end the country's controversial nuclear program. He stated a deal with Tehran is the only way to ensure it does not develop a bomb.

Speaking with Israel's Channel 2 television program “Uvda,” President Obama insisted that the best way to stop Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon was through an agreement. Tehran is currently negotiating with the US and other world powers over its program as a June 30th deadline quickly approaches.

“I can, I think, demonstrate, not based on any hope but on facts and evidence and analysis, that the best way to prevent Iran from having a nuclear weapon is a verifiable, tough agreement,” he reportedly said, according to the Israeli newspaper Haaretz.

The president went on to dismiss the idea that military action could destroy Iran’s nuclear program and keep the country from permanently seeking a nuke.

“A military solution will not fix it, even if the United States participates, it would temporarily slow down an Iranian nuclear program, but it will not eliminate it,” he said.

The interview, set to air Tuesday evening, is seen as an attempt by Obama to convince Israelis that he will not sign onto a bad deal. Any final deal would require restrictions on Iran’s nuclear program while lifting sanctions on the country.

Critics in the Israeli government, including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, have consistently criticized the emerging deal with Iran as weak while insisting that military action remains a viable option. Conservative political opponents in the US have also aired the same concerns.

New reports have also raised anxiety about the emerging deal, with one stating that Iran refused to grant access to the UN’s International Atomic Energy Agency at several of its nuclear sites.

Another report stated that Iran would sit on a “dispute resolution” panel that would review any allegations of non-compliance on Tehran’s part and issue a non-binding opinion before lifted sanctions can be reinstated. Critics contend that potential vetoes by Russia and China could make it more difficult for sanctions to be “snapped back” into place should Iran violate the agreement.
Negotiations with Tehran have raised tensions between Israel and the US to nearly unprecedented levels, reaching a point where Obama was asked about the possibility of Israel launching an attack on Iran without informing America beforehand.

“I won't speculate on that,” said Obama. “What I can say is to the Israeli people, I understand your concerns and I understand your fears.”

Evacuation as IBM high-rise catches fire in central Brisbane

Published time: June 02, 2015 03:34
Edited time: June 02, 2015 04:13
Get short URL

Hundreds of people have reportedly been evacuated after a fire broke out on the 13th floor of the IBM building in the central business district of Brisbane, Australia. Multiple firefighting crews have been dispatched and sealed off the adjacent streets.

Hundreds of people, including those who just evacuated from the high-rise on Edward Street, watched thick smoke billowing from one of the upper floors of the building. Firefighters were called to the scene at 12:40 pm Tuesday.

The whole 13th floor filled with smoke, but all employees were safely evacuated, according to the tech company.

“All our staff are safe and accounted for,” an IBM spokeswoman said.

According to reports, the fire may have started in a service elevator.

The fire has been successfully put out and Queensland Ambulance Service said there have been no reports of injuries.

Supersonic entry: NASA’s ‘flying saucer’ to get second test drive

Published time: June 02, 2015 03:53
NASA is expecting to get closer to landing the first humans on Mars on Tuesday by launching the second test flight of its peculiar “Low Density Supersonic Decelerator” (LDSD) technology, known simply as a ‘flying saucer.’

“The test, performed over the Pacific Ocean, will simulate the supersonic entry and descent speeds at which the spacecraft would be traveling through the Martian atmosphere,” according to NASA, which is working to meet its deadline of a Martian landing by 2035.

The flight test will be launched from the US Navy’s Pacific Missile Range Facility on Kauai, Hawaii. It is scheduled to begin at approximately 9:30 pm GST (10:30 am PDT) on Tuesday, June 2.

The technology explores a new way of slowing down spacecraft once it enters the Martian atmosphere. “NASA’s LDSD project is designed to investigate and test breakthrough technologies for landing future robotic and human Mars missions and safely returning large payloads to Earth,” NASA said.

“Right now we are at the technological limits of what we can land on Mars in terms of size and weight. This is all we can do with the current technology,” associate administrator of NASA’s Space Technology Mission Directorate Steve Jurczyk told reporters on Monday. “This technology is required to land five metric tons for human missions, maybe 30 and beyond metric tons to the surface.”
The currently employed landing technology has been in use since the 1960s-70s and was used to help the Curiosity rover land on Mars in 2012.

The latest prototype is made up of two elements: a flying saucer body and an inflatable tube called the Supersonic Inflatable Aerodynamic Decelerator (SIAD).

During the first try about a year ago, the spacecraft was lifted 50 kilometers (30 miles) up into the air by a huge balloon and then accelerated to supersonic speeds by a rocket motor.

**READ MORE: NASA testing ‘flying saucer’ Mars lander**

Then an inflatable tube around the vehicle, made from the same material as bulletproof vests, expanded to slow it from Mach 4 (four times the speed of sound) to Mach 2.5. The next stage was the deployment of a gigantic parachute, 33 meters in diameter, but it ripped apart as soon as it opened.

“We saw things that we’ve never seen or imagined existed before,” LDSD lead researcher Ian Clark told reporters on Monday, referring to the first test. “We saw a much more dynamic and much more turbulent parachute inflation than we had ever known … things like the suspension lines exploding like lightning, moving in a very chaotic manner all over the place.”

For the second test, NASA has reinvented the LDSD’s faulty parachute. The new model has a new shape, is bigger, and has been reinforced to withstand any tears.

