

U.S. Drone Shot Down over Yemen: Officials

WASHINGTON - A U.S. military MQ-9 drone was shot down in Yemen's Dhamar governate, southeast of the Houthi-controlled capital Sanaa, two U.S. officials told Reuters on Wednesday, the second such incident in recent months.

A Houthi military spokesman had earlier said that air defenses had brought down a U.S. drone.

The officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said the drone was shot down late on Tuesday.

This is not the first time a U.S. drone has been shot down in Yemen. In June, the U.S. military said that Houthi rebels had shot down a U.S. government-operated drone with assistance from Iran.



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U.S. forces have occasionally launched drone and air strikes against Yemen's al Qaeda branch, known as Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).

The group has taken advantage of a four-year-old war between the Houthi movement and President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi's Saudi-backed government to try to strengthen its position in the impoverished country.

One of the officials said that it appeared that the armed military drone had been shot down by a surface-to-air missile operated by the Iran-aligned Houthi group. "It appears to have been fired by the Houthis and enabled by Iran," the official said, without providing details or specific evidence. The official said that while losing a drone was expensive, it was not unprecedented and it was unlikely to lead to any major response by the United States. The other official cautioned that it was too early to tell who was responsible for the incident.

Iran rejects accusations from the United States and its ... (More on P4)...(11)

Without Evidence, Brazil's Bolsonaro Claims Ngos May be Burning the Amazon

SAO PAULO - Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro on Wednesday said, without presenting evidence, that non-governmental organizations could be burning down the Amazon rainforest to bring shame on his government after he cut their funding. Bolsonaro said "everything indicates" that NGOs are going to the Amazon to "set fire" to the forest. When asked if he had evidence to back up his claims, he said he had "no written plan," adding "that's not

how it's done." He pointed out that his government had slashed NGO funding, which he claimed may be a motive for NGOs burning down the forest as they seek to bring infamy to his government. "Crime exists," he said during the Facebook Live. "These people are missing the money." Bolsonaro's comments are likely to enrage critics, who have become increasingly concerned by his administration's attitudes toward the ... (More on P4)...(15)

NUR-SULTAN - Alphabet Inc's Google, Apple Inc and Firefox browser maker Mozilla took steps on Wednesday to block the Kazakh government from creating an internet surveillance system using their browsers. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox will block a government encryption certificate that allows authorities to read anything a user types or posts using the browsers, including account information and passwords, the com-

panies said in separate statements. Apple also said in a statement it would take similar measures to protect the users of its Safari browser. Kazakh authorities were not immediately available to comment. Earlier this month, Kazakhstan said it had halted implementation of the system, the initial roll out of which was described as a test by the government. State security officials had said its goal was to protect Kazakh users



from "hacker attacks, online fraud and other kinds of cyber threats". The system could be deployed again "if threats emerge to national security in the form of cyber- and information attacks", Kazakhstan's ... (More on P4)...(12)

Google, Apple, Mozilla Move to Block Kazakh Surveillance System

Germany Readies for Possible Realities, Such as Disorderly Brexit



BERLIN - Germany is preparing for a no-deal Brexit although Berlin

would still prefer an orderly British divorce from the European Union,

a German government spokesman said on Wednesday before

Prime Minister Boris Johnson meets Chancellor Angela Merkel. "We have always said an orderly British withdrawal from the EU is preferable to a disorderly one but we live with realities and we must prepare for possible realities," said government spokesman Stefan Seibert. For that reason, he added, intense activity on many levels was being put into making the necessary preparations on both a European and German level. (Reuters)

Trump Accused of 'Insulting' Danish Queen by Cancelling Trip over Greenland Snub

WASHINGTON - Fuming Danish politicians say US President Donald Trump offended the Danish queen by abruptly cancelling his trip to the country. Trump called off the visit after Denmark refused to discuss selling Greenland to the US. On Wednesday, Trump announced he will be "postponing" his visit to Denmark, originally planned for early September, after Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen refused to entertain his idea of the

US buying Greenland, which is a Danish dependency. Danish politicians were baffled by Trump's decision. Some even said his sudden move offends the nation's ruling monarch, Queen Margrethe II, who formally invited Trump. "This goes against everything, and it's a big insult to the Queen as the host," Soren Espersen, an MP from the Danish People's Party, told news agency Ritauz. A fellow lawmaker ... (More on P4)...(16)

Mexican President Says Government Not Talking with Organized Crime

MEXICO CITY - Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said on Wednesday that the government is not holding talks with organized crime gangs, a day after his interior minister said she was meeting with self-described self-defense groups in states hard hit by violence. (Reuters)

Australia Joins US-Led Anti-Iran Flotilla... In The Name of National Security & Economic Interests

WASHINGTON - Australia will send a frigate and a spy plane in support of Washington's dubious initiative to boost security in the Strait of Hormuz by filling it with foreign warships, increasing the risk of miscalculations and provocations.

"The government has decided that it is in Australia's national interest to work with our international partners to contribute," Prime Minister Scott Morrison said on Wednesday morning. "Our contribution will be limited in scope and it will be time-bound."

Following the US and UK lead, the former British colony will reinforce the sparse coalition with a P-8A Poseidon maritime surveillance plane this year and will dispatch a frigate next January for at least six months' patrol, foreign affairs minister Marise Payne and defense minister Linda Reynolds said in a statement.

