

US-Led Coalition Says Allies Foil Islamic State Prison Break

BEIRUT - The U.S.-led coalition says its Syrian allies have successfully dealt with an "incident" at a detention center in northeastern Syria which activists described as an attempted prison break by Islamic State militants. Col. Scott Rawlinson, coalition spokesman, said Saturday all detainees were accounted for after the Syrian Democratic Forces "peacefully" dealt with the incident that broke out a day earlier. He said coalition forces supported the SDF with aerial observation. Activists, including from Rojava Information Center, reported IS detainees in the town of Derik attempted the escape. The Kurdish-led SDF is holding hundreds of foreign IS



militants in facilities around areas they control in northeast Syria. Many more local suspects are detained separately. It was not clear if the attempted break out was among foreign or local detainees. (Fox News)

Erdogan Accuses US, Europe of 'Meddling' after Turkey Vote

ANKARA - President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Friday accused the US and Europe of "meddling" in Turkey's affairs after statements from Western allies following his ruling party's challenge to local election results. Erdogan and his AKP suffered an upset in Sunday's ballot when results showed the party lost the capital Ankara and was narrowly defeated in Istanbul, the country's largest city and economic hub. While the United States has called on Turkey to

accept the results, the European Union urged Ankara to allow elected officials to "exercise their mandate freely". But Erdogan rejected the remarks and told the US and Europe to "know your place". "America and Europe are... meddling in Turkey's internal affairs," Erdogan said in his first direct remarks to journalists since Monday. "Turkey gave a democracy lesson to the whole world," he added. US State Department spokesman Robert Palladino... (More on P4)...(15)

Anti-Government Protests Spread Across the Balkans

PODGORICA, Montenegro - It all started with a video posted on social media: a secret recording from 2016 that appears to show a well-known local tycoon hand over an envelope containing bundles of cash to a party associate of Montenegro's long-standing leader. The prominent businessman, a former close friend and confidant of Montenegrin President Milo Djukanovic, released the video late last year in retaliation for charges filed against him for fraud and money laundering.



The so-called envelope affair has triggered weeks of anti-Djukanovic protests, demanding the resignation of one of Europe's longest-lasting leaders after his almost 30 years in power. The almost simultaneous eruption of strong anti-government movements in neighboring Serbia and Albania has prompted talk of a "Balkan Spring" in reference to a wave of protests across the Arab world in 2010. (Fox News)

Qatar Wins, Regional Rivals Lose in Asian Soccer Elections



KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia - On a big day soccer elections, the 2022 World Cup host region gained a seat on FIFA's ruling committee and saw defeats for candidates from its regional... (More on P4)...(12)

Canada PM Warns of Russian Interference in Parliamentary Polls

OTTAWA - Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Friday warned of the risk of interference by Russia in Canadian parliamentary elections scheduled for this fall. "We've seen over the past number of years an increase in the interference or the implication of foreign actors in democratic processes," Trudeau told a news conference in Toronto. "We saw very clearly that countries like Russia are behind a lot of the divisive cam-

paigns, a lot of the divisive social media, you know, spreads that have turned our politics even more divisive and more anger-filled than they have been in the past," he said. "Our minister of democratic institutions, Karina Gould, is moving forward on a number of significant ways to ensure that the election that is coming up in six months will be decided by Canadians," he added. "That is what Canadians expect." (AFP)

Venezuela's Guaido Calls Demo to Maintain Pressure on Maduro

CARACAS - Venezuela's opposition leader Juan Guaido urged his supporters to demonstrate in the streets Saturday to maintain pressure on his rival President Nicolas Maduro, amid rising anger over the collapse of public services. Thousands of opposition supporters are expected to march through the capital Caracas from 11:00 am on Saturday as Venezuela's power struggle is exacerbated by massive blackouts and the collapse of water supplies. Guaido, recognized as interim president by more than 50 countries, said in a Twitter message on Friday: "Let's remain firm in the streets, this fight is for the lives of all Venezuelans." (AFP)

For American Jews, Trump Is Key Figure in Israeli Election

NEW YORK - Donald Trump isn't on the ballot for Israel's national election, yet he's a dominant factor for many American Jews as they assess the high stakes of Tuesday's balloting. At its core, the election is a judgment on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has won the post four times but now faces corruption charges. In his battle for political survival, Netanyahu has aligned closely with Trump - a troubling tactic for the roughly 75% of American Jewish voters who lean Democratic. "The world has come to understand that Netanyahu is essentially the political twin of Donald Trump," said Jeremy Ben-Ami, president of the liberal pro-Israel group J Street. (AP)

Is America Losing Its Grip on World Economy? 5 Big Defeats for US Financial Interests Abroad

WASHINGTON - Donald Trump made it a banner promise of his presidency to stop the US being abused as the world's "piggybank" - but not all foreign powers seem to be cowed into submission by his assertive style of foreign economic policy. The United States remains the world's second-biggest exporter after China, but these five cases show that it can't always get its own way - even among its allies. Is this a consequence of Trump's personal abra-



siveness, a period of painful adjustment before as the giant rouses, or perhaps a harbinger that the rest of the world no longer needs America as much as it used to? Washington tried to scare other Western countries into dropping a Chinese telecoms giant from supplying 5G network equipment... (More on P4)...(13)

Love, Death & Robots: Obama Snuggles with Merkel, Recalls Old Droning Times at VIP Gala in Germany

WASHINGTON - Former US president and smooth-talking drone warfare enthusiast Barack Obama has paid a visit to his old pal Angela Merkel, reminiscing about the good old days and collecting a fat check for a speech at a "leadership conference." Merkel looked pleased as punch to see her friend from the pre-Trump era, flashing an unusually genuine smile during their embrace as he left the chancellery. Obama, for his part, called Merkel one of his "favorite partners" during his two terms in office. The pair reportedly discussed "trans-

