

US Pulls Out of Reagan-Era Arms Treaty, Saying Russia 'Made No Efforts' to Comply

WASHINGTON - A historic arms-control treaty signed three decades ago by President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev was scrapped after President Trump decided to withdraw Friday.

The move to scrap the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty comes amid the administration's assessment that Russia was in "material breach of the treaty" and made no effort to "come back into compliance" with the agreement, a senior White House official said.

Russia was given a six-month period, in accordance with the treaty, as a "final opportunity to come back into compliance" with the



agreement, but the government headed by President Vladimir Putin "has made no efforts to do that," the official added. The end of the treaty sparks of a new global arms



race between the two countries, which possess the world's largest nuclear arsenals. The Trump administration stressed it was Russia's fault the treaty came to an end, pointing

out that Moscow has been developing and fielding weapons that violate the treaty and threaten the U.S. and its allies, particularly in Europe.

"Russia alone is to blame for this situation," the senior official said. "We have taken every opportunity -- dozens and dozens of opportunities across two administrations -- to bring Russia back into compliance."

"It is clear that they are in material breach of the INF Treaty, which is, of course, not its only arms control violation. They are a serial violator of arms control agreements," the official added, noting that "This violation, however, represents ... (More on P4)...(14)

Neighbor News

PM Directs Early Finalization of Islamabad Master Plan By-Laws

ISLAMABAD - Prime Minister Imran Khan on Friday said chaotic construction in the federal capital by previous governments had led to problems of city management, besides causing huge damage to green belts. Chairing a high-level meeting here at PM Office to review Islamabad's master plan, the Prime Minister said reduction in green areas had negatively impact-

ed the environment and also contributed to climate change. The Prime Minister mentioned pollution and climate change as the major problems of the country that needed urgent attention. He regretted that issues related to administration of cities including federal capital that expanded with growth of population, were totally ignored in the past. (Monitoring Desk)

Iran, UAE Sign Document to Boost Maritime Security Cooperation

TEHRAN - Iran and the United Arab Emirates have signed a memorandum of understanding to enhance maritime border security cooperation.

The document was signed by the commander of Iran's border police, Brigadier General Qassem Rezaie, and Emirati Coastguard Commander Brigadier General Mohammad Ali Mosleh al-Ahbab

during a meeting in Tehran on Thursday. The event took place after officials from Iran and the UAE met for the first time in six years in the Iranian capital to discuss ways of boosting maritime security. Following the session, Rezaie said the document was inked in line with efforts to boost border cooperation and

interaction between the two countries.

He added that regular meetings between officials of the two countries could help further increase border interaction, facilitate matters for the countries' businessmen and fishers, and fight attempts aimed at disrupting maritime security.

Al-Ahbab, by his part, described the MoU as a "positive step" which can serve the two countries' interests in the region, beef up border security, ease border control and facilitate crossings.

Tehran and Abu Dhabi held their last such gathering in Tehran in October 2013. The latest meeting comes following a chain of naval accidents in the region's waters. (Press TV)

Cancellation of Azerbaijan-Turkey Visa Regime to Contribute to Growth of Cargo Transportation

DUSHANBE - Azerbaijan's abolition of the visa regime for Turkish citizens will contribute to an increase in freight traffic, said Alper Ozel, Executive President of Turkey's International Freight Forwarders Association (UNF), Trend reports referring to Turkish media. According to him, this decision is very important for Turkish carriers. Ozel added that it will also positively affect the growth of freight traffic from Turkey to Central Asian countries.

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu stated on July 25 that Azerbaijan will cancel the visa regime for Turkish citizens from September 1, 2019. Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry has commented on

the cancellation of the visa regime for Turkish citizens.

"The Azerbaijan-Turkey relations based on common cultural-ethnic historical ties, friendship, brotherhood and solidarity between the two peoples are at the highest level," Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry said. "The bilateral relations are successfully developing thanks to the efforts of President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan." "The strategic partnership between Azerbaijan and Turkey in all spheres stipulates the need for free entry and exit of our peoples," the ministry stated. (Trend)

Measures on Counteraction to Illegal Trade in Ozone-Depleting Substances Discussed in Ashgabat

ASHGABAT - A workshop for employees of the Turkmen State Customs Service was held in Ashgabat to raise their awareness in the field of regulating the import, export and transit of ozone depleting substances, Trend reports referring to the State Customs Service. The event was organized by the Ozone Center at the Turkmen Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection according to the project on the implementation of the Montreal Protocol, the phase-out plan for hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs).

