

Scotland chosen as site for first British space port

London | United Kingdom

The UK Space agency said Sunday that it had chosen a peninsula on Scotland’s north coast as the site of the country’s first space port.

“Scotland is the best place in the UK to reach in-demand satellite orbits with vertically launched rockets,” the agency said in a statement.

According to the head of the agency, Graham Turnock, the new space port will “help kick-start an exciting new era for the UK space industry”.

Huge drugs haul intercepted in Bali

Denpasar | Indonesia

Bali police said yesterday they had intercepted a huge haul of Australia-bound cold relief tablets that contained a key ingredient for making illicit drugs.

Some 600,000 pseudoephedrine tablets being sent from South Korea to Australia were found during a stopover on the Indonesian resort island, they said.

The bust happened in January but was announced Monday.

Bottles of the pills, weighing nearly 140 kilograms (310 pounds) in total, were labelled as health food, authorities said.

Thailand retrieves final body in boating disaster

Phuket | Thailand

Thailand has recovered the last body after a boating accident killed dozens of Chinese tourists this month off the southern resort island of Phuket.

The Phoenix was carrying 105 people -- mostly Chinese -- when it sank on the way back from a popular snorkeling spot on July 5.

Divers and the navy spent more than a week retrieving bodies, some from inside the boat, as outraged relatives waited for news.

Italy’s Salvini calls to welcome Russia

Moscow | Russia

Italy’s far-right Interior Minister Matteo Salvini said during a visit to Moscow on Monday that he wanted to see EU sanctions against Russia dropped “by the end of the year”.

Salvini said he would use any means possible to convince European partners to scrap sanctions brought in over Russia’s annexation of Crimea in 2014 and subsequent activity in the east of Ukraine.

Salvini also said Russia’s return to the G7 would be “absolutely legitimate”.

The beast challenger!

● Little is known about the features of the Senat

● Experts say Putin’s limo features ‘an armoured capsule’

● Powered by a twin-turbocharged 4.4-litre Porsche-developed V8 engine

Daily Mail

President Vladimir Putin rolled into his Helsinki summit with President Trump with a new ride that can compare to the Secret Service-operated ‘Beast.’

The Russian strongman arrived in the back of his brand new Aurus Senat limousine in only the second time it has been used since his inauguration earlier this year.

Little is known about the features of the Senat save that it can be fully submerged in water while keeping the occupants safe, and runs on tyres reinforced with steel to stop them going flat.

Meanwhile The Beast features night vision cameras, tear gas cannons, a completely sealed main compartment capable of withstanding a chemical attack, and several pints of the President’s blood for emergency transfusions.

Automobile expert Vyacheslav Subbotin told the Zvezda TV channel that Putin’s limo features ‘an armoured capsule’ which can withstand gunshots



‘The limo has its unusual gear shift. It is automatic, and it’s hybrid with a generator that can work both as an electric engine and as a generator.’



US President Donald Trump



Trump arrives in the US official state car also known as “The Beast”



Vladimir Putin arrived in Helsinki inside his new presidential limousine, the Aurus Senat



Putin waves to crowd

and landmine blasts.

On the communication system, he said: ‘The system is internal, it is built entirely on our satellites and is completely in-built into the car which is incredibly important. The car will stay in touch under any circumstances.’

‘The defence system is also top level; should there be a chemical attack, the car can shut its windows and remain for long time underwater, just like a submarine. ‘The limo has its unusual gear shift. It is automatic, and it’s hybrid with a generator that can work both as an electric engine and as a generator.’

The body is covered in 15 millimetres of armour plating with a reinforced chassis ensuring the body will not fall apart under stress.

‘The body of the car is Russian invention as despite its size and heavy protection it turned out to be quite light.

‘The construction deals really well with torsion and bending,

there was a lot of strong boron-containing materials used. The car is almost seven metres long, it is a very serious work indeed.’

Russia began developing the Senat limo as part of a family of family of vehicles dubbed Kortezh in 2012 and has so far spent \$300million on the project, according to The Drive.

The vehicle measures 23ft long, which is slightly longer than The Beast, but is lighter, weighing in at 6.5 tons.

Given how much it weighs the vehicle almost certainly features armour plating and a reinforced chassis to withstand bomb blasts, though Russia has not revealed any of these details.

The Senat is powered by a twin-turbocharged 4.4-liter Porsche-developed V8 engine and will replace the adapted Mercedes-Benz Pullman limousine which Russian presidents have used since 1994.

Inside, the limousine is decked out with white leather

seats and wood detailing and features a large Russian coat of arms stitched into the door.

It also features a digital dashboard and on board multimedia system. Russia is also developing four-door and minivan concepts based on the limousine which will be sold to the public, some of which featured in Putin’s motorcade.

According to the Financial Express, the car was jointly developed with German firms Porsche and Bosch along with Moscow-based Central Scientific Research Automobile & Engine Institute.

It reportedly gets 592 horsepower. Russian leaders traveled in a Russian-made ZILS under Mercedes-Benz vehicles.

It wasn’t immediately known what security capabilities it has, but ‘the Beast’ has puncture resistant tires, armored plating, protection from bio chemical attack, and a sealed gas tank.

Meanwhile The Beast is a seven-seat black limousine which is designed to give Mr Trump the ultimate protection.

It can be turned into a sealed panic room with oxygen tanks, night-vision camera and reinforced steel plating said to be able to resist bullets, chemical attacks and bombs.

The Cadillac has Kevlar-reinforced tyres and steel rims that can keep the vehicle moving even if the tyres have been destroyed.

Bottles of the president’s blood type are carried on board in case of a medical emergency, and a satellite phone enables communication to be maintained from anywhere in the world.

As well as being able to defend the president, the car also features a host of attacking capabilities, such as a pump-action shotgun and a tear gas cannon.

The new Russian vehicle is just one of many ways Putin is using symbolism to boost his public image at the summit.

Former Spanish king’s ex-mistress says he laundered

AFP | Madrid, Spain

Spain’s former king Juan Carlos is once again in the spotlight after his former mistress claimed he was involved in money laundering, sparking calls for an investigation.

The scandal broke after two Spanish websites published recordings attributed to Corinna zu Sayn-Wittgenstein in which she alleges Juan Carlos tried to hide money transfers and used her name to buy property in Monaco and Morocco.

The German aristocrat, who is based in Monte Carlo, also said he told her he had moved money into the account of a cousin, Alvaro d’Orleans Bourbon, in Switzerland.



Corinna zu Sayn-Wittgenstein was the former king's lover (Courtesy the Times)

In the recordings, which were released online last week, she claims he also pocketed money from a high-speed train contract



Juan Carlos

with Saudi Arabia, saying he wanted money to divorce his wife Sofia and marry her.

Several royal experts said the voice in the recording was indeed that of Sayn-Wittgenstein.

She has not denied that the voice in the recording is hers, instead issuing a statement denouncing a smear campaign.

Royal expert Pilar Urbano, who has written several books about the royal family, said the content was “so obscure, so vague that it begged for more light” to be shed, lending “credibility” to the claims. Spain’s far-left Podemos party has demanded a probe into the activities of Juan Carlos, who is now 80.

Spy chief to speak

Juan Carlos abdicated in 2014, two years after he outraged Spaniards by going elephant hunting in Botswana with Sayn-Wittgenstein at the height