

Russia names Putin's new 'super weapons'



Moscow

Russia has unveiled the names for a new generation of nuclear-powered missiles touted by President Vladimir Putin as invincible after more than seven million people took part in a public vote organised by the Russian military.

The names chosen include 'Peresvet,' after a medieval warrior monk, for a laser and 'Burevestnik,' after a seabird, for a cruise missile.

The arms systems, which Putin revealed in a state-of-the-nation speech this month, include a nuclear-powered cruise missile, an underwater nuclear-powered drone, and a laser weapon.

The culmination of the "name that weapon" vote comes amid fears in both Russia and the West about a new arms race, something Putin and U.S. President Donald Trump have said they don't want, and after

Putin won a landslide re-election victory.

Russia's Ministry of Defence asked the public to name the weapons systems in an online vote, something it has never done before, and unveiled the results late on Thursday on state TV.

After the results were announced, Deputy Defence Minister Yuri Borisov explained on state TV, to ripples of applause, what the new weapons were capable of.

Warrior Monk, Greek God, Seabird

The defence ministry said Russians had voted to name the new military laser 'Peresvet' after a medieval warrior monk, Alexander Peresvet, who took part in a 14th century battle against the Mongols. Peresvet is revered by some clerics in the Russian Orthodox Church, whose influence has grown under Putin.

The winning name for the underwater nuclear drone was more conventional - 'Poseidon' after the Greek god of the sea, drawing criticism from some Russians who complained the name was too foreign.

The new nuclear-powered cruise missile, which Putin has said could hit almost any point in the world and evade a U.S.-built missile shield, will be called 'Burevestnik,' Russian for the Storm Petrel bird, the defence ministry said.

The Storm Petrel is a seabird whose presence mariners believe foretells bad weather.

Among the suggested names for the weapons systems that did not make the final cut: 'Stalin,' after the Soviet dictator, and 'Palmyra,' after the Syrian city which Russian forces helped Syrian President Bashar al-Assad take back from Islamic State. (Reuters)

Egypt opens Gaza border for two days

Gaza City

Egypt opened its largely sealed border with the Gaza Strip on Friday for two days, Palestinian authorities said.

In just the third such opening this year, the crossing between the Palestinian enclave and Egypt's

Sinai region will be open Friday and Saturday for humanitarian cases, the Palestinian embassy in Cairo said.

Both of the two previous border openings this year were cut short due to the security situation in Sinai.

Greek authorities seize 11 kg of heroin at airport

Athens

Greek authorities have seized 11 kg of heroin hidden in the luggage of a British citizen at Athens International Airport, police said on Friday.

Police said the 38-year-old man, who flew to Athens from the Pakistani city of Lahore via Doha, is part of a broader heroin ring trafficking drugs from Asian countries to Greece. He was arrested on Wednesday.

Authorities also confiscated



A photo provided by the Greek police shows 11 kilos of heroin hidden in the suitcase of a British citizen

300 euros, 84,000 Pakistani rupees (\$730) and two cellphones.

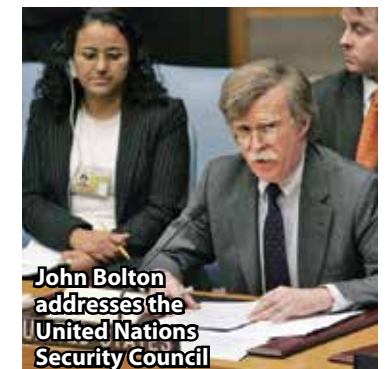
Palestinians slam Trump security advisor Bolton

Ramallah

A senior Palestinian official on Friday slammed US President Donald Trump's choice of hardliner John Bolton as his new national security advisor.

Trump on Thursday announced that Bolton, an arch-hawk and former United Nations ambassador, would replace army general HR McMaster.

"This man has a long history of hostility to Palestinians, dating to when he was at the United Nations, where he was protecting Israeli immunity," senior Palestinian official Hanan Ashrawi

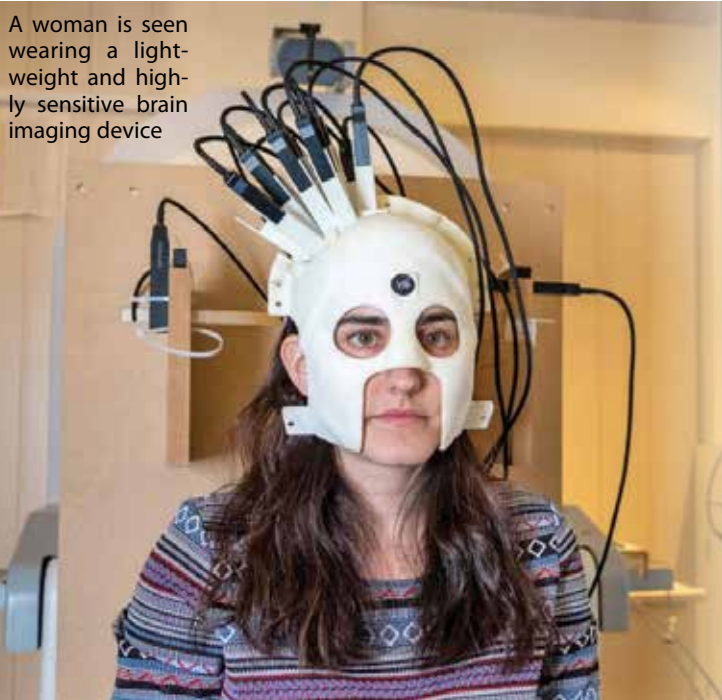


John Bolton addresses the United Nations Security Council

said, referring to US vetoes of UN resolutions targeting Israel. (AFP)

Scientists develop brain scanner in a helmet

A woman is seen wearing a lightweight and highly sensitive brain imaging device



British scientists have developed a lightweight and highly sensitive brain imaging device that can be worn as a helmet, allowing the patient to move about naturally

Flexible

The new scanner showed that patients were able to stretch, nod and even drink tea or play table tennis while their brain activity was being recorded.

Better than Fixed scanners

The new scanner would improve research and treatment for patients who can't use traditional fixed MEG scanners, such as children with epilepsy, babies, or patients with disorders like Parkinson's disease.



Brain imaging device are seen in this undated handout photograph

Pros

Current magnetoencephalography (MEG) scanners weigh as much as half a tonne, partly because the sensors need to be kept very cold - at minus 269 degrees Celsius.

The helmet scanners are lightweight, work at room temperature and can be placed directly onto scalp.

“This has the potential to revolutionize the brain imaging field, and transform the scientific and clinical questions that can be addressed with human brain imaging,” said Gareth Barnes, a professor at the Wellcome Trust Centre for Human Neuroimaging at University College London, who co-led the work.