



LONDON (Reuters) - British Prime Minister David Cameron vowed on Friday to use all means at his disposal to hunt down militants such as "Jihadi John" after the killer was identified as a Kuwaiti-born computer programming graduate from London.

The black-clad militant brandishing a knife and speaking with an English accent was shown in videos released by Islamic State (IS) apparently decapitating hostages including Americans, Britons and Syrians.

"When there are people anywhere in the world who commit appalling and heinous crimes against British citizens, we will do everything we can with the police, with the security services, with all that we have at our disposal to find these people and put them out of action," Cameron said.

ABU DHABI (PRESS TV) - The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has denied reports of selling military supplies to Ukraine despite earlier statements by senior Ukrainian officials confirming an arms deal with the UAE.

"An agreement on cooperation in defense technologies the UAE and Ukraine signed recently does not stipulate any contracts for deliveries of weaponry to the Ukrainian side," said Faraj Fares al-Mazrouei, an adviser to UAE Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, as cited in a Friday report by the Emarat Al-Yawm news portal.

According to the report quoting al-Mazrouei, the deal signed between Ukraine and the UAE was only one element in a future system of cooperation between the two nations in the field of military technologies.

The development comes as Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko said earlier this week after a meeting with top UAE officials that military technical-cooperation agreements were signed to bolster Ukraine's arms industry, which he said would secure several export orders.

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The U.S. House of Representatives gave final approval on Friday to a one-week stopgap spending bill for the domestic security agency, averting a partial shutdown with just hours to spare before a midnight deadline.

After a chaotic day that featured an embarrassing rebuke to Republican House Speaker John Boehner from angry conservatives, the House voted 357-60 to keep the lights on at the Department of Homeland Security for at least one more week.

The Senate had already passed the one-week extension a few hours earlier. President Barack Obama was expected to quickly sign it.

The dizzying twists and turns in the days-long political battle raised fresh questions about Boehner's ability to manage his caucus of restive conservatives and the prospects for legislative achievement in the new, Republican-run Congress.

Earlier on Friday, the House rejected a three-week funding extension for the agency when conservatives rebelled because the bill did not block Obama's executive orders on immigration. On a second try late in the evening, House Democrats provided the votes to pass a one-week extension.

NATO Membership to Be Decided by Finns: President

HELSINKI (PRESS TV) - The Finnish president says the country's accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) will be decided through referendum.

"We had a referendum on [Finland's] accession to the EU. In this case, we are talking about the issue of a similar scale," Sauli Niinisto told reporters on Saturday.

However, he said Finland's current government will not call referendum on the issue as its term of office will soon expire.

Niinisto expressed hope that the country's new government, which will be formed following the parliamentary elections in April, will not rule out the idea of joining the bloc.

in the near future as more Finnish people are against the plan than for it. "The latest public opinion poll showed that only 26% of Finns are for accession to NATO, while 43% are against. To make such a decision, we also need at least two-thirds of votes in the parliament. These are facts," Niinisto pointed out.

"Moreover, the current situation shows that many people in the West are saying that filing for accession [to NATO] now is not very wise," he added, possibly referring to the current tensions between Finland's eastern neighbor, Russia, and NATO over the Ukrainian crisis.

NATO-Moscow relations have been extremely tense in recent months.



Finnish President Sauli Niinisto

"In any case, I hope it [the new government] will not exclude the possibility altogether," the president stated.

The official also admitted that NATO accession will not be realized

NATO and Kiev accuse the Kremlin of supporting pro-Russia forces in east Ukraine. Russia categorically denies the allegations, saying NATO is responsible for the flare-up in Ukraine.

Russia Not to Cancel Food Embargo: Deputy PM

MOSCOW (PRESS TV) - Russia has no intention of canceling its embargo on food products from countries that imposed sanctions on Moscow over the crisis in Ukraine, Deputy Prime Minister Arkady Dvorkovich says.

"We are not planning to cancel the food embargo so far," said Dvorkovich at the Krasnoyarsk Economic Forum on Saturday.

The deputy premier added that Russian authorities are instead discussing the reduction of import duties for a number of products from the food embargo list for countries, which have not imposed sanctions on Russia.

Dvorkovich's remarks came two days after four Russian lawmakers submitted a bill contesting the 6-month old embargo. The Lower House committee for Economic Policy has said it would not support the motion,

saying the embargo "was right in principle."

Russia imposed a year-long food embargo against a number of countries including the United States, members of the European Union (EU), Australia, Canada and Norway last August in a tit-for-tat measure after Western governments applied bans on Russian individuals and entities for its alleged involvement in the Ukraine crisis.

