

# Mattis Warns of Escalation into War if DPRK Attacks U.S.

WASHINGTON - U.S. Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis warned on Monday that if the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) fires at the United States, the situation could quickly escalate into war. "If they (DPRK) fire at the United States, it could escalate into war very quickly," Mattis told reporters. "If they shoot at the United States, I'm assuming they hit the United States. If they do that, it's game on," he added. According to Mattis, the Pentagon would know "within moments" if a missile launched by the DPRK was headed for U.S. territory, including Guam. He said the U.S. military would "take it



out" if a missile was headed for any U.S. territory. If a missile is fired in the direction of Guam but not hit the U.S. territory, Mattis said, "it becomes an issue we take up however the president chooses." The DPRK military said in a statement Thursday that its plan to strike Guam with intermediate missiles will be ready by mid-August and its implementation will depend on a decision by the DPRK's top leader Kim Jong Un. It was a response to U.S. President Donald Trump's unusually stern warning to the DPRK on Tuesday, when he said "North Korea (DPRK) best not make any more threats to the United States. (Xinhua)

## Still Interested in Dialogue with N.Korea: US

SEOUL, South Korea - U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson says the Trump administration remains interested in a dialogue with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un but is waiting for some sign of interest from Pyongyang. Tillerson says: "We continue to be interested in trying to find a way to get to dialogue but that's up to him." Speaking to reporters at the State Department on Tuesday, Tillerson said he had no comment on North Korea's latest pronouncement that it had completed plans to test

ballistic missiles near the U.S. Pacific territory of Guam but would not immediately carry it out. North Korea says that the issue of Americans detained in the country "is not an object to discuss" in view of current tensions with the United States. A short dispatch from state news agency KCNA said Tuesday that a foreign ministry spokesman made the statement in response to foreign media reports that talks are ongoing. It did not identify which media. (AP)

## Britain Seeks "Temporary Customs Union" with EU to Avoid Trade Chaos after Brexit

LONDON - Britain on Tuesday published a position paper in a bid to negotiate a "temporary customs union" arrangement with the European Union (EU) for an interim period after Brexit to avoid chaos in cross-border trade. Britain is seeking to strike the EU deal to retain the main benefits of the customs union for years after it has left the regional bloc, said the position paper. The official document, the first in a series of "future partnership papers"

to reveal the British government's strategy on the post-Brexit arrangement, was published as part of London's efforts to counter criticism from Brussels about its approach to the Brexit talks. EU officials said in July that it was hard to make a progress in the Brexit talks because Britain had no position at all on many issues. Britain hopes to keep the temporary arrangement in place until a final trade agreement with the EU takes effect, according to the pa-



per. The British proposal, if accepted by Brussels, will allow the transit of goods across borders to continue as now. After Brexit, there will be no need for companies to fill in additional paperwork, ensuring that goods move smoothly across the border with the rest of the EU countries. (Xinhua)

## Russian Minister Plays Down Impacts of Western Sanctions



MOSCOW - Western sanctions have not exerted "particularly negative impact" on Russian industrial sector and it has almost fully adapted

to them instead, Russian Industry and Trade Minister Denis Manturov said. "I would say it adapted almost fully. If one looks

back, it is clear that the sanctions did not have a particularly negative impact," Manturov said Monday in an interview with Russian news agency RIA Novosti, adding that the imposed sanctions had allowed the country's authorities to respond to existing challenges more effectively. He said the outlook for a 2-percent industrial production growth in 2017 is not changed, and "in the first six months of 2017, we already have a 2-percent growth."

