

'No Winners' in INF Collapse, But Russia 'Will Never Lose an Arms Race' Either – Deputy FM

MOSCOW - The US withdrawal from the INF treaty jeopardizes everyone's security and may cause an arms race, but the US shouldn't count on winning it, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov told RT. The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) officially expired on Friday, six months since the Trump administration announced it was withdrawing from it in February. The rash move left Russia no choice but to also abandon the landmark accord, which served as a cornerstone of European security since 1987.



The INF banned ground-based missiles with a range between 500km and 5,500km. By withdrawing

from the treaty, "the US decided to untie itself from an arms control treaty that kept their capabilities in this area at zero level for decades," Ryabkov said.

"No one will gain from the collapse of the INF," he pointed out. "Everyone's security will be in jeopardy." He also shrugged off ambitious claims by US

President Donald Trump about the superiority of American arms. Russian President Vladimir Putin has said that it would make no sense to compete with the US in the number of missiles and that parity should instead be achieved by producing a limited number of state-of-the-art hardware that surpasses American capabilities. "Russia showed utmost responsibility regarding European and global security" by announcing a moratorium on fielding weapons that used to be banned under the INF until the US makes such a deployment anywhere in the world. Moscow hopes Washington will ...*(More on P4)...(12)*

Neighbor News

Iran to Further Reduce Commitments to Nuclear Deal

GENEVA - Iran will take another step to reduce its compliance with a landmark 2015 nuclear deal, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Saturday without elaborating, according to parliamentary news agency ICANA. Iran has repeatedly said it will reduce its commitment to the nuclear accord in stages and may even withdraw from the pact altogether unless the remaining signatories find ways to shield its economy from U.S. sanctions. Washington pulled out of the deal last year. "The third step in reducing commitments to (the nuclear deal) will be implemented in the current situation," he said. "We have said that if (the deal) is not completely implemented by others then we will also implement it in the same incomplete manner. And of course all of our actions have been within the framework of (the deal)." Last month, Iran threatened to restart deactivated centrifuges and ramp up enrichment of uranium to 20% purity in a move away from the nuclear deal. Iranian officials have said that all of Tehran's moves in reducing its commitments to the nuclear deal are reversible as long as the remaining signatories uphold their commitments. (Reuters)

Russian PM to Hold Summit Talks in Turkmenistan

ASHGABAT - Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev will take part in the first Caspian Economic Forum to be held in Turkmenbashi city on August 12, 2019, Trend reports referring to the Russian government. A meeting with Turkmen President, Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov is planned to be held on the sidelines of the event to discuss topical issues of cooperation and interaction in the Caspian region. Medvedev is expected to deliver speech at the plenary session of the forum. The Russian delegation will also visit the international exhibition of innovative technologies of the Caspian countries, in which Russia's stand will be showcased. About 190 companies with Russian capital operate in Turkmenistan. AREIT holding (formerly Itera) has been operating in Turkmenistan since 2009 on the basis of a production sharing agreement on the Turkmen sector of the Caspian Sea. In 2019, Russia's Gazprom resumed purchases of Turkmen gas after a three-year break. Furthermore, Russia and Turkmenistan are initiating cooperation in the Caspian Sea. In particular, a ferry service across the sea, which will connect Russia's Makhachkala with the port of Turkmenbashi, is planned to be launched. (Trend)

Pakistan Writes Letter to UN Secretary General on Grave Situation in Iok

ISLAMABAD - Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has written a letter to UN Secretary General on the grave situation in Indian occupied Kashmir (IoK). In the letter to UNSG, Qureshi has expressed concern at reports that India is preparing ground to change status of Indian Occupied Kashmir, said Maleeha Lodhi, Pakistan's Ambassador at the UN. Pakistan has consistently opposed any move that could alter situation in IoK as it would violate Security Council resolutions, Qureshi said in the letter, Maleeha tweeted. She said the Foreign Minister's letter to UN Secretary General on the grave situation in occupied Kashmir has also been circulated among members of the UN Security Council. She said this details the serious human rights violations and cross LoC violations. (Monitoring Desk)