“We learned a great deal from last year’s flight test. We’ve used that knowledge to improve the design and manufacturing of the hardware,” Jurczyk said. “This year I’m cautiously optimistic that we’ll have a fully successful flight test.”

**Pentagon shipped live anthrax samples to Canada - report**

Published time: June 02, 2015 04:03

Get short URL

![Image of protective gear and tent](https://www.reuters.com)
New disclosures from Pentagon officials say samples of live anthrax were sent to three Canadian laboratories. The scandal now involves anthrax sent to labs in 12 states, Washington, DC, and three countries – Australia, Canada and South Korea.

An unnamed Pentagon official not authorized to speak publicly told USA Today that, so far, no one had been sickened by the shipments, and that military investigators are continuing to search anthrax samples and records to discover whether further samples were shipped to other labs.

The Pentagon admitted last Wednesday that live anthrax was inadvertently shipped from a military lab in Utah across state lines and out of the country over a one-year period from March 2014 to April 2015. The research samples were mistakenly marked inactive, according to officials.

The agency said the public was not at risk from the anthrax spores, which, if inhaled, can spark a high fever and other flu-like symptoms and be lethal even with treatment.

The samples, which the military said were shipped commercially, were for use in determining whether a new detection test for anthrax and other organisms works as expected. A Maryland lab first notified the Department of Defense about the live spores after receiving one of the shipments.

So far, 28 labs in 12 states and the District of Columbia have received samples, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said. CDC bioterror lab regulators and the Pentagon are investigating why the military lab hadn’t thoroughly killed the anthrax specimens before shipping. An email sent to a CDC official said the methods used to kill anthrax spores are not always fully effective.

"We have concern that the inactivation procedures, when followed properly, are inadequate to kill all spores, and the US government is developing an approach to securing such possible samples from misuse," wrote Daniel Sosin, deputy director of the CDC’s Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response, in an email to state officials that was obtained by USA Today.

Anthrax is known to be one of the most difficult microorganisms to kill, and the bacteria can survive for years in the form of tough spores. The Army facility zaps the anthrax with radiation, which is supposed to render spores permanently inert, but errors can still occur.

“One of the things that can happen is that they set it up, and they do it, and they find out later that it only kills 99.99 percent,” Paul Keim, a biologist at Northern Arizona University who studies anthrax, told Minnesota Public Radio.

“That’s more than enough if you’re killing 100 spores, but if you’re doing it to 10 billion spores,” he says, "you’re going to have some escapes."

CDC spokesman Jason McDonald said four workers in three states are being treated for possible anthrax exposure. Separately, the military says that 22 individuals at Osan Air Base, a US facility in South Korea, are also receiving treatment.

Polish ambassador condemns spike in N. Ireland hate crimes

Published time: June 02, 2015 13:35
Get short URL
Attacks on members of Northern Ireland’s 25,000-strong Polish community must end and the perpetrators must be brought to justice, according to the country’s ambassador to the UK.

Figures for hate crimes against Northern Ireland-based Poles have spiked recently, with 150 attacks taking place in the 12 months to March 2015.

That constitutes an increase of 39 incidents on the previous year.

Speaking at Queen's University, Belfast, during a two-day visit, Ambassador Witold Sobkow addressed an audience that included senior ministers.

"On the whole, they feel at home and find Northern Ireland a hospitable place. From time to time, we have the attacks on the representatives of the communities.

"This is bad for the community but it is also bad for Northern Ireland because it creates the wrong image of the community that is, in general, hospitable.

"But I’m very grateful for the acts of solidarity of people who live here, for all the efforts of the city council and the executive, of the police. We hope the perpetrators of those attacks will be detained."

Hate crimes are on the rise in Northern Ireland, a region of the UK with a long history of inter-communal violence.

Last year it was reported by the annual Human Rights and Racial Equality Benchmarking Report for Northern Ireland that at least 982 racist incidents had taken place in 2013-2014. The number was up on 2012-13 figures, when 750 racist incidents were reported by the watchdog.

Despite a large number of cases, only 12 people were convicted for over 14,000 hate crimes in Northern Ireland in the last five years.

Those who are behind the xenophobic attack are showing “intolerance and provocative aggression,” said Gavin Robinson, a council member from the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP).

“It is a huge level of pathetic stupidity, especially on a week when many in the unionist and loyalist community came together to devise a strategy to combat racism,” he said.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) said that the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), a Protestant paramilitary organization whose members have long history of violence and terrorist convictions, is behind racist attacks in the region.

**BUK missile manufacturer on MH17 shooting over Ukraine LIVE UPDATES**

Published time: June 02, 2015 09:46
Emergencies Ministry members walk at the site of a Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777 plane crash, MH17, near the settlement of Grabovo in the Donetsk region, July 17, 2014. (Reuters/Maxim Zmeyev)

The BUK missile manufacturer revealed its own findings into the flight MH17 downing over Ukraine, effectively proving that a missile type consistent only with the Buk-M1 system was used – one that the Russian armed forces do not possess.

**Tuesday, June 2**

Political analyst Aleksandar Pavic joins RT

US satellites were spotted hovering over Donbass at the time of the Boeing downing in east Ukraine – Almaz-Antey

The Ukrainian General Staff says that Ukraine possesses BUK M-1 missile systems, but that on the day of the MH17 crash Ukraine was not in control of the area where it is suspected the missile was fired.

