

Bill retains U.S. eCar tax credit

Washington

A compromise Republican tax bill released late Friday does not eliminate a \$7,500 electric vehicle tax credit as Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives had previously proposed. The electric vehicle tax credit starts to phase out after a manufacturer sells 200,000 plug-in vehicles. After that point, the credit is still available for at least three more months before phasing out.



Defector in S Korean military hospital

Seoul

The North Korean soldier, 24-year-old Oh Chong Song, was transferred to the military hospital on Friday from a trauma center at Ajou University Hospital south of Seoul, where his treatment for gunshot wounds and pre-existing conditions included two major operations. The official declined to provide a specific schedule for Oh's questioning.



North Korea must earn its way back to the table. The pressure campaign must and will continue until denuclearization is achieved,"

-Rex Tillerson,

U.S. Secretary of State



MiG-15 celebrates 70 years of flight

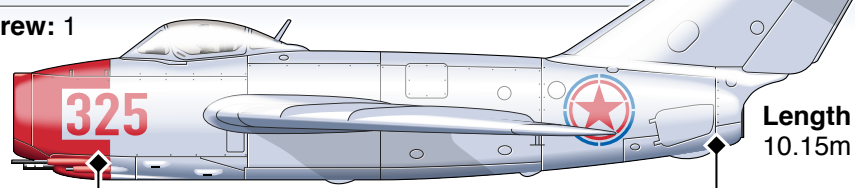
The MiG-15, the Soviet jet that stunned the West during the Korean War, remains in service 70 years after it first took to the skies

MIKOYAN-GUREVICH MIG-15 (NATO codename "Fagot")

Maximum speed: 1,078km/h (Mach 0.87) at sea level

Range: 805km **Service ceiling:** 15,545m

Crew: 1



Length
10.15m

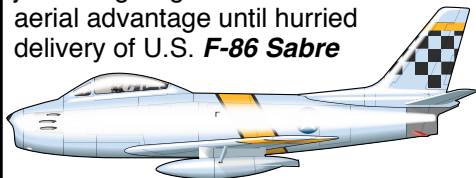
Armament: 1 x 37mm and 2 x 23mm cannons, plus rockets or bombs

Engine: VK-1 turbojet, 26.7kN thrust (copy of British Rolls-Royce Nene)

■ **Dec 30, 1947:** First flight

■ **1949:** Enters service – first Soviet fighter with ejection seat, pressurised cockpit and swept wing

■ **1950:** Makes Korean War debut, quickly proving superior to Western jets and giving communist forces aerial advantage until hurried delivery of U.S. **F-86 Sabre**



■ **1953:** West obtains intact MiG-15 with defection of North Korean pilot, **No Kum-Sok**. At end of war, U.S. Air Force claims 10 to 1 kill ratio for MiG-Sabre battles*

■ **1956:** MiG-15s flown by Egyptian Air Force during Suez Crisis

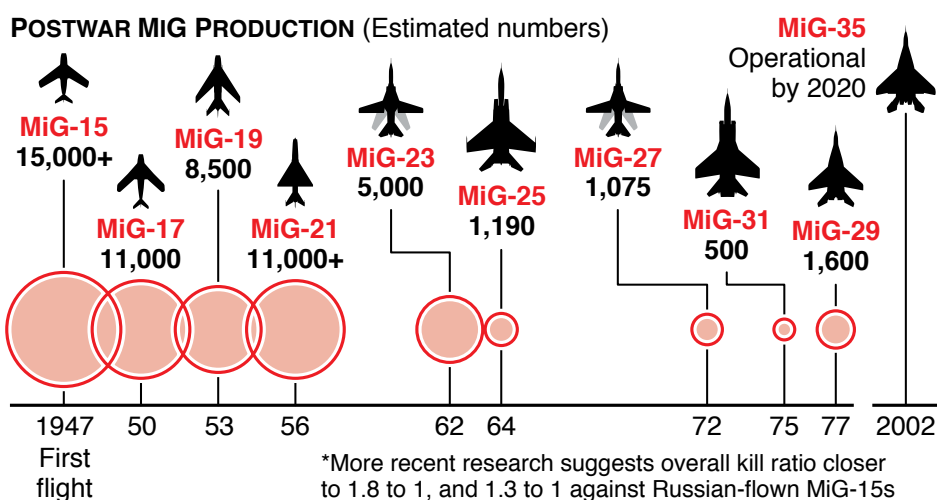
■ **1950s:** Chinese MiG-15s engage Republic of China and U.S. aircraft in combat over Taiwan Strait