The Biased Scales of Justice in Tajikistan

DUSHANBE - The dozens of imprisoned opposition figures and hundreds of perceived government opponents who have fled Tajikistan would certainly dispute any suggestion that everyone is equal under the law in the Central Asian country controlled by hard-line President Emomali Rahmon. The injustice extends not only to those who run afoul of Tajik law -- but also to those who escape its grasp. Case in point: Sulaymon Sultonzoda, the director of Tajikistan's anticorruption agency, who met with members of the media on July 30. A journalist asked Sultonzoda whether Shahboz Rajabzoda, 32, a former official in the Customs Service, was being investigated for corruption, since in his 20 months on the job Rajabzoda worked in the Customs Service, he was able to acquire three apartments in Dushanbe and purchase three cars. Sultonzoda said Rajabzoda was not being investigated and would not be since there was no formal complaint against him and President Rahmon had already pardoned him. Rajabzoda's tale is a strange one. News of his seemingly ill-gotten gains was announced by Rahmon at a May 10 meeting of officials from the finance, tax, and customs agencies. Rahmon called on Rajabzoda to stand up and then asked him how many homes and cars he owned. (Trend)

Snubbed by North Korea, Pompeo Hits other Asian Turbulence

BANGKOK - U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo left Thailand on Saturday with his hopes for resuming nuclear talks with North Korea dashed, while facing an escalating trade war with China and a potentially devastating breakdown in relations between key American allies Japan and South Korea. After three days in Bangkok that the Trump administration had expected could herald an end to the impasse in North Korea negotia-

tions, Pompeo instead departed without progress on that front as Pyongyang continued to launch ballistic missiles, heightening unease over prospects for a denuclearization deal. Pompeo expressed disappointment that the North had sent neither its foreign minister nor a counterpart for the chief U.S. negotiator to the Thai capital. "I always look forward to a chance to talk with him," Pompeo said on Friday after it became clear ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

'We're Not Slaves': New Doc Explores Black Vest Protests for Migrant Workers' Rights in France

PARIS - A new documentary by the Redfish media group follows the Black Vests, a growing protest movement among migrant workers from Africa who fight for labor rights in France. Hundreds of migrant activists occupied Charles de Gaulle Airport near Paris and the HQ of one of the world's largest catering companies. They then staged a sit-in inside the Pantheon, a well-known historical landmark in the French capital.

They call themselves the Black Vests (Gilets Noirs), undocumented workers from Africa, who campaign for labor rights and fight forced deportations. The documentary by investigative journalists from the Redfish media group explores their struggle in modern France, where the ruling government has been quietly cracking down on migrant laws. "We went there to attack, to tell them to stop the exploitation. We are not slaves," one activist



said, describing the protests. Just like with the Yellow Vests, their activities led to clashes with police. (RT)

'It Was Genius': Farage Says Trump's 'Go Back' Tweet Played Out to His Advantage



BERLIN - Brexit Party leader Nigel Farage has praised US President Donald Trump's "go back" comment as a

clever move that forced the Democratic party to embrace the ultra-progressive congresswomen of whom it had tried

to steer clear. Trump took heat from both sides of the aisle last month after telling the 'Squad' of four progressive congresswomen to "go back and help fix the totally broken and crime infested places from which they came." Only one of the women, Minnesota's Ilhan Omar, was born outside the US, while the other three - New York's Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Michigan's Rashida Tlaib and Massachusetts' Ayanna Pressley - are US na-

Russian Police Arrest More Than 300 Protesters in Central Moscow

MOSCOW - Police detained more than 300 demonstrators in Moscow on Saturday as Russian opposition supporters took to the streets in defiance of a formidable security presence, in fresh protests calling for fair elections in the capital next month. The unauthorized march, which comes after stark warnings from Russian authorities and a crackdown on Kremlin critics, was billed as a "stroll" along Moscow's leafy boulevards as anger grows over the refusal of officials to let popular opposition candidates run in next month's city parliament elections. Most of those candidates and opposition leaders are still in police detention following the last rally, as what began as a local issue has boiled over into one of the worst political conflicts of recent years. At least 311 were detained by police, according to OVD-Info, a ...*(More on P4)...(16)*