At the workshop, the information on the methods of illegal trade in ozone depleting substances was given. Turkmenistan has rati-

fied all international agreements in this sphere. Some 99.95 percent of the main ozone depleting substances has been phased out of circulation in Turkmenistan since 1995. The Law on the Protection of the Ozone Layer was adopted in 2009, and legislative documents were developed for comprehensive control of import-export and consumption of ozone depleting substances. Most of ozone depleting substances are gases that actively contribute to global warming. According to the experts, a decrease in emissions of ozone depleting substances has led to a great decrease in greenhouse gas emissions and, as a result, the climate change processes are constrained. (Trend)

South Korea Says 'Won't be Defeated Again' as Japan Trade Row Spirals

TOKYO/SEOUL - South Korea fired back at Japan over a deepening trade dispute on Friday, pledging it would not be "defeated again" by its neighbor, laying bare decades-old animosity at the root of a row over fast-track export status. During a rare live television broadcast of his cabinet meeting, President Moon Jae-in threatened countermeasures after Japan's cabinet approved the removal of South Korea's fast-track export status from Aug. 28.

Dropping South Korea from a so-called "white list" of favored export destinations means some Japanese exporters face more paperwork and on-site inspections before they can secure permits, potentially slowing exports of a wide range of goods. Relations between the two U.S. allies began to deteriorate late last year following a row over compensation for wartime forced laborers during Japan's ... (More on P4)...(19)

Saudi Arabia Lifts Travel Restrictions on Women, Grants Them Greater Control

RIYADH - Saudi Arabia has allowed adult women to travel without permission and granted them more control over family matters, further eroding a heavily criticized male guardianship system at a time of heightened scrutiny over its human rights record.

A series of royal decrees published by the official gazette on Friday stipulated that a Saudi passport should be issued to any citizen who applies for it and that any person above the age of 21

does not need permission to travel.

The amendments to regulations also grant women for the first time the right to register child birth, marriage or divorce and to be issued official family documents and be eligible as a guardian to children who are minors.

Riyadh has long endured international censure over the status of women, who rights groups say are often treated as second-class citizens under rules requiring them to get the



consent of a male guardian for important decisions throughout their entire lives, regardless of age.

Muna AbuSulayman, a prominent Saudi influencer and a former talk show host, took to ... (More on P4)...(15)

India Marks 'New Era' in Transport by Approving \$10bn HYPERLOOP Project



NEW DELHI - One of India's busiest transit routes is getting a serious upgrade with the announcement of a \$10bn hyperloop project, expected to be the world's first, which will ferry passengers 117.5km from Mumbai

to Pune in just 23 minutes.

The Maharashtra provincial cabinet approved the Rs 70,000 crore (~US\$10bn) project in a meeting Tuesday. At present, some 75 million people travel the route annually.

"This project would mark the beginning of a new era in the country's transport sector," the state government said in a statement late on Wednesday.

Hyperloop is an ultra-high-speed rail system that launches passenger

pods through almost entirely frictionless tubes using magnetic propulsion at speeds of up to 750 miles (1,200 km) per hour. The Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority (PMRDA) will oversee the project which is expected to be funded largely by foreign investment. United Arab Emirates' DP World and Virgin Hyperloop One have already signed up to be involved but the project will be opened up to additional bidders. ... (More on P4)...(16)

'The Great Hack' Expert Warns That Facebook Data-Grabbing Puts 'Power Over People'

Facebook is hoarding the data of millions of users, vesting the firm with immense power over the discourse itself. A consultant on the Netflix film 'The Great Hack' told RT why this practice is not based on "legitimate interest."

The social network came under immense pressure last year to reign in its data-storing practices following the revelation that Cambridge Analytica, a political consulting firm with a niche for data analysis, harvest-

ed information from millions of Facebook users for advertising purposes without their knowledge. Facebook was slapped with a \$5 billion penalty in the wake of the scandal - the largest privacy fine in world history - and the controversy stoked debate over who really controls Big Data.

