

world

Nine deer dead in Japan after eating plastic: wildlife group



Tourists are forbidden from feeding the deer any food other than crackers

Tokyo

Nine deer have died after swallowing plastic bags in Japan's Nara Park, a wildlife group said yesterday, warning that a surge in tourism may be to blame.

The Nara Deer Preservation Foundation said that masses of plastic bags and snack packets were found in the stomachs of the deer which died between March and June this year.

"The biggest litter found in one of the nine amounted to 4.3 kilograms (9.5 pounds)," foundation official Yoshitaka Ashimura said.

"We were surprised. It was so big," he said.

The picturesque park in Japan's ancient capital is home to more than 1,000 deer, which can even be found roaming the streets in search of spe-

cial tasty crackers offered by tourists.

Tourists are forbidden from feeding the deer any food besides the crackers but Ashimura said some visitors offer the animals other types of snacks.

"The deer probably think that the snacks and the plastic packs covering them are both food," he said, adding the animals normally eat grass and acorns.

"They might also eat plastic bags dropped on the ground," he said, adding that he believed such cases had increased recently "due to the growing number of visitors".

"The only way to prevent this is to remove all the garbage."

The sprawling park that also includes wooden temples and shrines built centuries ago is a major tourist attraction.

Turkey vows to keep drilling off Cyprus despite warnings



Turkey last month sent a second ship called Yavuz to search for oil and gas in the eastern Mediterranean

Ankara

Turkey yesterday vowed to continue drilling activities off Cyprus despite tensions with the European Union, which has called on Ankara to cease its "illegal" activities.

The discovery of huge gas reserves in the eastern Mediterranean has sparked a dispute between EU member Cyprus and Turkey, which last month sent a second ship, the Yavuz, to search for oil and gas in the region.

"The drilling activities of our ship Yavuz are based on legal and legitimate grounds," the Turkish foreign ministry said in a statement.

"We reject the statement made by Greek Foreign Ministry and EU officials that deem our country's activities illegal," it added.

In May, Ankara sent the ship

Fatih into Cyprus' exclusive economic zone to begin drilling there, while the Yavuz was deployed last month to search for oil and gas to the east.

The European Union said in a statement on Monday that a second attempt by Turkey to drill for oil and gas was an "unacceptable escalation", having already warned Ankara to stop its "illegal" activities or face sanctions.

The European Council said it was considering "appropriate measures" and would respond "in full solidarity with Cyprus" in light of the second exploration.

The United States and Egypt also joined a chorus of criticism this week, with Washington urging Turkish authorities "to halt these operations".

Ankara says its actions abide by international law and that it is drilling inside its continental shelf.

Britain's US ambassador resigns after Trump spat

London, United Kingdom

Britain's ambassador to Washington Kim Darroch said yesterday he was resigning after drawing Donald Trump's ire for calling the US president "inept" in leaked confidential cables to London.

Darroch said in a resignation letter to the Foreign Office that the scandal made it "impossible" for him to continue representing British interests in the United States.

Trump has said his administration would no longer "deal" with Darroch.

"Since the leak of official documents from this Embassy there has been a great deal of speculation surrounding my position and the duration of my remaining term as ambassador," Darroch wrote.

"I want to put an end to that speculation. The current situation is making it impossible for me to carry out my role as I would like," he said.

"I believe in the current circumstances the responsible course is to allow the appointment of a new ambassador."

Prime Minister Theresa May told parliament moments after Darroch's resignation that the criticism he faced was "beyond unfair and wrong".

"I think he's given honourable and good service and he should be thanked for it," she said.



British Ambassador to the US Kim Darroch speaks during an annual dinner of the National Economists Club at the British Embassy in Washington, DC

“Since the leak of official documents from this Embassy there has been a great deal of speculation surrounding my position and the duration of my remaining term as ambassador”

DARROCH

The Mail on Sunday's publication of Darroch's cables set off a political firestorm in London and saw Trump launch two successive days of Twitter attacks against the envoy and May.

One of the cables called the Trump administration "uniquely dysfunctional" and another characterised the US leader as "inept" and "insecure".

Trump tweeted Monday that Darroch "is not liked or well thought of within the U.S. We will no longer deal with him." He also welcomed the "good

news" that Prime Minister Theresa May was stepping down in two weeks.

The US leader followed that up on Tuesday by calling "wacky Ambassador" Darroch "a very stupid guy".

The scandal saw Darroch taken off the guest list of a dinner attended by Trump on Monday.

He also missed visiting UK Trade Minister Liam Fox's talks in Washington on Tuesday with the president's adviser and daughter Ivanka Trump.

Iraqi gets life in jail for teen rape-murder

Wiesbaden | Germany

An Iraqi man was sentenced to life in jail by a German court yesterday for the rape and murder of a teenage girl that fuelled far-right protests against a mass influx of migrants.

The Alternative for Germany (AfD) party and other far-right groups have seized on the brutal killing of 14-year-old Susanna Maria Feldman in their campaign against Chancellor Angela Merkel's asylum policy.

The accused, rejected asylum seeker Ali Bashar, 22, was convicted of the killing and handed the maximum sentence of life in prison by the court in Wiesbaden, the city where the murder took place in May last year.

The judge, Juergen Bonk, also found the crime to be of exceptional severity, meaning that Bashar will not be granted parole after 15 years as is usually the case in Germany.

Bashar committed a "cold-blooded murder" and showed "neither remorse nor empathy," said the presiding judge, adding that during his trial the defendant had "voiced no sincere word of regret".

The Iraqi man battered, raped



Prosecutors said that Bashar battered, raped and strangled the schoolgirl to death in a wooded area



Bashar later confessed to the killing but denied the rape

and strangled the schoolgirl to death in a wooded area near railway tracks on May 23. The court heard he then sent

false messages from Susanna's smartphone indicating she had left for an impromptu trip to Paris.

Her body was only found on June 6 in a shallow grave covered with leaves, twigs and soil.

By this time, Bashar and his family had left Germany and returned to Arbil in northern Iraq.

The accused was however arrested by Kurdish security forces and, even though Berlin and Baghdad have no formal extradition treaty, taken back to Germany.

Incapable of empathy

Federal police chief Dieter Romann personally joined the controversial operation, as newspaper front pages showed pictures of commandos escorting a heavily restrained Bashar off an aircraft.

Bashar later confessed the killing but denied the rape, claiming that he and the girl had consensual sex before she fell, got angry and threatened to call the police.

In a separate trial, Bashar is accused of twice raping an 11-year-old girl, who was believed to have also been sexually assaulted by an Afghan youth.