Iraqi, Egyptian, Jordanian FMs to Meet on Boosting Relations in Baghdad

BAGHDAD - Foreign ministers of Iraq, Egypt and Jordan will hold a meeting on Sunday in Baghdad to discuss means of boosting Arab relations, economic cooperation as well supporting stabilization in Iraq, the Iraqi Foreign Ministry said Saturday. A statement by the ministry said the tripartite meeting will discuss "combating terrorism and investment through a series of agreements and understandings that include economic coordination and support for Iraq in the reconstruction of areas liberated from the control of Islamic State (IS) group." The participants ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

Maduro Says He 'Repudiates' Trump Statement on Possible Venezuela Blockade

CARACAS - Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro on Friday said he rejected U.S. President Donald Trump's statement about a possible blockade of the South American country, adding that its seas would remain "free and independent." Maduro said he had asked Venezuela's ambassador to the United Nations, Samuel Moncada, to denounce the "illegal" threat to the U.N. Security Council. "All of Venezuela, in a civic-military union, repudiates and rejects the statements of Donald Trump about a supposed quarantine, of a supposed blockade," Maduro said in a state television broadcast. "A blockade, why would he announce that? It is clearly illegal." The ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson Is an Anglo-American Farce

BERLIN - The great Hollywood director Billy Wilder, who was born in Eastern Europe when his home town was ruled from Vienna, once noted that the genius of Austria lay in convincing the world that Beethoven was a native son, but Hitler was not. Today we see a similar cultural sleight-of-hand, but this time in the Scepter'd Isle of Britain, where some would remind us that one of their own is actually one of ours. The satirical British magazine Private Eye's souvenir issue commemorating the ascent of Boris Johnson as prime minister is a hallmark of the genre. The caption on the cover the week of the moonshot



anniversary, showing Johnson goofily mugging for the cameras as he enters Number 10 Downing Street, reads "Loon Landing." But it's the subhead that deserves closer attention: "The Ego Has Landed - America Plants Flag on U.K." This isn't just another hackneyed reference to Johnson's surface similarities to Donald Trump, which include

urine-colored tumbleweed coils, the elevation of pathological mendacity to a political art form, and, excepting Johnson's higher erudition (he regularly spouts gobbets of ancient Greek), the impressive willingness to speak without coherence or elementary knowledge about the things that supposedly matter most to either man. (The Daily Beast)

Beijing Says Progress on China-Australia Ties 'Unsatisfactory'

BEIJING - The progress of repairing China-Australia ties, strained over Canberra's concerns about Chinese influence in its domestic affairs, has been "unsatisfactory," said China's top diplomat after meeting his Australian counterpart. "During our diplomatic and strategic dialogue in Beijing last November,

we agreed to calibrate and relaunch China-Australia relations, but the process of improving our ties has not been satisfactory," said State Councillor Wang Yi after the Bangkok meeting on the sidelines of a regional security forum. Beijing says it never interferes in the internal affairs of another country. ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

Sudanese Activists, Army Finalize Power-Sharing Deal

CAIRO - The African Union envoy to Sudan said Saturday the pro-democracy movement and the ruling military council have finalized a power-sharing agreement. Mohammed el-Hassan Lebabt told reporters that the two sides "fully agreed" on a constitutional declaration outlining the division of power for a three-year transition to elections. He did not provide further details, but said both sides would meet later on Saturday to prepare for a signing ceremony. The pro-democracy coalition issued a statement saying they would sign the document Sunday. The military overthrew President Omar al-Bashir in April following months of mass protests against his three-decade-long authoritarian rule. The protesters remained in the streets, demanding a rapid transition to a civilian government. They have been locked in tense negotiations with the military for weeks while holding mass protests. The two sides reached a preliminary agreement last month following pressure from the United States and its Arab allies, amid growing concerns the political crisis could ignite civil war. That document provided for the establishment of a joint civilian-military sovereign council that would rule Sudan for a little over three years while elections are organized. A military leader would head the 11-member council for the first 21 months, ...*(More on P4)...(19)*