Almaz-Antey is still entertaining the possibility that another aircraft may have been involved in the downing of flight MH17.

The country that possessed the missile that hit flight MH17 remains unknown - Almaz-Antey

"If necessary, we can carry out a field test... with the participation of independent experts," Novikov says. "We are willing to carry out a demolition of a 9M38M1 missile at a specified angle and aimed at the same model of aircraft."

**World’s biggest e-commerce group Alibaba opens Russia office**
Chinese online retailer Alibaba has opened an office in Russia to get closer to one of its strategic global markets. Its online store, AliExpress, is the most popular online shop in Russia – with a monthly customer base estimated at 15.6 million people.

"Alibaba Group has established a new company in Russia in order to further expand our business and support partners, and to facilitate interaction with the state authorities of Russia," Mark Zavadsky, AliExpress Business Development Director in Russia and the CIS told Kommersant Tuesday.

AliExpress reached 15.6 million customers a month in the second half of 2014, way ahead of other key market players, eBay and Amazon, who had just 3.7 million and 1.4 million customers a month, respectively.

The company registered a legal entity “OOO Alibaba.com (RU)” in May with Zavadsky appointed its CEO. He will also keep his post of AliExpress Business Development Director in Russia and the CIS countries.

The group was founded in 1999. Alibaba includes a retail portal, Taobao, with more than 6 million online merchants, online marketplace Tmall.com, which represents major brands and retailers, the Alipay payment system and its online retailer AliExpress, among other enterprises.

READ MORE: Alibaba expands into US to compete against Amazon, Google

According to the company, the number of active customers using Alibaba Group services totaled 350 million people in the fiscal year ending March 31, 2015. Alibaba Group’s revenue for the period reached $12.2 billion with net profit of $3.9 billion.

In September 2014, Alibaba conducted the world’s largest-ever IPO, collectively raising almost $25 billion. The capitalization of the company as of June 1 amounted to $222.9 billion.

READ MORE: Alibaba’s Ma dethroned as China’s richest man after $1.4bn one-day loss

Also last year, Russia’s third-richest billionaire, Alisher Usmanov, became one of the shareholders of Alibaba Group. Later, in an interview with CNBC, he said that the profitability of his investments in Alibaba had already exceeded 500 percent. The volume of his funds invested in Alibaba is unknown, but he said he hasn’t sold his shares.

Fat, unfit cops must shape up or leave force, Metropolitan Police chief says

Published time: June 02, 2015 10:16

Get short URL
Unfit and overweight police officers must improve their health and physique or “we haven’t got a job for them,” Britain’s top police chief has warned.

Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe said officers’ annual fitness tests featured standards that were much too low. The Metropolitan Police Commissioner said he passed his physical assessment very well with no preparation.

He added that police officers need fit colleagues, not “somebody waddling down the road who’s never going to arrive.”

Hogan-Howe has led London’s Metropolitan Police Authority, the largest force in Britain, since 2011.

In an interview with the Radio Times, he said police officers who failed the fitness test must improve their physical condition or risk losing their jobs.

“If they don’t, then we haven’t got a job for them. I think you’ve got a duty to your colleagues,” Hogan-Howe said.

“If they shout for help, they want fit people to come. They don’t want somebody waddling down the road who’s never going to arrive, and when they get there they’re out of breath,” he added.

The mandatory annual fitness test came into force in England and Wales in 2014, following a policing review by Chief Inspector of Constabulary Tom Winsor.

Known as the “bleep” test, it involves running a short distance back and forth in time to a bleeping sound. As the level goes up, the frequency of the bleep becomes faster. Police officers must try to complete as many levels as they can, running faster with each progression.

According to interim results given to the College of Policing, out of 29,285 tests taken, 807 officers failed. The 807 figure could include officers who failed more than once. Men failed 237 tests and women failed 570.

Winsor has recommended the test be changed in 2018 to resemble that undertaken by police recruits in Northern Ireland, where they have to do push-and-pull exercises to test strength, plus crawling, jumping, climbing and running laps.

Hogan-Howe said he had personally passed his own assessment “very well with no preparation.”

However, he added: “It’s taken too long to get the annual test, but it will start to have an increasing impact. For me, the standard is too low: I think it should be higher. It’s relatively easy to pass.”

Chairman of the Met Police Federation John Tully said while he accepted officers need to maintain fitness, because of budget cuts frontline officers had no time to keep fit while on the job.

He said the police force had a duty of care to remember because some officers failed the test due to illness or an injury they received on duty.
“There is no differentiation between someone injured playing football in their own time or injured on duty,” Mr Tully said.

“Clearly the commissioner is laying a line down from what he has said, but it would be a sad day seeing people leave the organization if that happens,” he added.

East Jerusalem schoolkids act out murder of Palestinian by IDF soldier

Published time: June 02, 2015 10:26
Get short URL

A kindergarten in East Jerusalem has come up with a controversial play which showed a kid dressed as IDF soldier “killing” a Palestinian boy with a gun. The supporters of the “victim” then cover him in a Palestinian flag.

