



One third of IS weapons made in EU

Beirut

Nearly a third of all weapons used by Isil on the battlefield were manufactured in the European Union, according to the most thorough investigation yet into how the jihadist group acquired its vast arsenal.

Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Isil) militants relied heavily on guns and ammunition produced by Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria and Germany, a report released yesterday by Conflict Armament Research (CAR), an international organisation that documents weapons trafficking in war zones, revealed.

The only bigger producer of weapons used by the group was found to be China.

The revelation sits uncomfortably with the EU's effort to degrade the group's military capacity, CAR researchers say, and highlights how easily weapons can end up in the wrong hands in "messy" conflicts.

Their 200-page report provides the most comprehensive, verified study of the group's weapons to date, presenting an analysis of more than 40,000 items recovered from Isil forces over three years.

It concludes that international weapon supplies intended for rebel factions in the Syrian conflict ended up with Isil, "significantly augmenting the quantity and quality of weapons in its arsenal".

In the early phase of the conflict, most of the group's cache had been captured from Iraqi and Syrian forces. But from the end of 2015, CAR started to see another significant source - factories in Eastern Europe.

The weapons and ammunition was being manufactured in Europe, sold to the US and Saudi Arabia, and transported across the Turkish border into Syria.

They said supplies of weapons by the Washington

and Riyadh to Syrian opposition groups indirectly allowed Isil to obtain a substantial amount of sophisticated anti-armour ammunition and anti-tank guided weapons (ATGW), which have then been used against coalition forces they support.

"Time and again, states that seek to accomplish short-term political objectives supply weapons to groups over whom they exert little to no control," said James Bevan, the executive director of CAR. "These weapons often gravitate to the most organised and effective rebel and insurgent forces."

In one case CAR tracked a number of advanced ATGWs.

Using their production numbers they discovered they were manufactured in the EU, sold to the US, which supplied them to an opposition group in Syria, where they were then transferred to Isil fighters in Iraq. (telegraph.co.uk)

Airbus A380 draws giant Christmas tree over Germany

Hamburg

One bold and inspired pilot brought seasonal joy to the world by drawing a giant Christmas tree in the sky on a flight path over Germany while doing a test flight of an Airbus A380 aircraft for Emirates.

The plane set off from Hamburg's Finkenwerder airport at 12.47pm local time and is estimated to arrive back into the same airport at 4.35pm, according to Flightradar.

However, instead of simply doing a few laps, the pilot took the decision to use the flight path to introduce a



little more festive cheer. The tree even features baubles by

means of regular loops in the flying pattern in between each branch.

The plane cruised at an average 41,000ft while completing the masterpiece, which went south as far as Stuttgart for the tree's trunk before turning northwards towards Hamburg again.

It's a more family-friendly piece of aircraft art than the recent flight path that landed a US navy fighter crew in hot water. The crew was grounded after they used their advanced fighter jet to draw a penis in the sky. (thesun)

#PollToday



Do you think the weapons intended for Syrian opposition groups ended up with Isil as Conflict Armament Research's report says?

Yes No Can't Say



"It is very clear that the Security Council resolutions must be fully implemented first of all by North Korea but by all other countries whose role is crucial to ... achieve the result we all aim at, which is the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula," Antonio Guterres

United Nations Secretary-General

Rest in sight

Memorial for Grenfell tower fire victims



A grand memorial service was held at St. Paul's Cathedral in London for the victims of the Grenfell tower fire that claimed 71 lives on June 14.

6,700 Rohingya killed in a month

More than 6,700 Rohingya Muslims were killed in the first month of a crackdown that started in August in Myanmar's Rakhine state

Happiness minister sought over murder

Indian police have launched a manhunt for the country's only "happiness minister" after the state politician vanished when a court ordered his arrest over an alleged murder.

EU could 'scrap refugee quota scheme'

The EU could scrap a divisive scheme that compels member states to accept quotas of refugees, one of the bloc's most senior leaders will say this week.

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13th human foot washes ashore in British Columbia

Vancouver

Canadian officials are investigating after a human foot washed up on the shores of British Columbia - marking the 13th time in the past decade that tides have carried a sneaker-clad foot on to its coastline.

The grisly find was made earlier this month by Mike Johns as he walked his dog along the scenic southern coast of Vancouver Island, near Jordan River. After a large object tangled in sea kelp captured the dog's attention, Johns leaned in for a closer look.

What he saw was a fibula and tibia attached to a left foot, all of it encased in a white sock and black Velcro shoe. "By the looks of it, the foot was totally intact. The ankle bone still worked and the bones were attached at the base of the knee," Johns told CTV News.

After calling police, Johns carried the foot home for safekeeping, worried that high tides might wash the foot back into the ocean



A human foot, still in a sneaker, that was found on Vancouver Island by Mike Johns

or that it would attract the attention of wildlife in the area.

The find was the latest in a series that has sparked speculation around the world. Since 2007, another dozen feet have washed up in British Columbia, each of them clad in running shoes. (theguardian)

A good ol' chuckle



A delighted dormouse is crowned winner of the Comedy Wildlife Awards. This adorable snap, which shows a cute dormouse climbing up a yarrow flower in the Italian mountains, won the Creatures of the Land category. The photographer, Andrea Zampatti, 32, from Monticelli in Italy, took the photo while hiking on Mount Guglielmo.

Boy hangs himself after marrying brother's widow

New Delhi

A 15-year-old boy has taken his own life after his family forced him to marry his dead brother's widow.

High school student Mahadev Das committed suicide just hours after marrying Ruby Devi, who at 25 was ten years his senior, in Gaya in Bihar state.

Mahadev had succumbed to pressure from his family to marry his sister-in-law following the death of his brother in 2013.

His father Chandreshwar Das, 80, told Hindustan

Times that the teenager had been unwilling to marry a woman who 'used to care him like her own child.'

He explained to the newspaper that he had received financial compensation when Mahadev's older brother died in 2013, but as it had left Devi widowed, her family had demanded the full sum as a form of dowry repayment.

"They kept on exerting pressure on me to either give the money or marry my son with Ruby," Das added. (MailOnline)