

Britain will Not Pay 'A Penny More' than it Thinks Right to Leave EU: Boris Johnson

LONDON - Britain will pay "not a penny more, not a penny less" than what the government thinks its legal obligations are to the European Union as the country leaves the bloc, foreign minister Boris Johnson said on Friday. Talking to BBC Radio Four, Johnson said his comment that the EU could "go whistle" on its demands for payment was in response to being asked whether Britain would pay "100 billion euros or pounds", and not a suggestion that the government would not pay.



A financial settlement is set to be one of the most difficult issues to resolve in negotiations to unravel more than 40 years of union, and the EU has said it is one of three areas the two sides must make progress on before starting talks on a future relationship, including trading arrangements. "Some of the sums that I've seen seem to be very high. Of course, we will meet our obligations," Johnson said. "We should pay not a penny more, not a penny less of what we think our legal obligations amount to." (Reuters)

Nieghbor News

China, Saudi Arabia Agree to Build Energy Cooperation Mechanisms

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia - China and Saudi Arabia agreed here on Thursday to set up a package of bilateral energy cooperation mechanisms. The agreement was reached when Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Gao-li met with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in the Saudi Red Sea resort of Jeddah during Zhang's visit to the Gulf Arab country. Also during the talks, the two compared notes and reached broad consensus on bilateral cooperation in the fields of energy, finance and industrial capacity, among others.

They vowed to push forward a sea water desalination project using high temperature gas-cooled reactors, as well as a Chinese industry park in Saudi Arabia's southern border region of Jizan, and support the construction of a power plant in the western

Saudi coastal town of Rabigh.

The two sides also agreed to promote cooperation over petrochemical projects and security matters, and enhance international coordination so as to further boost their bilateral comprehensive strategic partnership. Also on Thursday, Zhang and Mohammed co-chaired the second meeting of a high-level steering committee, a regular meeting mechanism set up during Chinese President Xi Jinping's state visit to the Gulf Arab country last year.

At the second meeting, the two sides agreed that the two countries have maintained close high-level exchanges, noting that Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud visited China while a number of Chinese leaders have visited Saudi Arabia. (Xinhua)

Pakistan Suffered Huge Losses in War Against Terrorism: Zakaria

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan's sacrifices against terrorism are worldwide recognized and Pakistan had lost over seventy thousand precious human lives besides suffering an economic loss of over \$100 billion in the war against terrorism, Pakistan's Spokesperson of the foreign office said here on Friday. During the weekly press briefing, the spokesperson, Nafees Zakaria said that Pakistan remained committed in taking action against terrorists without any discrimination and the efforts to eradicate terrorism would continue. Replying to a question, the spokesperson said the meeting of the National Security Committee (NSC) had made a detail response regarding the new US strategy about Afghanistan and

South Asia. He said that the region of South Asia was fertile, full of human and natural resources which was also the economic pivot for the entire world. "We have already seen the emergence of new powers in the region," he added.

Referring to the visit of the US commander to South Waziristan, he said that they all appreciated the efforts of Pakistan and its achievements against the scourge of terrorism, adding the country was lauded for restoring peace in the area. He said that Pakistan had longstanding multidimensional relationship with the US. He, however, added that various channels were being used to remove the differences between the two countries. (Monitoring Desk)

Russia Signs \$2.87bln Military Equipment Contracts at Military-Technical Forum

MOSCOW - Russia signed over 20 contracts of weapon purchases worth over 170 billion rubles (2.87 billion U.S. dollars) at an ongoing military-technical forum, the Russian Defense Ministry said Thursday. "Twenty-three state contracts and three additional agreements were signed with 17 defense industry enterprises today for a total amount of more than 170 billion rubles," Deputy Defense Minister Yuriy Borisov was quoted by Russian news agencies as saying after the signing ceremony. The contracts

mainly concern the purchase of precision-guidance weapons, most of which have already been tested in Syria, the deputy minister said. More than 600 units of weapons, military and special equipment will be delivered to the Russian Armed Forces, and over 200 units will be upgraded as a result of these contracts, he said. It is aimed at showcasing the military power of the Russian armed forces and developing military-technical cooperation of Russia with foreign countries. (Xinhua)