The play took place in a kindergarten at the Dar al-Hekma private school in Beit Hanina, a Palestinian neighborhood in East Jerusalem, the Arabic-language Himma News reported. The site posted a video of the performance but soon deleted it. It was later uploaded by the Jerusalem Post

READ MORE: Israeli serviceman shoots 5yo Palestinian in the face (GRAPHIC IMAGES)

In the video, a kindergarten pupil dressed as an IDF soldier takes another boy, apparently a Palestinian, from the crowd. He explains to him something and then “shoots” him at close range.
Then kids playing Palestinian supporters are seen running to the victim, grieving the murder of their fellow comrade. They later cover him with a Palestinian flag.

Girls in veils are also seen in the video. They are yelling that Palestinian prisoners in Israel are spending their best years in prison but will, with the help of God, kill all the collaborators and “occupiers.”

READ MORE: Netanyahu demands Palestinians stop anti-Israel ‘campaign’, return to negotiations ‘without preconditions’

“The collaborator is a traitor! He sold himself, his people, and his homeland!” the girls are heard saying, as cited by Jerusalem Post.

The paper says that the background music for the play is a song by Ferkat al-Walad, a band which is known for promoting jihadist values.

The Dar al-Hekma school, which apparently concentrates on Palestinian-Israeli relations, is now under investigation from the Education Ministry, which says that it views the incident “very seriously.”
The incident “will be reviewed at the district level. The office will operate in accordance with the findings of the review,” it said in a statement.

**Russians rule out universal polygamy, but some would allow exception for Muslims, poll shows**

Published time: June 02, 2015 10:47

An overwhelming majority of Russian citizens are against introducing polygamy all over the country but about one-third of the population said it was OK for Muslim peoples in the country.

According to a survey released this week by state polling agency VTSIOM, 87 percent of respondents said polygamy for ethnic Russians was unacceptable. Just 8 percent said that such a thing was possible and 2 percent said it was necessary, without specifying why.

When sociologists asked citizens if polygamy could be allowed among Muslims 3 percent said it was necessary and 30 percent said it was possible. 58 percent answered that polygamy was not appropriate for Russian citizens even if they follow Muslim faith and 9 percent found it difficult to answer the question.

The head of the VTSIOM agency, Valery Fyodorov, said in comments to the media that the negative attitude to polygamy was rooted in the general conservativeness of Russian society. “Slavic peoples cannot accept polygamy as for them this is a trait of an alien way of life,” he said. The researcher added that an overwhelming majority of Russian Muslims also do not approve of polygamy, but the share of those who do was naturally larger than the one among ethnic Russians.

According to research conducted by the independent agency Levada Center in 2013, 7 percent of Russian citizens described themselves as Muslims, compared to 80 percent who call themselves Orthodox Christians. Ten percent aid they belonged to no particular faith and 3 percent said they were atheists. The share of Buddhists, Jews and followers of other major religions was under 1 percent combined.

Other researchers assess the share of Muslims in Russia as up to 15 percent, but they usually count all “traditionally Muslim peoples” as Muslims.

Polygamy was considered a criminal offense in the USSR but was decriminalized in 1997 in modern Russia. Polygamy is still not allowed and having a spouse is listed as one of the reasons obstructing the registration of a marriage. Leaders of traditionally Muslim republics and regions have repeatedly suggested allowing polygamy over the past decade, but federal authorities have not responded to these appeals.

**Public ‘weary’ of war – Hammond on eve of anti-ISIS coalition conference**
The experience of intervention in Afghanistan and Iraq has caused a “change in public mood” that must be put aside to fight Islamic State, UK Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond has said.

Hammond made his comments in a speech at the Chatham House foreign policy think-tank, ahead of Tuesday’s meeting in Paris of foreign ministers from the Global Coalition against Islamic State (formerly ISIS/ISIL).

In a released copy of the speech, Hammond said of Britain’s role in the alliance: “As a leading member of the global coalition against ISIL, carrying out the second-largest number of air strikes in Iraq, we will be meeting in Paris with our coalition partners to assess the campaign that is under way to degrade and destroy ISIL – including reviewing the successes and the setbacks since our last meeting in January in London.”

He added: “This terrorist group’s deplorable actions have caused severe human suffering in Iraq and Syria. Today’s conference is an opportunity to reaffirm our support for Iraqi forces, and assess what more we can do as a coalition.”

“I will discuss with key partners the military campaign and the coalition’s efforts to cut off ISIS’s finances, reduce the flow of fighters, undermine their brutal ideology and stabilize areas liberated from ISIL,” Hammond said.

The foreign secretary also said he wanted to use the conference to see “what more we can do.”

As well as contributing the second-highest number of airstrikes, the UK already has around 100 British troops in the region in mentoring and training roles, mostly with Kurdish irregular forces.

On Sunday, it was reported that the UK’s National Security Council, composed of politicians, senior military officers and intelligence chiefs, is considering whether to increase the number of UK troops committed to training tasks.

Ahead of the meeting, which will include the 22 core nations of the 63-strong coalition known as the Small Group, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov aired his view of the intervention as a whole, branding it a US “mistake.”

In a live interview, Lavrov told Bloomberg: “Unfortunately, when the Americans announced this crusade against ISIL in Iraq and Syria, they never came to the Security Council, they just announced the coalition and they announced that the Iraqi government gave its consent.”

“I believe it was a mistake. I think that just an obsession with the personality of [Syrian President Bashar] Assad is not bringing any good to the common cause of fighting terrorism.”

The Russian foreign minister reiterated the country’s position on resolving the conflict in the region.

