

250 drug suspects arrested in SE China

Police in Xiamen City, southeast China's Fujian Province, announced Friday that they had arrested 250 suspects implicated in 219 cases found during a month-long narcotics investigation.

Raids and arrests since late February have led to the seizure of 106 kilograms of controlled substances and 194 kilograms of raw production materials.

Of the 250 arrested, six were wanted for outstanding drug-related charges and seven were drug addicts caught abusing drugs at a construction site in Xiamen.

Xiamen police said they would improve inter-department cooperation and push forward narcotics and dangerous drug investigations.

CASIC plans to launch 156 minisatellites

State-owned China Aerospace Science & Industry Corp. (CASIC) announced plans for a network of 156 mini-satellites that would facilitate global broadband coverage.

This is the first low orbiting, networked satellite project, which will orbit 1,000 km above the ground, developed by China amid its wider push for commercial space development, said the CASIC.

"The network is a general satellite platform," said Bei Chao, an engineer with the CASIC, who added that add-ons and upgrades would be explored next.

9 killed, 6 injured in central China scaffold collapse

Nine people were killed and six injured when a section of scaffolding collapsed Monday in central China's Hubei Province, the local government said Friday.

It took the emergency services 59 hours to rescue all the trapped workers, the last was found Thursday. All the injured are receiving hospital treatment, the Macheng city government announced.

The accident occurred at an amusement park construction site in Macheng city at 2:35 p.m. Monday.

Nine people are in police custody.

The provincial safety production supervision authority has sent a work team to the city to investigate the incident.

[Iain Dale: May moves Article 50 – and the BBC plunges into a period of national mourning](#)

Iain Dale is Presenter of LBC Drive, Managing Director of [Biteback Publishing](#), a columnist and broadcaster and a former Conservative Parliamentary candidate.

Listening to the BBC coverage of triggering Article 50 earlier this week, you'd have thought that we were entering a period of national mourning.

It started with the *Today* programme, which relished interviewing anyone who had anything negative to say – and believe me, most of their carefully-chosen guests did. In the section I listened to they had one pro-Leave business guest. She was given all of two minutes to make her case. The five or six Remainers were left to witter on with hardly a challenge from the presenters.

We're going to have two more years of this. But the die is cast. Article 50 has been triggered; there is no going back. I had hoped that there would be a realisation from the likes of Nick Clegg and Hilary Benn that the course to take now is unite behind Brexit, and make the best of it. I suppose it was always a forlorn hope. Clegg seems to have cast himself as Remainer in Chief, having declared that "the phoney war is now over", and that Brexiteers must be held to account "for their false promises".

If he wishes to go to war with the British people over the way they voted, that's up to him. We should admire those who stick to their principles – but we shouldn't have any truck with politicians who fight the battles of the last war. Everyone's attentions should now be directed to how we make a success of Brexit – or if you are of a less optimistic persuasion, make the best of a bad job.

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It says a lot about the state of the British media that on the day before Article 50 was triggered, all we could talk about were the respective legs of the Prime Minister and the Scotland First Minister. Who'd have thighed it?

I wonder when Keir Starmer looks himself in the mirror – and with that gelled hair, he must do so quite often – does he see the reflection of John Moore staring back at him

A lot has been written about the rise in inflation during the last few weeks. Those who know nothing about economics appear to attribute it all to Brexit and the fall in the pound.

The truth is more simple. Since Brexit, the price of oil has risen by about 60 per cent, and the effect has now begun to come through in the inflation figures.

Were the rise in inflation all connected to Brexit, the rate would be far higher. In fact, it's only 0.1% higher than Germany's rate, and on a par with that of most of the rest of the main EU economies.

Alex Salmond is a genial cove. I host him every Wednesday afternoon for a half-hour phone-in on LBC. He and Nicola Sturgeon are adamant that Scotland should have its own deal, since voted to Remain by 62 per cent to 38 per cent.

I am sure that Salmond genuinely believes the case he is making. And of course, I am also sure that if Dumfries & Galloway or the Borders vote in a second Independence referendum vote to remain in the UK, he'd also allow them their own special deal to stay in the UK. And pigs might fly.

There were two new books out this week which may be of interest to ConservativeHome readers. Sayeeda Warsi has written a book called [The Enemy Within](#), which is allegedly how some people described her when she was a minister in the Cameron government.

It's certainly not a kiss-and-tell account of her time in government. Instead, it's a thoughtful tome about the place of Muslims in Britain today. It's incredibly well-researched (and heavily footnoted), and I hope it gets a much wider readership than simply Muslims who are interested to read about the views of Britain's first Muslim cabinet minister. It deserves to.

Douglas Carswell has also written a weighty tome called [Rebel](#). It's a call to arms to overthrow what he calls the oligarchs and political interests that control our society. It's a powerful polemic, and ought to have a readership across the political spectrum. It's certainly not a right-wing treatise;

indeed, at times you think you're reading the words of someone on the far left.

Some of his solutions for dealing with out-of-control capitalism could come from the pen of Jeremy Corbyn. Indeed, if the latter has any sense, he will read this book and adopt a lot of its conclusions. But as I say, the key phrase there is "if he has any sense". No doubt he and his little helper Seumas Milne couldn't bring themselves to read a single word of a book they would regard as being written by someone on the extreme right. And therein lies their problem. Carswell is far more in tune with the views of the ordinary Brit than they ever will be.

I like interviewing Amber Rudd, although I don't do it that often. On Wednesday, she was on my LBS show talking about triggering Article 50. I asked her if she thought that people on both sides should moderate their language and stop the insults.

"Yes," she said: "they should". I immediately retorted, "Well, that's enough about you and Boris." She giggled and said: "Well, I rather let myself in for that one, didn't I?" Good on her. It's a pity that more politicians don't react in the same way rather than go all hoity-toity.

[The ambition for home ownership is stronger than ever](#)

The annual [English Housing Survey](#) came out this month. It suggested that in the last financial year 62.9 per cent of English households owned their own homes. So that was very slightly down on [last year's figure of 63.6 per cent](#). A fall of 0.7 per cent, after a rise of 0.3 per cent the previous year. Some media coverage suggested [the fall was significant](#) – although the survey itself suggested it was within the margin of error. At any rate there has yet to be any progress getting back to the peak of 71 per cent in 2003.

Furthermore this was before Gavin Barwell, the Housing Minister, sent out the [depressing message](#) that there was to be less emphasis from the Government on wider home ownership. A better response would be for the Government to redouble its efforts – notably with [a right to shared ownership](#) and a big expansion in supply to ease affordability with a crackdown on [state land banking](#).

The most startling figure in the survey was how the determination to buy has actually increased. The "proportion of renters who expect to buy" is at 44.1 per cent, up from 41.0 per cent last year. That increase is probably more than the "margin of error" (the survey is based on interviews with 13,300

households). It is also the highest since the survey began. One might have thought that the expectation of home ownership would decline as property prices rose. This indicates that the ambition is very strong. Politicians would be well advised to take note – rather than assume everyone on average incomes has just shrugged and given up on such aspirations.

Another point of interest is that the number of us living in tower blocks continue to decline. Those in “purpose built flat, high rise” consisted of 516,000 dwellings according to the 2014/15 estimate. The latest Survey puts it at 425,000. The number of Council tower block homes is down over the last year from 139,000 to 113,000. They were the future once.

[home ownership Housing](#)