

European Tribune - Comments - European Salon de News, Discussion et Klatsch - 7 July

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July 14, 2011

[WTO backs EU complaint against China's mineral quotas | EurActiv](#)

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) ruled yesterday (5 July) that China's export restrictions on a series of key industrial minerals are not justified on environmental grounds and should be lifted.

The case was [initiated](#) by the EU and the US, in June 2009, amid concerns over access for their high-tech industries to key raw materials, such as bauxite and magnesium, used to produce steel, aluminium and chemical products.

The [reports](#) by the WTO expert panel show that China has not respected commitments made upon its accession to the organisation in 2001, when it undertook to eliminate all export duties - except for a number of products listed separately - and promised not to apply export quotas.

The trade body is therefore requesting China to make sure that its measures conform with its international obligations.

by [afew \(afew\(a in a circle\)eurotrib_dot_com\)](#) on [Wed Jul 6th, 2011 at 09:15:12 AM EST](#)
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On a slightly related note, the IEEE Power and Energy section has realized that the widespread use of specialized high strength magnets poses a risk if materials shortages occur, and they are thinking now of alternative motor and generator designs. "One alternative is induction motors, now used by Tesla and some heavy-duty vehicle manufacturers. Other machine technologies, such as the switched reluctance motor, hold out the promise of replacing some of the current machine technologies in future hybrid and electric power trains due to the absence of permanent magnets in their design and their lower cost, fault-tolerant capabilities, and extended-speed, constant-power operation." [IEEE Power & Energy Magazine, July/August 2011]

by [asdf](#) on [Wed Jul 6th, 2011 at 06:54:42 PM EST](#)
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['Crimes against humanity' claims in Syria - Middle East - Al Jazeera English](#)

Syria has drawn strong condemnation for its deadly crackdown on protesters in the central city of Hama, with human rights campaigners hinting at the possibility of the country's leaders being tried for crimes against humanity.

Tuesday's attack in Hama killed 22 people and left more than 80 wounded as troops pushed through improvised road blocks made by residents, according to human rights groups.

As international condemnation piled on Syria, Amnesty International said a deadly siege in May in Talkalakh, which lasted less than a week, may have amounted to crimes against humanity as a result of deaths of protesters in

He also said there was no fighting reported in the area.

by [afew \(afew\(a in a circle\)eurotrib_dot_com\)](#) on [Wed Jul 6th, 2011 at 10:41:19 AM EST](#)
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[BRAZIL: The 'Happiest' Emerging Nation - IPS ipsnews.net](#)

RIO DE JANEIRO, Jul 6, 2011 (IPS) - The reputation of Brazilians as cheerful, happy-go-lucky people is starting to be reflected in the cold reality of statistics. A study has put numbers to that state of well-being by quantifying the significant reduction in social inequality in the last few years, an area in which South America's giant has outdone other emerging nations.

The study, "Os emergentes dos Emergentes", presented by the Getulio Vargas Foundation's Centre for Social Policies with support from the Inter-American Development Bank, compares Brazil's economic and social performance with that of Russia, India, China and South Africa, the other members of the so-called BRICS group of nations.

These emerging countries are home to over half of the world's poor. But according to investment bank Goldman Sachs, by 2050 the combined size of the BRICS economies will exceed that of the Group of 7 richest countries.

Based on data from the Gallup World Poll 2009 on "the degree of life satisfaction," the coordinator of the study, Marcelo Neri, compared the "happiness index" of the BRICS countries, and found that on a scale of 0 to 10, Brazil has a rate of 8.7, South Africa and Russia 5.2, and China and India 4.5.

by [afew \(afew\(a in a circle\)eurotrib_dot_com\)](#) on [Wed Jul 6th, 2011 at 10:42:55 AM EST](#)
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[Libyan rebels push towards Tripoli on two fronts | Reuters](#)

(Reuters) - Rebel fighters seized a village south of the Libyan capital and another group advanced toward Tripoli from the east on Wednesday in the biggest push in weeks toward Muammar Gaddafi's main stronghold.

Rebels firing their rifles into the air in celebration poured into the village of Al-Qawalish, just over 100 km (60miles) southwest of Tripoli, after a six-hour battle with pro-Gaddafi forces who had been holding the town.

Rushing through an abandoned checkpoint where government troops had left tents and half-eaten bread in their rush to get away, the rebels ripped down green pro-Gaddafi flags, said a Reuters reporter in the village.

Farther north, on Libya's Mediterranean coast, rebels pushed westwards from the city of Misrata, taking them to within about 13 km of the center of the neighboring town of Zlitan, where large numbers of pro-Gaddafi forces are based.

by [afew \(afew\(a in a circle\)eurotrib_dot_com\)](#) on [Wed Jul 6th, 2011 at 03:46:50 PM EST](#)