■ **1960s:** Basic MiG design proves capable again during Vietnam War, in form of more advanced **MiG-17**

■ **1970s-present:** Two-seat **UTI** trainer version continues to serve air forces of many countries into 1990s. North Korea remains sole operator



POSTWAR MIG PRODUCTION (Estimated numbers)



Sources: Airforce Technology, Global Security, RAND Corporation, Smithsonian Institution

Picture: Twitter

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Al Masri detained in Saudi



Sabih Al Masri (file)

Amman

Sabih al-Masri, Jordan's most influential businessman and the chairman of its largest lender Arab Bank, was detained in Saudi Arabia for questioning after a business trip to Riyadh, family sources and friends said yesterday.

A Saudi citizen of Palestinian origin, Masri was detained last Tuesday hours before he was planning to leave after he chaired meetings of companies he owns, according to the sources.

He is the founder of Saudi Astra Group, which has wide interests in diversified industries ranging from agro-industry to telecommunications, construction and mining across the region.

"Masri was heading to the airport and they told him to stay where you are and they picked him up," said a source familiar with the matter who asked not to be named.

He canceled a dinner in Amman on Wednesday that he had invited board members of Arab Bank and business associates to attend

on his return.

Masri could not be reached for comment. The Saudi authorities did not respond to requests for comment.

"He has been answering questions about his business and partners," said a source familiar with the matter who did not elaborate nor confirm he was held.

Masri, who comes from a prominent merchant family from Nablus in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, amassed a fortune from partnering with influential Saudis in a major catering business to supply troops during the U.S.-led military operation to retake Kuwait from Iraq in the 1991 Gulf War.

He was elected chairman of Arab Bank in 2012 after the resignation of Abdel Hamid Shoman whose family had founded the bank in Jerusalem in 1930.

The bank, which has earned a reputation of resilience in the face of political upheaval, played a prominent role in supporting former Palestinian leader, the late Yasser Arafat during past Middle East turmoil.

Arab Bank, which operates

in 30 countries and five continents, has an extensive network in Palestinian territories where it is the largest bank. It also owns 40 percent of Saudi Arabia's Arab National Bank ANB.

Masri led consortium of Arab and Jordanian investors who bought a 20 percent stake in Arab Bank Group from Lebanon's Hariri family business empire for \$1.12 billion last February.

He was also instrumental in agreeing in 2015 to settle litigation brought by hundreds of Americans who accused Arab Bank of providing financial services in the West Bank that facilitated militant attacks in Israel.

Masri is also the leading investor in the Palestinian territories with a large stake in Paltel, a public shareholding company, which is the largest private sector firm in the West Bank.

Masri's family ranks among the wealthiest in the Palestinian territories, with majority holdings in real estate, hotels and telecommunications firms set up after a self-rule agreement with Israel in 1993. (Reuters)

May wins Brexit boost

London

After a turbulent few months when some predicted she

could be gone by Christmas, British Prime Minister Theresa May finally has some good news with a deal on Brexit -- but any reprieve will likely be short-lived.

The EU's decision Friday to move to the next stage of negotiations with Britain was a much-needed success for May, whose leadership has

been dogged by doubts since a disastrous snap election in June.

The approval followed an 11th-hour deal struck last week by the prime minister and European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker on the terms of the divorce, including Britain's financial settlement. (AFP)



Theresa May