Besides this 'limited' contribution, Canberra also agreed to provide intelligence and other assistance, as the US faces an uphill battle ... (More on P4)...(17)

Pope Gives Sick Girl Free Run of Audience Stage, Delighting Crowd

VATICAN CITY - Pope Francis allowed a girl suffering from an undisclosed illness to move around undisturbed clapping and dancing on the stage for most of his general audience on Wednesday, delighting the crowd.

The girl, wearing a pink T-shirt reading "Love," slipped away from her mother at the front of the audience hall and reached the big marble stage. She pranced back and forth in front of him, jumped, and occasionally let go a loud, sharp clap.

Francis signaled to security to let her be. The



girl returned to her mother, who tried to keep her still, but only to slip away again and go back to the stage, drawing applause from the crowd in the Vatican's audience hall.

"This poor girl is a victim of an illness and she

does not know what she is doing," Francis said at the end of the audience, which lasted more than an hour. "I ask one thing and everyone should respond in their own heart. Did I pray for her when I saw ... (More on P4)...(13)

Sudan Forms 11-Member Sovereign Council, Headed by Military Leader

CAIRO - Sudan on Tuesday completed the formation of an 11-member sovereign council that will run the country for a three-year transitional period until elections, a spokesman for the ruling military council told a news conference.

The sovereign council will be led by Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, who is the head of the transitional military council (TMC), which has ruled Sudan since April, when the military deposed veteran leader Omar Hassan al-Bashir.

Members of the sovereign council and the prime minister will be sworn in on Wednesday.

Last week Sudan's main opposition alliance nominated economist Abdalla Hamdok to serve as prime minister in the country's transitional government.

A power-sharing agreement signed on Saturday paves the way for a transitional government and eventual elections. It provides for a sovereign council as the highest authority in the country but ... (More on P4)...(14)

Neighbor News

Mutual Trade Between Kazakhstan, Germany Exceeds \$5B

NUR-SULTAN - The growth in trade turnover between Kazakhstan and Germany has been positively assessed in Germany, Trend reports with reference to the press office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan.

This has been noted during the negotiations with representatives of the German economic sector within the framework of the official visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Beibut Atankulov to Germany.

The parties have assessed the growth in trade turnover, which has reached \$5.1 billion in 2018 according to German statistics.

"Kazakhstan is Germany's main partner in Central Asia, the total trade volume over the past year amounted more than 85 percent of the total volume of German foreign trade operations with the countries of the region," the report said. The parties also discussed the possibility of signing a road map for economic and industrial cooperation between the two countries, which should include new projects in energy, engineering, renewable energy, chemistry, tourism, transport and agriculture in 2019. (Trend)

Iran Says Top Waterways Won't Be as Safe If Its Oil Exports Cut to Zero

GENEVA - If Iran's oil exports are cut to zero, international waterways will not have the same security as before, its president said on Wednesday, cautioning Washington against upping pressure on Tehran in an angry confrontation between the longtime foes.

The comment by President Hassan Rouhani coincided with a remark by Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif that Tehran might act "unpredictably" in response to "unpredictable" U.S. policies under President Donald Trump.

"World powers know that in the case that oil is completely sanctioned and Iran's oil exports are brought down to zero, international waterways can't have the same security as before," Rouhani said while meeting Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali

Khamenei, according to Khamenei's official website.

"So unilateral pressure against Iran can't be to their advantage and won't guarantee their security in the region and the world."

Tensions between Tehran and Washington have risen since Trump's administration last year quit an international deal to curb Iran's nuclear ambitions and began to ratchet up sanctions. Iranian officials have denounced the new penalties as "economic warfare".

In a speech at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Zarif appeared to echo Rouhani's tone. "Mutual unpredictability will lead to chaos. President Trump cannot expect to be unpredictable and expect others to be predictable. (Reuters)

PM Orders Launch of Polio Immunization, Awareness Drives

ISLAMABAD - Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday, expressing serious concern over the recent spike in polio cases, directed to launch effective awareness and immunization campaigns at federal and provincial levels.

Chairing a high-level meeting here at the PM Office to take stock of reported polio cases in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and other parts of the country, the Prime Minister said polio eradication was the top-most priority of the government as it badly affected the future generation.

The Prime Minister stressed robust Ehsaas-Polio eradication partnership for the synergized implementation of the two vital programmes.

The meeting was attended by Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mehmood Khan, Chief Minister Balochistan Jam Kamal Khan, Special Assistant to PM on Health Dr Zafar Mirza, PM's focal person on polio eradication Babar Bin Atta, Engineer-in-Chief of Pakistan Army Lt Gen. Moazzam Ejaz, Canadian High Commissioner Wendy Gilmore, Federal Secretary Health, Chief Secretaries of Punjab, KPK, Sindh and Balochistan, representatives from UNICEF, WHO, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and senior officials. (Agencies)

SCO Heads of Government to Meet in Uzbekistan

TASHKENT - The meeting of the prime ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) countries will be held in the Uzbek capital of Tashkent from October 31 to November 1, Trend reports citing IA TASS.

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia Igor Morgulov announced this at a meeting of the Council of National Coordinators of SCO.

The deputy minister said that prior to the meeting, a series of consultations will be held at the level of deputy foreign ministers.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization was established in 2001. Its main goals are to strengthen mutual trust, friendship and good neighborliness, and to promote effective cooperation in the political, trade, economic, cultural, humanitarian and other fields.

The SCO includes India, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Observers of the organization are Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia. (Trend)