“We certainly believe that only a political settlement is possible for Syria, and we also believe that the Geneva communiqué three years ago is the basis [for this],” he said.
Cameron refuses to rule out ‘nuclear option’ of EU Brexit over human rights reform

Prime Minister David Cameron has not ruled out the so-called “nuclear option” of complete withdrawal from the European Convention on Human Rights if the Strasbourg court refuses to accept his proposed reforms.

The Guardian revealed that Cameron was still willing to consider the option, which was initially proposed by former Justice Secretary Chris Grayling, if the EU rejects British plans to veto European court decisions.

The newspaper claimed that Cameron is keeping the “nuclear option” in reserve, should he face backlash from the European convention during the Conservative push to scrap the Human Rights Act (HRA).

Britain’s abolition of the HRA, designed to make sure the UK’s court system is the “ultimate arbiter of human rights,” has been delayed until after the referendum on EU membership scheduled to take place by 2017.

‘Unstoppable clamor’

Cameron is already facing trouble from Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, who will say on Tuesday that Britain would face a “groundswell of anger” should Scotland be removed from the EU as part of a UK-wide referendum.

Speaking in Brussels, the Scottish National Party leader is expected to say Scotland would rise in an “unstoppable clamor” with a “strong backlash” if the decision was made, adding that “positive change” could be made within the existing agreement.

“Polls in Scotland consistently show strong support for EU membership,” Sturgeon will say, according to pre-released comments. That is why we will propose a “double lock,” meaning that exit from the European Union would only be possible if all UK nations agreed. That way Scotland couldn’t be forced out of the European Union against our will,” she will say.

Backbench rebellion

Cameron’s proposals to remove Britain from the European Convention has also been met with rebellion among his own backbench MPs.

Cameron has reportedly been told he does not have the requisite amount of support amongst his party to pass the changes. He believes that attempting to scrap the HRA at the same time as renegotiating a relationship with the EU would complicate both tasks.
London Mayor Boris Johnson has added his two cents to the debate, saying Cameron should be prepared to allow the country to create a “glorious” future, unencumbered by the European Union.

Speaking in parliament for the first time since his election as an MP in the May 7 general election, Johnson said that if EU negotiations fell through, Britain could continue to succeed if it made a free-trade agreement with the bloc.

“If you are going to go into a difficult international negotiation of this kind then you have got to be prepared to walk away if you don’t get the result that you want,” he said.

“If we don’t get the deal that is either in the interests of this country or of Europe, we should be prepared to strike out and forge an alternative future that could be just as glorious and just as prosperous with a free trading arrangement.”

“We now have a Tory majority government with a clear mandate to seek change and therefore a government in the most powerful position in our lifetimes to deliver reform and improvement in Europe. We can. We can win that argument by being relentlessly positive and of course by making it clear that what we are advocating is not simply in the interests of Britain but in the entire EU,” he added.

Ukraine plans to seize Russian foreign property to compensate for ‘lost’ Crimea

Kiev will nationalize Russian overseas property as compensation for the losses over Crimea’s reunification with Russia, Ukraine’s Deputy Minister of Justice Natalia Sevostyanova said. The decision is now up to the European Court of Human Rights.

Ukraine will be able to use this effective instrument if the European Court of Human Rights rules in favor of Kiev, Sevostyanova told “Channel 5,” Ukraine’s National News (UNN) reported on Tuesday.

“There will be a stage of satisfaction, when we’ll determine the amount by which the compensation will be directly paid to... The tool of property seizure is very effective abroad. Russia currently has a lot of such property in other countries,” Sevostyanova said.

More than 400 Ukrainian companies and 18 gas fields have been nationalized in Crimea, according to Ukraine’s Ministry of Justice.

Crimea rejoined Russia in March 2014 after a referendum where the majority of people voted for secession from Ukraine and for joining Russia. Ukraine then called the result of the referendum Russia’s “illegal
annexation” of the peninsula and filed its first lawsuit against Moscow to the European Court of Human Rights. Kiev estimated its losses at over 1 trillion hryvnia ($47 billion). Later, the country filed another lawsuit, related to the Donbass, over Moscow’s alleged involvement in the military conflict in southeastern Ukraine.

The reunion of Crimea and Sevastopol with Russia complies with international law, Russian Justice Minister Aleksandr Konovalov said last week.

Poor sleep could increase risk of developing Alzheimer's - study

Published time: June 02, 2015 12:30
Get short URL

It's no secret that sleepless nights can cause dark circles and irritability, but researchers now believe it could also lead to Alzheimer's disease. The lack of shut-eye may cause memory-robbing proteins to build up in the brain, a new study says.

Researchers at the University of California Berkeley have found that a deficit in deep non-REM (Rapid Eye Movement) sleep is associated with a higher risk of beta-amyloid protein build-up in the brain – the type of protein believed to attack the brain's long-term memory and trigger Alzheimer's disease.

Those higher levels of memory-robbing proteins then cause further sleep disruption – resulting in a vicious cycle.

“The more beta-amyloid you have in certain parts of your brain, the less deep sleep you get and, consequently, the worse your memory,” researcher and UC Berkeley neuroscience professor Matthew Walker said.

“Additionally, the less deep sleep you have, the less effective you are at clearing out this bad protein. It’s a vicious cycle.”