"With this data, we start to understand it goes beyond privacy, it's really about power over people, and who should have that power," ... (More on P4)...(20)

NATO Says Ready with Measured Response to Russia Missile Breach

BRUSSELS - NATO has agreed ways to deter Russia from launching a new medium-range missile capable of a nuclear strike on Europe, the alliance said on Friday, saying its response would be measured and only involve conventional weapons.

The United States formally withdrew from a Cold War-era nuclear missile pact with Russia on Friday after determining that Moscow was in violation of the treaty and had no plans to come into compliance with it.

"Russia bears sole responsibility for the demise of the treaty," the NATO allies said, referring ... (More on P4)...(21)

Finland's Central Banker Rehn Pulls Out from IMF Chief Vote

HELSINKI - Finnish central bank governor Olli Rehn, an European Central Bank's board member, on Friday pulled out from the vote between EU leaders to choose a European candidate to lead the International Monetary Fund, he wrote on Twitter.

"I pull out from the vote at this stage, to allow for a broad understanding to be reached over a European candidate and get him or her the rest of the world's support," he wrote, adding the job itself would have been "highly worthwhile and motivating".

Rehn had been shortlisted among three candidates that also comprised Jeroen Dijsselbloem, the Dutch former head of euro zone finance ministers, and Bulgaria's Kristalina Georgieva, the World Bank chief executive. (Reuters)

Bombs Hit Bangkok During Major Security Meeting

BANGKOK - Six small bomb blasts wounded at least four people in Bangkok on Friday, as the Thai capital hosted a Southeast Asian security meeting with top diplomats from the United States, China and other world powers.

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha ordered an investigation into the bombs, a blow to Thailand's image during the high profile event and barely two weeks after his former military junta transformed into a civilian government. The first small explosions were heard during rush hour, just before 9 a.m. (0200 GMT), at two sites in central Bangkok. Further blasts hit a gov-



ernment complex hosting several ministries in the north of the city.

Three of those hurt were women cleaning the street when what police called a "ping-pong bomb" went off. Pictures on local websites showed them looking dazed and getting treatment from medics. The other casualty was

near the 77-storey King Power Mahanakhon building, one of the tallest in Bangkok. Police Colonel Kamtorn Uicharoen told Reuters a total of six bombs exploded. One was recovered before it blew up. "My ears were ringing. The sound was so loud," said motorcycle taxi ... (More on P4)...(17)

UK PM Johnson's Parliamentary Majority Almost Gone as Pro-EU Party Wins Seat

LLANELWEDD, Wales - Britain's pro-European Union Liberal Democrats won a parliamentary seat from the governing Conservative Party, taking new Prime Minister Boris Johnson's working majority to just one as he tries to steer the country through Brexit.

Johnson is expected to face a showdown with lawmakers in the autumn over his vow to take Britain out of the

European Union on Oct. 31 with or without a divorce deal.

His government already relies on the support of a small Northern Irish party to pass legislation, with only a few rebels in his own Conservative Party needed to lose key votes.

The Liberal Democrats, who are calling for a second referendum on EU membership, won the Welsh seat of Brecon ... (More on P4)...(18)

Trump Says It's Up to China to Deal with Hong Kong 'Riots'

HONG KONG - U.S. President Donald Trump has described protests in Hong Kong as "riots" that China will have to deal with itself, signaling a hands-off approach to the biggest political crisis gripping the former British colony in decades.

Millions have taken to the streets in the past three months to protest against an extradition bill that would have allowed people to be sent to mainland China for trial in courts controlled by the Communist Party. The protests are the most serious political crisis in Hong Kong since it returned to China 22 years ago. They also pose the greatest popular challenge to Chinese leader Xi Jinping since he came to power in 2012 and come as Xi already grapples with a Sino-U.S. trade war and tensions in the South China Sea.

Some activists have waved the U.S. flag during the demonstrations, while Beijing has accused U.S. officials of being behind the violent chaos and warned against interference. Trump was asked by reporters before leaving for a campaign event in Ohio on Thursday whether he was concerned by media reports that China might intervene in Hong Kong and said the city had experienced "riots for a long period of time".

"Hong Kong is a part of China, they'll have to deal with that themselves," he said. Trump's labeling of the demonstrations as riots is certain to rile activists in the Asian financial center who have called ... (More on P4)...(22)