Atlantic relations" during their meeting. The nostalgia session must have proved therapeutic for Merkel, after repeatedly being taken to task by Obama's successor Donald Trump over Germany's failure to pay enough for the privilege of hosting US troops as would be expected from a good NATO member. And transatlantic relations aren't in the best shape, with the Trump administration promising repercussions for Germany's resistance to the non-stop flood of US sanctions against trading partners like Russia and Iran... (More on P4)...(14)

Amid Discord, G7 Ministers Seek Common Ground on Issues

DINARD, France - Foreign ministers from the Group of Seven advanced economies wrapped up a two-day meeting Saturday in the French seaside resort of Dinard, where they sought to find common ground on a range of contentious global challenges and lay the groundwork for August's G-7 summit in Biarritz. Diplomats from the G-7 countries - the United States, France, Canada, Japan, Germany, Italy and the U.K., walked side-by-side in the fresh Brittany air to project a united front before a working lunch. They hoped to agree on a joint statement that touches on thorny issues such as the Middle East, drug trafficking, Africa's troubled Sahel region, cybercrime and sexual violence against women in conflict zones, especially in Africa. A European Union official expressed "regret" the proposed joint statement contained what she thinks are several glaring omissions, including "no reference to a two-state solution" in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and "no mention" of the United Nations Security Council's resolution in favor of the Iran Nuclear deal. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because she was not allowed to speak to press ahead of the document's formal announcement. Disagreement over the statement could set the stage for potential tensions at a G-7 summit scheduled for Aug. 25-27. Last June, U.S. President Donald Trump roiled the G-7 meeting in Canada by first agreeing to a group statement on trade only to withdraw support from it. Trump also caused disarray with an extraordinary set of tweets. (AP)

Neighbor News

Iran Will Blacklist US Army If Washington Bans IRGC: MP

TEHRAN - A senior Iranian lawmaker says Tehran will blacklist the US military - like the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group - if Washington labels Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) as a "terror organization". "If the IRGC is placed on the US's list of terrorist groups, we will put the country's military personnel on the terrorist blacklist alongside Daesh," chairman of the Iranian Parliament's Committee on National Security and Foreign Policy Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh tweeted on Saturday. The warning came after three American officials told Reuters that the US is expected to designate the IRGC as a foreign terrorist organization. The decision, the officials said, will be announced by the US State Department, perhaps as early as Monday. The US has already blacklisted dozens of entities and individuals affiliated with the IRGC, but not the group as a whole. (Press TV)

Ambassador Khalid Invites Chinese Companies to Invest in SEZs During Shandong Visit

BEIJING - Pakistan Ambassador to China, Masood Khalid has invited the Chinese companies to invest in special economic zones under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and explained the incentives offered by the government to the foreign companies. He made these remarks during his official visit to Weihei and Jinan, two cities in Shandong province of China. The visit was organized by Secretary General, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Valdimir Norov, for the ambassador of SCO member countries, according to official sources here on Friday. As part of the programme, on-site visits were arranged to Shandong Weigao Group company and Weihei Vocational College. Meetings were also arranged with the city administrations of Weihei and Jinan as well as with the administration of Shandong Province. Ambassador Khalid highlighted that Pakistan would be focusing on expanding cooperation in agriculture, food processing, livelihood projects, water purification and treatment, vocational training and tourism especially religious tourism in the second phase of the CPEC which would start with the visit of Prime Minister Imran Khan to attend second Belt and Road Forum in Beijing. (Monitoing Desk)

Tourism Development Agency Makes Tourist Maps for Cities and Districts of Tajikistan

DUSHANBE - The Tourism Development Agency under the Government of Tajikistan is making tourist maps for cities and districts of the country. These maps are expected to be distributed in airports, railway stations and border crossing points (BCPs), reports Trend with reference to asia-plus.tj. The production of tourist maps is one of the points of the Plan of Actions dedicated to the Years of Development of Rural Areas, Tourism and Folk Crafts in Tajikistan (2019-2021). In accordance with the Plan of Actions that was approved by the President, the tourist maps must be prepared before the end of this month. The Tourism Development Committee is engaged in making tourist maps in collaboration with local authorities and private sector. The Plan of Actions provides for distributing the tourist maps in airports, railway stations, border crossing points (BCPs), consular services and so forth. In all, the approved Plan of Actions includes more than 50 various events that must be carried out during the Years of Development of Rural Areas, Tourism and Folk Crafts in Tajikistan. Among them are various development programs, creation of centers, organization of conference, seminars, contests and so forth. (Trend)

Uzbekistan to Exhibit Its Project at XI Forum ATOMEXPO-2019

TASHKENT - Uzbek delegation will participate in the annual ATOMEXPO Forum held by Russian Rosatom State Corporation, Trend reports with reference to the press service of Uzatom. The Forum has established itself as the largest international exhibition and business platform, where the current state of the nuclear industry is discussed, and trends for its further development are formed. This year the forum will be held from May 15 to 16 in the Russian city of Sochi and the main theme of the 11th ATOMEXPO Forum is "Nuclear technologies for a better life." This year's business program is being formed for the first time by the International Program Committee, which included Director-General of the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) William D. Magwood, Director General of the World Nuclear Association (WNA) Agneta Rising, former Chairman of the World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO) Jacques Regalado, former Director General of the OECD Nuclear Energy Agency Luis E. Echavarri and others. The forum participants will consider global issues of carbon-free energy development, a responsible approach to ecology and natural resources, "green" investment and international partnership for sustainable development. (Trend)