The study's lead author, Bryce Mander, said the study's data is “very suggestive that there's a causal link” between poor sleep and beta-amyloid protein.

“If we intervene to improve sleep, perhaps we can break that causal chain,” he said.

The team's findings were published Monday in the journal Nature Neuroscience.
The study consisted of 26 healthy adults aged 65 to 81, who showed no evidence of dementia or other neurodegenerative, sleep, or psychiatric disorders. They each received scans to measure the amount of beta-amyloid in their brains.

They were then asked to memorize 120 pairs of words, and were tested on how well they remembered a portion of them.

The participants then slept for eight hours, during which their brain waves were measured. The next morning, their brains were scanned as they recalled the remaining word pairs.

Researchers tracked activity in the hippocampus - the area where memories are temporarily stored before moving to the prefrontal cortex.

“The more you remember following a good night of sleep, the less you depend on the hippocampus and the more you use the cortex,” Walker said. “It's the equivalent of retrieving files from the safe storage site of your computer's hard drive, rather than the temporary storage of a USB stick.”

The results showed that those with the highest levels of beta-amyloid in the medial frontal cortex had the poorest quality of sleep and performed worst on the memory test the following morning. Some forgot more than half the information they had learned the day before.

But despite the researchers' conclusion that the bad protein and poor sleep lead to a “vicious cycle,” it remains unclear which one begins the cycle. This will be the foundation of further research, as scientists set out to track a new set of older adults over the next five years.

"This is a new pathway linking Alzheimer's disease to memory loss, and it's an important one because we can do something about it," Mander said.

Alzheimer's is the most common form of dementia, accounting for 60 percent to 80 percent of cases of the condition. Nearly 44 million people are currently living with the disease, according to Alzheimer's Disease International.

As the Baby Boomer generation continues to age, Alzheimer's is expected to become one of the world's fastest-growing and most debilitating public health concerns.

**Russia may lift food ban if West drops sanctions - Russian deputy PM**

Published time: June 02, 2015 13:14

Get short URL

The terms of Russia's food embargo depend on actions of Western partners, according to Russian Deputy Prime Minister Arkady Dvorkovich. Moscow may lift the ban introduced last year as a counter-measure if West lifts its anti-Russia sanctions, he said.
“The issue of lifting or extending the food embargo surely depends on what our partners who imposed sanctions will be doing. If sanctions are not lifted the embargo will not be lifted, surely we have no reasons to lift it,” Dvorkovich told journalists on Tuesday, according to RIA Novosti. He also added that there might be selective adjustments but no radical decisions are planned.

Moscow banned agricultural imports from sanctioning countries for one year in August. The embargo was introduced in response to sanctions imposed on Russia by the west over the Ukrainian crisis. Imports of beef, pork, poultry meat, fish, cheese, milk, vegetables and fruit from Australia, Canada, the EU, the US and Norway have been prohibited in Russia.

The one-year ban is also expected to boost domestic agriculture as Russia has started pursuing an import substitution policy.
Trendies Ready for Ultimate Wearable: “Chip Implanted in Their Skin Used for Payments”

The Mark of the Beast is more almost here than ever before.

As SHTF has previously noted, the likelihood of a forced RFID implant under the guise of a martial law pandemic emergency might be a little too obvious, as far as future tyranny goes.

Before it comes to that, it seems plenty of people will be voluntarily subjecting themselves to cattle-like status, by jumping at the chance to ditch the inconvenience of a wallet and get a “smarter” payment system that can be embedded under their skin.

Via the Business Insider:

A mind-boggling 25% of Australians say they are at least “slightly interested” at the prospect of having a chip implanted in their skin that could be used for payments, new research has found.
The research by credit card company Visa and the University of Technology Sydney found **Australians are open to the prospect of paying for items using wearable tech including smart watches, rings, glasses and even a connected car.**

"New technology like tokenisation makes it possible to turn any device into a secure vehicle for commerce. We’re already seeing smartphone payments take off in Australia. Things are about to get creepyier. The significance of the “mind-boggling 25% of Australians” is that the number is growing into a sizable portion of the population. **They are ready to accept it.**

If that continues, polls might soon show that 60% and 80% of the population are interested in these devices, and that a 25% or 33% of them are already using them.

Whereas firms like VeriChip met fierce resistance in introducing implantable RFID chips in the wake of 9/11, the furious trend to buy smart technology is making biometrics and data tracking seem passive and benign – even in the face of Edward Snowden’s revelations about mass surveillance through a partnership between the government and private industry.

To make matters more conspiratorial, this poll linking the popularity of wearables, implants and digital payments coincides with numerous calls in the financial sector to **ban cash and force people** to use electronic currency in order to make the enforcement of certain economic policies easier (and to **enrich banks with deposit fees, transaction fees and fines**, of course).

**SHTF** reported:

> The Federal Reserve bank and its owners, the largest banks on Wall Street, want badly to be able to charge you interest for the privilege of depositing your funds. The problem is getting you to stand for it.

[T]hey can bring interest rates to zero, but reducing them further below that is fraught with problems, the biggest of which is cash in the economy.

**Cash therefore gives people an easy and effective way of avoiding negative nominal rates.**

[ergo...]

**Abolish currency.**

**Tax currency.**

But of course... there are definitely some **drawbacks** to a cashless system.

Switching exclusively to electronic payments may create new security and operational risks.