The most positive dynamics were shown in pharmaceutical and chemical, car manufacturing, electrical equipment manufacturing, and consumer goods industries. "We have reasons to believe that in the second six months these positive trends will remain," said the minister. In July, the Russian Economic Development Ministry announced that Russia's economic growth accelerated in the second quarter and is likely to exceed 2 percent for the entire year. (Xinhua)

## Creaky Slovak Coalition Agrees Deal to End Crisis

BRATISLAVA - Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico struck a deal Tuesday to keep his three-party coalition in power, ending a week-long crisis triggered when a euro-sceptic junior partner threatened to quit. Confirming the deal to amend the parties' 2016 coalition deal, the left-wing premier told reporters that "early elections would end any hope of Slovakia belonging to the core of the European Union." They "agreed on a timetable to prepare an amendment to the coalition agreement," government spokeswoman Beatrice Szabova said in a statement, adding that further crisis talks were "no longer needed". Szabova did not reveal the changes agreed by the coalition partners. The coalition led by Fico's leftwing populist Smer-Social Democracy (Smer-SD) party commands a narrow 79-seat majority in Slovakia's 150-member parliament. Smer-SD has 49 votes, while junior coalition partners the right-wing Slovak Nationalist Party (SNS) and the Most-Hid Hungarian minority party hold 15 seats each. "The coalition crisis is over but co-operation between the three parties will be more difficult," Pavol Babos, a political analyst at the Slovak Academy of Sciences, told AFP. Both the Smer-SD and SNS parties campaigned on a staunchly anti-Muslim and anti-refugee platform, something analysts say paved the way for the extreme right Our Slovakia to enter parliament in March 2016 for the first time with 14 seats. Their unusual partnership was thrown into crisis on August 7th when SNS leader Andrej Danko said his party was quitting, insisting it wanted "a new adjustment" to the coalition deal struck last year. (AFP)

## Abe, Trump Hold Telephone Talks on Korean Peninsula Issue

TOKYO - Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and U.S. President Donald Trump agreed during telephone talks on Tuesday to work with the international community to prevent the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) from launching missiles that might be aimed toward the U.S. territory of Guam. While stating that the threat of the launch had raised regional tensions, Abe told a press briefing after talks that the Japanese government will "continue to work closely with the United States and South



Korea, also with the international community, including China and Russia." "At the same time, we will make utmost efforts to protect our citizens' lives by preparing for any possible situation. We'll maintain a high level of vigilance

and our missile defense system under the strong Japan-U.S. alliance," Abe added. The conversation between the two leaders took place following the DPRK intimating it could fire missiles into waters off Guam in the western Pacific. (Xinhua)

## Merkel Slams U.S. Far-Right Violence as "Absolutely Repulsive"

BERLIN - German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Monday reacted with dismay to weekend far-right violence and racism in the U.S. The event stood "in complete contrast to everything which the chancellor and the entire (German) Federal government are working towards", Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert told reporters in Berlin. "Those were absolutely repulsive scenes which were witnessed during this far-right march," he added. By voicing such outspoken concern through her speaker, the German chancellor has gone far beyond U.S. Presi-

dent Donald Trump, who has so far failed to directly criticize far-right violence. Trump came under attack, including within his own Republican party, for only making a curt statement against hatred and fanaticism "from many sides" in response to the Charlottesville incident. A rally staged by white nationalists in Charlottesville turned violent Saturday. After hours of fights between the pro-rally far-right figures and anti-racism protesters, a sport car ploughed into crowd against the rally, killing a 32-year-old local woman and injuring 19 others. (Xinhua)

## Poland and EU's Points of View Vary on Several Issues

WARSAW - Poland's government has clashed with EU institutions several times recently, notably on the issues of judiciary system's reform, the logging of Bialowieza forest, migration crisis and the EC's reform proposals on the posted workers directive. The judiciary system's reform, launched by the ruling Law and Justice party (PiS), has drawn criticism from the European Union, which has sent Warsaw several warnings, and finally ended up with the infringement procedure against Poland, launched by the European Commission on July 29th. The European Commission frowned on the power invested in Polish justice minister to dismiss and appoint court presidents and accused it of undermining judicial independence. The Law on the Ordinary Courts Organization and the Law on the National School of Judiciary have finally entered in force. The EU also accused the reform of falling foul of gender equality in employment, as the law introduced a different retirement age for female and male judges. (Xinhua)