According to Spanish Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Garcia-Margallo, the EU has lost some USD 24 billion as of the beginning of February due to the Russian bans on meat, fish, poultry, fruit, vegetables and dairy products.

This is while the Western bans target Russia's financial and energy sectors as well as a number of Russian nationals close to President Vladimir Putin.

Ukraine Military Reports Significant Fall in Fighting



An armed man with the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic army salutes from the top of a mobile artillery cannon as his convoy starts pulling back from Donetsk February 28, 2015.

KIEV (Reuters) - Ukraine's military said on Saturday there had been a significant decrease in attacks by pro-Russian separatists in the east overnight, but said rebels had fired GRAD missiles at the town of Avdiivka despite a two-week-old ceasefire deal.

On Friday, Ukraine reported the first deaths among its servicemen in three days, underscoring the fragility of the truce meant to have taken effect on Feb. 15, as government troops and rebels pulled back heavy weapons from the frontline.

Overnight there was a "significant decrease in attacks in general and a

full ceasefire in certain parts of the conflict zone," the military said on its Facebook page.

It said the truce had been most fully observed around the rebel-controlled city of Luhansk and near government-held Mariupol on the Sea of Azov.

Kiev feared the port city and industrial hub could become the next rebel target after they humiliated government troops by seizing the strategic town of Debaltseve after the truce was meant to have come into force.

The Ukrainian military reported isolated attacks by rebels on gov-

ernment positions, including strikes from GRAD missiles around government-held Avdiivka, north of rebel-held Donetsk and home to one of Europe's largest coke plants.

Fighting in Ukraine's industrialized east has devastated the steel sector, which before the conflict erupted last April accounted for 15 percent of the economy.

Both government troops and separatists said they continued withdrawing heavy weapons from the front line, "point two" of the peace agreement aimed at ending the conflict which has killed more than 5,600

Greek PM Accuses Spain, Portugal of Anti-Athens 'Axis'

ATHENS (Reuters) - Greece's leftist Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras accused Spain and Portugal on Saturday of leading a conservative conspiracy to topple his anti-austerity government, saying they feared their own radical forces before elections this year.

Tsipras also rejected criticism that Athens had staged a climb-down to secure an extension of its financial lifeline from the euro zone, saying anger among German conservatives showed that his government had won concessions.

Greeks have directed much of their fury about years of austerity dictated by international creditors at Germany, the biggest contributor to their country's 240-billion-euro bailout.

But in a speech to his Syriza party, Tsipras turned on Madrid and Lisbon, accusing them of taking a hard line in negotiations which led to the euro zone extending the bailout program last week for four months.

"We found opposing us an



Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras

axis of powers ... led by the governments of Spain and Portugal which for obvious political reasons attempted to lead the entire negotiations to the brink," said Tsipras, who won an election on Jan. 25.

"Their plan was and is to wear down, topple or bring our government to unconditional surrender before our work begins to bear fruit and before the Greek

example affects other countries," he said, adding: "And mainly before the elections in Spain."

Spain's new anti-establishment Podemos movement has topped some opinion polls, making it a serious threat to the conservative People's Party of Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy in an election which must be held by the end of this year.

Canada Judge Refuses to Hear Hijab-Wearing Woman

OTTAWA (PRESS TV) - A Canadian judge in the Quebec province has refused to hear the court case of a Muslim woman unless she removes her headscarf or hijab.

Judge Eliana Marengo in the Quebec city of Montreal was heard on a recording of the proceedings telling Rania el-Alloul to either remove her headscarf immediately or apply for a postponement in order to consult a lawyer.

Marengo said in the recording that "hats and sunglasses for example, are not allowed. And I don't see why scarves on the head would be either," adding, "I will therefore not hear you if you are wearing a scarf on your head."

The judge then adjourned the case indefinitely after Alloul replied that she could not afford a lawyer and that she did not want to postpone the case.

The single mother was in court to ask for receiving her car back after it was seized by Quebec's automobile insurance board. The vehicle was seized after authorities stopped Alloul's son for driving with a suspended license.

Following the court incident Alloul spoke to Canadian media saying she was in disbelief and she now felt afraid.

"When I swore to God to be a good Canadian citizen I was wearing my hijab, and the judge, I shook hands with him the same day I became Canadian. I was really very happy. But what happened in court made me feel afraid. I felt that I'm not Canadian anymore," said El-Alloul.

In addition, Alloul said when Marengo told her to remove her hijab she felt as if she was not being treated as a human being.

"When she insisted I should remove my hijab, really I felt like she was talking with me as ... not a human being," said Alloul adding, I don't want this thing to happen to any other lady. This is not the work of a judge. She doesn't deserve to be a judge."