**Abolishing currency would inevitably be associated with a loss of privacy and create risks of excessive intrusion by the government.**

Nevertheless, it is coming down the pipe – and privacy (and the protections of the 4th Amendment), as we have learned well, doesn’t mean much to those controlling the system.

Will forced RFID implants on a cashless control grid inside an electronic prison planet really be our future?

There are many who will draw a firm red line against it, who will even die before they take it.

But there are others who will line up for it the same way they have lined up for any other release of the latest techno gadget.

As with any other new technology, acceptance by the masses depends upon the early adopters, who typically pay premium prices to get consumer electronic systems before they become the standard, or before most people on the block have them. These are the trendies, who help decide the fate of dualing formats like BetaMax and VHS, HD DVD or BluRay, or iPhone or Android, and set the tone for consumer attitudes, closely monitored by the system.

For something ominous and apocalyptic like the RFID chip – and the soon-to-be dominate consumer field of smart tech and wearables – it is important for the system to gauge what the public will accept, and just how many care about the implications for privacy, etc. compared with all those willing to embrace the conveniences at any social cost.

Will you stand for it?

“**And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the**
slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand or on their forehead, and he provides that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name....”  

-Revelation 13:16-17

Rule By The Corporations

TTIP: The Corporate Empowerment Act

The Transatlantic and Transpacific Trade and Investment Partnerships have nothing to do with free trade. “Free trade” is used as a disguise to hide the power these agreements give to corporations to use law suits to overturn sovereign laws of nations that regulate pollution, food safety, GMOs, and minimum wages.

The first thing to understand is that these so-called “partnerships” are not laws written by Congress. The US Constitution gives Congress the authority to legislate, but these laws are being written without the participation of Congress. The laws are being written by corporations solely in the interest of their power and profit. The office of US Trade Representative was created in order to permit corporations to write law that serves only their interests. This fraud on the Constitution and the people is covered up by calling trade laws “treaties.”

Indeed, Congress is not even permitted to know what is in the laws and is limited to the ability to accept or refuse what is handed to Congress for a vote. Normally, Congress accepts, because “so much work has been done” and “free trade will benefit us all.”

The presstitutes have diverted attention from the content of the laws to “fast track.” When Congress votes “fast track,” it means Congress accepts that corporations can write the trade laws without the participation of Congress. Even criticisms of the “partnerships” are a smoke screen. Countries accused of slave labor could be excluded but won’t be. Super patriots complain that US sovereignty is violated by “foreign interests,” but US sovereignty is violated by US corporations. Others claim yet more US jobs will be offshored. In actual fact, the “partnerships” are unnecessary to advance the loss of American jobs as there is nothing that inhibits jobs offshoring now.

What the “partnerships” do is to make private corporations immune to the laws of sovereign countries on the grounds that laws of countries adversely impact corporate profits and constitute “restraint of trade.”

For example, under the Transatlantic Partnership, French laws against GMOs would be overturned as “restraints on trade” by law suits filed by Monsanto.

Countries that require testing of imported food, such as pork for trichnosis, and fumigation would be subject to lawsuits from corporations, because these regulations increase the cost of imports.

Countries that do not provide monopoly protection for brand name pharmaceuticals and chemical products, and allow generics in their place, can be sued for damages by corporations.

Obama himself has no input into the process. Here is what is going on: The Trade Representative is a
corporate stooge. He serves the private corporations and will go on to a million dollar annual salary. The corporations have bribed the political leaders in every country to sign away their sovereignty and the general welfare of their people to private corporations. Corporations have paid US senators large sums for transferring Congress’ law-making powers to corporations. [http://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/may/27/corporations-paid-us-senators-fast-track-tpp](http://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/may/27/corporations-paid-us-senators-fast-track-tpp) When these “partnerships” pass, no country that signed will have any legislative authority to legislate or enforce any law that any corporation regards as inimical to its bottom line.

Yes, the great promiser of change is bringing change. He is turning Asia, Europe, and the US over to rule by the corporations.

Only those who have sold their integrity for money sign these agreements. Apparently Merkel, a Washington vassal, is one of them. [http://sputniknews.com/politics/20150530/1022740004.html](http://sputniknews.com/politics/20150530/1022740004.html)

According to news reports, both of France’s main political parties have sold out to the corporations, but not Marine Le Pen’s National Front Party. In the last EU elections, the dissident parties, such as Le Pen and Farage’s, prevailed over the traditional parties, but the dissidents are yet to prevail in their own countries.

Marine Le Pen objects to the secrecy of the agreements that establishes corporate rule. As Europe’s only leader, she speaks:

> “It is vital that the French people know about TTIP’s content and its motivations in order to be able to fight it. Because our fellow countrymen must have the choice of their future, because they should impose a model for society that suits them, and not one forced by multinational companies eager for profits, Brussels technocrats bought by the lobbies, and politicians from the UMP [party of former president Nicolas Sarkozy] who are subservient to these technocrats.”

It is vital that the American public also know, but not even Congress is permitted to know.

How does it work, this “freedom and democracy” that we Americans allegedly have, when neither the people nor their elected representatives are permitted to participate in the making of laws that enable private corporations to negate the law-making functions of governments and place corporate profit above the general welfare?