UN Chief to Visit Mideast Countries, Hoping to Restart Peace Process

UNITED NATIONS - UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is heading to Kuwait, Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories in hopes of restarting the Mideast peace process, the chief UN spokesman announced on Thursday. "The Secretary-General will leave New York on Friday... for a trip that will take him to Kuwait, Israel and the state of Palestine," said the spokesman, Stephane Dujarric. Guterres plans to meet with Kuwaiti leaders on Sunday, "to discuss the

situation in the region" and express gratitude to Kuwait for its "tremendous generosity for humanitarian causes," and then fly to Israel, Dujarric said. There, "he will meet with the Israeli and Palestinian leadership to discuss the prospects of reviving the peace process," said the spokesman, adding that Guterres "will also engage with civil society and university leaders and visit an UNRWA (UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Ref-



ugees in the Near East) facility."

The Secretary-General is to return to UN Headquarters in New York late on Wednesday, Aug. 30,

Dujarric said.

"On the visit to Israel and Palestine, I think the issue is obviously an important issue on the UN's agenda," he said. (Xinhua)

Japan to Hold Drills Deploying Missile Interceptors at U.S. Bases



TOKYO - Japan's Air Self-Defense Force (ASDF) will hold drills deploying missile interceptors at three U.S. military bases here to prepare for any contingencies stemming

from heightened tensions in the Korean Peninsula, Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera said Friday. "The drills will contribute to further strengthening the Japan-U.S. alliance,"

Onodera told a press briefing on the matter. The Defense Ministry said the exercises will take place at the U.S. Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo and at the Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni in Yamaguchi Prefecture in Japan's southwest, next Tuesday. On Sept. 7, similar drills will be held at the Misawa Air Base in Aomori Prefecture in northern Japan, the ministry also said. Such drills would mark the first time that exercises deploying missile interceptors have been held

at U.S. bases in Japan, the Def Ministry said. The ministry has already deployed ASDF PAC-3 missile interceptors in parts of western Japan. PAC-3 surface-to-air missile defense systems are a second line of defense that have the capability of intercepting missiles at lower altitudes as they reenter the earth's atmosphere. Japan's first line of defense against inbound missiles would be its Aegis advanced radar-equipped destroyers. (Xinhua)

Spain PM Wants Improved Anti-Terror Cooperation in EU

MADRID - Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy on Friday said he intended to bring up how to improve anti-terrorism cooperation in the EU at a summit in Paris next week, after the deadly attacks in Catalonia. "My intention is to be able to analyse current (anti-terrorism) cooperation mechanisms in the EU and look at options to strengthen and improve them," he said after a cabinet meeting. Rajoy is due in Paris on Monday to meet with French President Emmanuel Macron, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Italian Prime Minister

Paolo Gentiloni, after twin vehicle attacks in Spain last week left 15 people dead and more than 120 injured. Interior Minister Juan Ignacio Zoido met with his French counterpart Gerard Collomb on Monday to discuss the matter. Rajoy said he "asked French President Emmanuel Macron that we broach this issue in the summit that will take place next Monday in Paris." He recalled that Spain had already participated in various EU initiatives such as the fight against money laundering and financing of terror groups, or arms control measures. (AFP)

UAE Diplomat Urges Qatar to Review Strategic 'Ambition'

DUBAI - The United Arab Emirates (UAE) Minister of State for Foreign Affairs urged Thursday the Qatari government to review its strategic "ambition." Qatar should "have balanced its ambition and its reality" and should have taken into account "its geographical location as a Gulf country and its genetic structure," Anwar Gargash, UAE's second highest diplomat, said on his twitter account. He posted the remarks hours after Qatar restored full diplomatic ties with Iran, a rival for most Gulf nations. Qatar cut relations with Iran in January 2016, when Iranian demonstrators attacked the Saudi embassy in Tehran. Doha "caused the crisis through mismanagement and deepened it," Gargash noted. (Xinhua)

French President Macron's Makeup Costs Prompt Criticism

PARIS - President Emmanuel Macron's office has confirmed a report that the French leader spent 26,000 euros (\$30,695) on makeup during his first three months in power, and says it's trying to find a cheaper alternative. The report in Le Point news magazine prompted harsh criticism of the president from French social media users. It said the cost includes the pay of a freelance makeup artist following Macron during television appearances and trips abroad. The president's office confirmed the amount Friday. The report comes at a bad time for Macron, with polls showing his popularity plunging in recent weeks following the announcement of budget cuts and divisive labor reform. (AP)