## Neighbor News

### U.S. Trade Protectionism Move will Damage Ties with China: Foreign Ministry

BEIJING - Any U.S. trade protectionism move against China will surely damage bilateral economic and trade ties, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said Tuesday. China's Ministry of Commerce (MOC) Tuesday expressed "grave concerns" about a memorandum signed by U.S. President Donald Trump to direct U.S. trade representative Robert Lighthizer to examine China's intellectual property practices. In response, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying told a daily news briefing that the MOC had released a statement on the recent U.S. trade protectionism move, expressing three important messages. "Firstly, we think the United States should not become a destroyer of multilateral rules," Hua said. She said secondly any U.S. trade protectionism move against China will surely damage bilateral ties and the interests of

companies from both countries. Thirdly, if the United States fails to respect basic facts and multilateral trade rules, and takes measures that harm bilateral economic and trade relations, China will definitely not sit by, but will take all appropriate measures to resolutely safeguard its legitimate rights and interests, she said. Hua said China's position on the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula remains clear and consistent. China is committed to safeguarding the international nuclear nonproliferation treaty, protecting peace and stability on the peninsula, and safeguarding its own security interests. China stands ready to play a constructive role in resolving the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula through political and peaceful means, and maintaining communication with the United States on the basis of mutual respect, she said. (Xinhua)

### Sharif Files Three Review Petitions in SC Against his Disqualification

ISLAMABAD - Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday filed three separate review petitions in the Supreme Court challenging his disqualification by a five-member bench on July 28. His lawyer Khawaja Haris Ahmad filed review petitions in the apex court through Advocate-On-Record Syed Razaqat Hussain Shah. Khawaja Haris prayed the court to accept petitions and the final order passed by the court in Panama Papers case should be recalled and the Constitutional Petition No. 29 of 2016 be dismissed. He stated: "The Final Order of the judgment

suffer from errors floating on the surface of the record, besides being per incuriam, and are therefore, liable to be reviewed. The petitioners reserve the right to urge further grounds at the time of hearing of the review petition." Khawaja Haris also submitted relevant documents about the UAE Iqama of Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. He argued that the July 28 decision should have been given by a three-member bench since Justice Asif Saeed Khosa and Justice Gulzar Ahmed's jurisdiction had expired after their dissenting judgement on April 20. (APP)

### Iran, Russia Presidents Discuss Syria on Phone

TEHRAN - Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin discussed the latest developments in Syria on the phone on Monday. Rouhani and Putin urged coordinated efforts to put an end to the six-year conflict in the Arab stat, Press TV reported. No details were revealed about the conversation. Both presidents also discussed the latest mutual, regional and international

issues. Russia and Iran have emerged as the stunt regional allies to the Syrian government in its struggle against the militants in the seven year conflict. Last week, representatives of Iran, Russia and Turkey held an expert-level meeting in the capital Tehran on Syria. The meeting aimed to set the agenda of imminent Syrian peace talks in the Kazakh capital of Astana at the end of this month. (Xinhua)

### Tajikistan, Pakistan Actively Working on CASA Project

DUSHANBE - Pakistan and Tajikistan have formed a committee to draw a plan for laying a second power transmission line from Central Asia through the northern areas of Pakistan, The Express Tribune reported. The two countries are already working on the Central Asia-South Asia (CASA) power supply project, under which Pakistan will receive 1,000 megawatts of electricity to meet domestic needs. Tajikistan is keen to export an additional 1,000MW through a second transmission line from Central Asia to Chitral. A senior government official said the

committee would conduct due diligence and a feasibility study on the project's viability. The two countries would require funding from international finance institutions for which a feasibility study would be necessary, he elaborated and said the transmission line would also pass through border areas of Afghanistan, which would receive transit fee. Pakistan has received a bid from Chinese company Tebian Electric Apparatus (TBEA) that is interested in laying a power transmission line as part of the Casa 1,000 electricity supply project, say officials. (AKI)