

China data leak exposes mass surveillance in Xinjiang

Beijing, China

A Chinese technology firm has compiled a range of personal information on 2.6 million people in Xinjiang -- from their ethnicity to locations -- according to a data leak highlighting the wide extent of surveillance in the restive region.

Xinjiang is home to most of China's Uighur ethnic minority lives and has been under heavy

police surveillance in recent years after violent inter-ethnic tensions.

Nearly one million Uighurs and other Turkic language-speaking minorities in Xinjiang are reportedly held in re-education camps, according to a UN panel of experts.

The leak was discovered last week by security researcher Victor Gevers, who found that Chinese tech company SenseN-

ets had stored the records of individuals in an open database "fully accessible to anyone".

The records included information such as their Chinese ID number, birthday, address, ethnicity, and employer.

The exposed data also linked individuals to GPS coordinates -- labelled with descriptions such as "mosque" -- captured by tracking devices around the region.



Within a 24-hour period, more than six million locations were saved by SenseNets' tracking devices, according to Gevers, who works at Dutch online security non-profit GDI Foundation and posted his findings on Twitter.

"You can clearly see they have absolutely no clue about network security," he told AFP, describing SenseNets' IT skills as belonging "to the early 90s".

'Kissing sailor' in iconic NY picture dies age 95

Washington, United States

The sailor pictured kissing a woman in Times Square as people celebrated the end of World War II has died at age 95, his daughter told *The Providence Journal*.

George Mendonsa had a seizure Sunday after falling at an assisted living facility in Middletown, Rhode Island, his daughter Sharon Molleur said.

In the famous image, one of four taken by Alfred Eisenstaedt for *Life* magazine, Mendonsa is seen ecstatically bending over and kissing a woman in a white nurse's uniform.

The picture was published by *Life* as "V-J Day in Times Square."

Mendonsa, who served in the Pacific during World War II, was on home leave when the picture was taken.

He had long claimed to be the sailor in the picture, but it wasn't confirmed until recently with the use of facial recognition technology.

Greta Zimmer Friedman, the woman in the picture, died in 2016 at the age of 92.

Eisenstaedt did not get the names of the kissing strangers.

He later described watching the sailor running along the street, and grabbing any girl in sight.

"I was running ahead of him

The picture was published by *Life* as "V-J Day in Times Square." Mendonsa, who served in the Pacific during World War II, was on home leave when the picture was taken



George Mendonsa in 2009, holding a copy of Alfred Eisenstaedt's iconic World War II photo. (Courtesy of Washington Post)

with my Leica looking back over my shoulder but none of the pictures that were possible pleased me," he wrote in "Eisenstaedt on Eisenstaedt." "Then suddenly, in a flash, I saw something white being grabbed. I turned around and clicked the moment the sailor kissed the nurse. If she had been dressed in a dark dress I would never have taken the picture."

Back Guaido or 'lose everything'

Trump tells Venezuela military

Miami, United States

US President Donald Trump on Monday urged Venezuela's military to accept opposition leader Juan Guaido's amnesty offer, or stand to "lose everything," as a crisis deepened over President Nicolas Maduro's refusal to let in desperately needed humanitarian aid.

Bringing in humanitarian aid is crucial to the viability of Guaido, who has denounced Maduro's re-election last year as fraudulent and in January declared himself interim president, a move recognized by some 50 countries.

He has given the Maduro government until Saturday to let shipments of mainly US aid into the country, which is in the grip of a humanitarian crisis due to shortages of food and medicine exacerbated by hyperinflation.

Addressing supporters and Venezuelan expatriates

in Miami, Trump said he had a message for officials helping keep Maduro in place.

"The eyes of the entire world are upon you today, every day and every day in the future.

"You cannot hide from the choice that now confronts you. You can choose to accept president Guaido's generous offer of amnesty to live your life in peace with your families and your countrymen.

"Or you can choose the second path: continuing to support Maduro. If you

choose this path, you will find no safe harbor, no easy exit and no way out. You will lose everything."

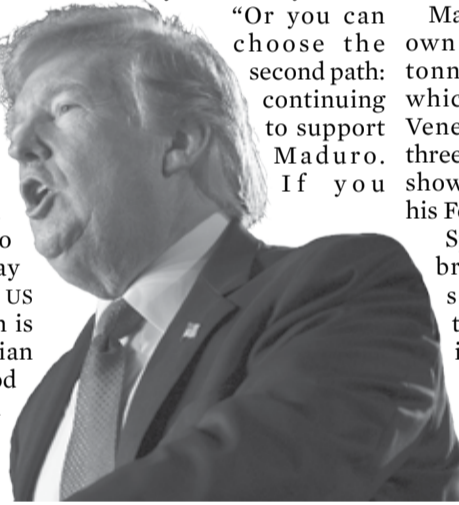
Guaido has set a target of signing up to a million volunteers to help bring in the aid, with 600,000 already registered.