NATO Presence in Poland Crucial: Stoltenberg

WARSAW - The deployment of international combat groups in Poland and Baltic States represents "a sign of NATO's unity, strength and decisiveness," said NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg here after meeting with Polish Prime Minister Beata Szydlo on Friday. The meeting between Stoltenberg and Szydlo in Warsaw was aimed at discussing the implementation of the decisions made at the 2016 NATO summit in Warsaw, NATO's adaptation to new threats, regional security and develop-



ment of the Polish army. During a joint press conference, Stoltenberg emphasized the fact that the NATO presence in Poland and Baltic countries - Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia was of a vital importance. He also praised

Poland for using 2 percent of GDP on defense spending and further commitments to even more increase. gations under the Vienna OSCE document. He said the NATO will send two observers. (Xinhua)

Russian FM Urges U.S. to Cool Down on Sanctions Spiral

MOSCOW - Russia Foreign Ministry on Thursday urge the U.S. government to cool down and make efforts to end the ongoing sanction cycle between Moscow and Washington. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said it was not Russia "that started a completely senseless struggle in the international arena and triggered an inconceivable sanction spiral." "We expect that the hot heads (in the U.S.) will cool down and that the common sense will eventually prevail," Lavrov said at a press conference following talks with his Cambodian

counterpart Prak Sokhon. Speaking of the impact of Russia-U.S. tensions on joint work on the Syrian issue, the foreign minister said cooperation between the two sides was still underway. "We are pragmatists and we understand that this is not the place for taking offenses or holding a false sense of prestige. This is a threat to all of us," Lavrov said, adding that the U.S. side even voiced the wish to expand bilateral interactions on this matter. Relations between Moscow and Washington have soured recently due to escalating mutual sanctions. (Xinhua)

S. Korean, Japanese Leaders Hold Phone Talks on DPRK Issue

SEOUL - South Korean President Moon Jae-in and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Friday held telephone talks about nuclear and missile issues on the Korean Peninsula, Moon's office said. Moon and Abe had the phone conversation for about 30 minutes earlier in the day, sharing a view that the nuclear and missile issues concerning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) should be resolved through dialogue and in a peaceful manner while maintaining strong pressure and sanctions, according to the presidential Blue House. President Moon has maintained a position that another war must be prevented from breaking out on the peninsula, stressing the importance of dialogue with the DPRK for an eventual resolution.

The annual South Korea-U.S. command post military exercise, codenamed Ulchi Freedom Guardian (UFG), started earlier this week, but it was scaled down compared with last year. The joint war game will last until next Thursday. Pyongyang tested what it called an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) twice last month, escalating tensions on the peninsula. It was followed by the war of words between Pyongyang and Washington. The tensions eased recently as Pyongyang delayed its missile strike targeting the waters off the U.S. island of Guam in the Pacific. U.S. President Donald Trump praised it as a wise and well-reasoned decision. (Xinhua)

Iran Blasts New US Interventionist Strategy against Pakistan

TEHRAN - Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Bahram Qassemi blasted the new strategy adopted by the US against the sovereign state of Pakistan, and urged Washington to stop interfering in other countries' internal affairs. "What the US today condemns other countries for is the result of Washington's wrong and ill-timed policies in the region, particularly in Afghanistan and its opportunist strategies, unilateral policies and wrong interferences whose outcome was nothing but escalating chaos, growth of terrorism and extremism in the region," Qas-

semi said. The Iranian foreign ministry spokesman called on the US not to meddle in regional states' affairs, and said, "These countries enjoy the necessary capacity for collective cooperation in the fight against terrorism and establishing stability and security in the region and have no need for the US destabilizing strategies and terrorism-fostering policies." Washington, in line with its interfering policies, has recently accused Pakistan of being a safe haven for the terrorist groups and threatened Islamabad to cut its financial aids by the US for Pakistan. (FNA)

Uzbekistan Gets Membership in IRENA

TASHKENT - Uzbekistan became a member of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) on Aug. 24, according to the information published on IRENA's official Twitter account. The membership in the agency is open to the states which are members of the United Nations and to regional intergovernmental economic integration organizations. The Interna-

tional Renewable Energy Agency is an intergovernmental organization that supports countries in their transition to a sustainable energy future, and serves as the principal platform for international cooperation on renewable energy. Currently, 152 countries are members of the agency while 28 states have started the formal process of becoming members. (Trend)