**Hacked Emails Expose George Soros As Ukraine Puppet-Master**

The hacktivists have published three files online

*by Zero Hedge* | June 2, 2015

Just days after George Soros warned that World War 3 was imminent unless Washington backed down to China on IMF currency basket inclusion, the hacker collective CyberBerkut has exposed the billionaire as the real puppet-master behind the scenes in Ukraine. In 3 stunning documents, allegedly hacked from email correspondence between the hedge fund manager and Ukraine President Poroshenko, *Soros lays out “A short and medium term comprehensive strategy for the new Ukraine,”* expresses his confidence that the US should provide Ukraine with lethal military assistance, “with same level of sophistication
in defense weapons to match the level of opposing force,” and finally explained Poroshenko’s “first priority must be to regain control of financial markets,” which he assures the President could be helped by The Fed adding “I am ready to call Jack Lew of the US Treasury to sound him out about the swap agreement.”

The hacking group CyberBerkut claims it has penetrated Ukraine’s presidential administration website and obtained correspondence between Soros and Ukraine’s President Petro Poroshenko. It has subsequently posted all the intercepted pdfs online at the following location. More details as RT earlier reported:

The hacktivists have published three files online, which include a draft of “A short and medium term comprehensive strategy for the new Ukraine” by Soros (dated March 12, 2015); an undated paper on military assistance to Kiev; and the billionaire’s letter to Poroshenko and Ukraine’s Prime Minister Arseny Yatsenyuk, dated December 23, 2014.

According to the leaked documents, Soros supports Barack Obama’s stance on Ukraine, but believes that the US should do even more.

He is confident that the US should provide Ukraine with lethal military assistance, “with same level of sophistication in defense weapons to match the level of opposing force.”

“In poker terms, the US will ‘meet, but not raise,’” the 84-year-old businessman explained, supposedly signing one of the letters as “a self-appointed advocate of the new Ukraine.”

The Western backers want Kiev to “restore the fighting capacity of Ukraine without violating the Minsk agreement,” Soros wrote.

Among other things, the leaked documents claim that the Ukrainian authorities were also asked to “restore some semblance of currency stability and functioning banking system” and “maintain unity among the various branches of government” in order to receive assistance from foreign allies.

Soros believes that it’s up to the EU to support Kiev with financial aid, stressing that “Europe must reach a new framework agreement that will allow the European Commission to allocate up to $1 billion annually to Ukraine.”

As for the current state of economy, the billionaire wrote that former Chilean finance minister, Andres Velasco, after visiting Ukraine on his request, returned with “a dire view of financial situation.”

“The new Ukraine is literally on the verge of collapse” due to the national bank’s lack of hard currency reserves, Soros warned Poroshenko.

The correspondence shows that the billionaire has been in constant touch with the authorities in Kiev and consulting them.

Digging into the details of the documents, we find one intriguing snippet:

As you know, I asked Andrés Velasco, a prominent economist who was Chile’s very successful minister of finance from 2006-2010 to visit Kyiv where he met the Prime Minister; the President was in Warsaw at the time. Velasco came back with a dire view of the financial situation. The National Bank of Ukraine has practically no hard currency reserves. That means that the hryvnia has no anchor. If a panic occurred and the currency collapsed as it did in Russia, the National Bank could not stabilize the exchange rate even if only temporarily as Russia did by injecting $90 billion.

Your first priority must be to regain control over the financial markets—bank deposits and exchange rates. Unless you do, you will have no way to embark on deeper reforms. I believe the situation could be stabilized by getting the European Council to make a commitment in principle that they will pull together the new $15 billion package that the IMF requires in order to release the next tranche of its original package at the end of January 2015. Based on that commitment the Federal Reserve could be asked to extend a $15 billion three months swap arrangement with the National Bank of Ukraine. That would reassure the markets and avoid a panic.

I am ready to call Jack Lew of the US Treasury to sound him out about the swap agreement.

One wonders what other matters of national importance involve George Soros getting on the line with the US Treasury Secretary to arrange virtually unlimited funds courtesy of the US Federal Reserve just to promote one person’s ulterior agenda?
And just like that, conspiracy Theory becomes Conspiracy Fact once again.

The full documents are below:

Ironically, the first document laying out the “short and medium-term comprehensive strategy for new Ukraine” and signed by George Soros, “a self-appointed advocate of the New Ukraine”, was ironically created by Tamiko Bolton, the 40 year old who became Soros’ third wife several years ago.

**Soros Ukraine Strategy**

The next letter, one directly sent by Soros to Ukraine’s president Poroshenko and prime minister Yatseniuk, comes courtesy of a pdf created by Douglas York, Soros’ personal assistant.

**Priority To Fix Financial Markets**

Finally, a letter (authored by Yasin Yaqubie of the International Crisis Group based on its pdf metadata properties), which lobbies the US “to do more.”

**Ukraine Letter to Potus - Lethal Aid**

To sum up: Soros is basically lobbying on behalf of Ukraine, pushing for cash and guns, to oppose Putin in every way possible.

If genuine, and based on their meta data, they appear to be just that, these letters show how Soros is trying to weasel around the Minsk agreements (for instance, how to train Ukrainian soldiers without having a visible NATO presence in Ukraine). The documents link up Nuland with Soros, and clears up who is truly pulling the strings of the US State Department.

Finally, while the documents don’t mention what Soros has in store for Ukraine, one can use their imagination.