"On February 23, we have the opportunity to save the lives of hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans," he said.

Maduro countered with his own announcement of 300 tonnes of aid from Russia, which he said would reach Venezuela by Wednesday -- three days ahead of a potential showdown brought about by his February 23 deadline.

Speaking at an official event broadcast on TV, Maduro said the shipment contained "high-value medicine."

Maduro has previously announced the arrival of aid from China, Cuba and Russia, his main international allies.



Critically Endangered



A veterinarian from the zoo of Besancon feeds "Soa", a female crowned sifaka, in Besancon, eastern France. The crowned sifaka is a critically endangered species from Madagascar. There were only 6 females over 20 individuals living in 7 zoos worldwide end of 2018

Aussie rodent becomes first 'climate change extinction'

Sydney, Australia

Australia officially declared a Great Barrier Reef rodent extinct yesterday, making it the first mammal believed to have been killed off by human-induced climate change.

The rat-like Bramble Cay melomys -- whose only known habitat was a small sandy island in far northern Australia -- has not been spotted in a decade.

Researchers from Queensland determined a key factor in its disappearance was "almost certainly" repeated ocean inundation of the cay -- a low-lying island on a coral reef -- over the last decade, which had resulted in dramatic habitat loss.

Australia's environment ministry yesterday said it had officially transferred the animal to the "extinct" list.

The declaration was expected. The researchers completed a



Aerial view of Great Barrier Reef

wide-ranging survey in 2014 in a bid to track down the species, but found no trace.

Available data on sea-level rise and weather events in the Torres Strait region "point to human-induced climate change

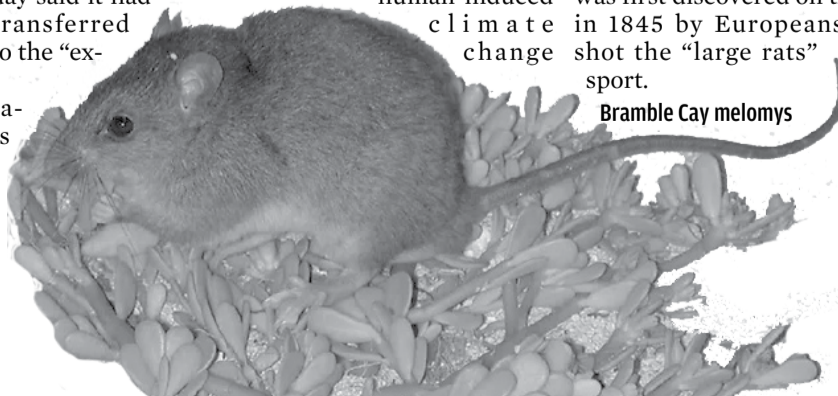
being the root cause of the loss of the Bramble Cay melomys", a study released in 2016 said.

The Melomys rubicola, considered the Great Barrier Reef's only endemic mammal species, was first discovered on the cay in 1845 by Europeans who shot the "large rats" for sport.

being the root cause of the loss of the Bramble Cay melomys", a study released in 2016 said.

The Melomys rubicola, considered the Great Barrier Reef's only endemic mammal species, was first discovered on the cay in 1845 by Europeans who shot the "large rats" for sport.

The researchers completed a



Bramble Cay melomys

'Invasion' of polar bears in Russian Arctic over

Moscow, Russia

An "invasion" of aggressive polar bears in inhabited areas of Arctic Russia has come to an end, officials said yesterday, ten days after the animals came to the area looking for food.

Officials in the remote northeastern Novaya Zemlya archipelago declared a state of emergency last week after 52 bears were seen entering homes and public buildings. Local authorities appealed for help from Moscow to tackle the "unprecedented" situation on the archipelago, where Russia has bases for military personnel.

"The mass invasion of polar bears into inhabited areas has ended," Novaya Zemlya authorities said in a statement, adding that emergency measures had been lifted.

"The threat has been minimised," the head of the local government, Zhigan-sha Musin told TASS news agency.

Officials said 24-hour patrols were preventing bears from entering the main settlement of Belushya Guba in Novaya Zemlya, which has a population of around 3,000.

Polar bears are affected by global warming with melting Arctic ice forcing them to spend more time on land where they compete for food.

