

Merkel Welcomes G7 Progress on Seeking Iran Solution

BIARRITZ, France - German Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Monday G7 leaders had taken a big step forward in their efforts to avoid an escalation of tensions with Iran over its nuclear program.

All the G7 leaders agreed not only that Iran should not have nuclear weapons but also that negotiations were the right way to achieve that goal, Merkel said, adding that the United States had welcomed European talks with Iran.

"What the outcome will be, what possibilities open up, we can't say today," she said of the talks. "But the firm will to talk is already a big step forward."

"We all have a big interest in



a peaceful solution to such a conflict, but it won't be easy," Merkel added, speaking to reporters after meeting leaders from the G7 economic powers. (Reuters)

Iran's Zarif Visit to G7 Was No Surprise, but 'It Was Too Soon' - Trump

BIARRITZ, France - Meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister at G7 was premature for the US delegation, Donald Trump has said amid reports that he was 'blindsided' by the top diplomat's surprise appearance at the summit. US President Donald Trump told reporters on Monday that while he "respected the fact that [Mohammad Javad Zarif] was coming in," he did not want to meet Iranian Foreign Minister as "it was too soon." On Sunday, Zarif paid

an unannounced visit to Biarritz, France, where the G7 summit was taking place. He held a meeting with President Emmanuel Macron, who volunteered to facilitate dialogue between the US and Iran. American officials told Reuters that Zarif's appearance had caught them by surprise, and Trump refused to comment on the matter. However, the US president has now revealed that he encouraged Macron to "go ahead" and ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

Beijing Vows to Take 'More Steps' to Protect Its Interests If Trump Raises Tariffs on China

BEIJING - China will enact new measures to safeguard its economy if the United States moves forward with its threat to impose higher tariffs, Beijing has warned. A Foreign Ministry spokesperson said on Monday that it is resolutely opposed to new US tariffs and issues between the two countries should be resolved with talks. He added that China hopes the US moves back to the path of rationality and "decoupling" won't resolve the current impasse.

The sentiments were echoed by Chinese Vice Premier Liu He who was speaking at a tech conference in Chongqing on Monday. Liu, China's top trade negotiator, said that China is willing to resolve the trade war through calm negotiations and resolutely opposes the escalation of the conflict, the Chongqing Morning Post reported.

The comments come in the wake of President Donald Trump announcing an extra 5 percent duty on some \$550



billion of Chinese goods on Friday. That move followed China's announcement of retaliatory tariffs on \$75 billion of imports from the US as the trade war continues to spiral. China's yuan fell to an ...*(More on P4)...(11)*

Erdogan Says Turkish Troops Will Enter Planned Syria Safe Zone 'Soon'



ANKARA - Turkish ground troops will enter a planned safe zone in northern Syria "very soon," President Tayyip Erdogan said on Mon-

day, after a joint operation center with the United States opened at the weekend. Turkey and the United States agreed earlier this

month to set up the joint center for the planned safe zone along Syria's northeastern border, but gave few details on the size of the zone or the command structure of the forces to operate there.

"We are slowly making progress in our efforts to establish a safe zone," Erdogan said. "Just like many other issues some saw as untouchable, we are putting the east of the Euphrates issue on track," Erdogan said. Turkey has repeatedly said that it would not

tolerate any delays to the agreement by U.S. officials, warning that it will mount a cross-border offensive on its own to clear its borders from the Syrian Kurdish YPG militia if necessary.

On Monday, Erdogan said progress was being made on plans to establish the safe zone, but added that Turkey had made all preparations to carry out its own plans if its expectations are not met. "Our priority is dialogue and cooperation. If we are ...*(More on P4)...(12)*

Indonesia to Move Capital from Sinking Jakarta to Borneo

JAKARTA, Indonesia - Indonesia's president announced Monday that the country's capital will move from overcrowded, sinking and polluted Jakarta to a site in sparsely populated East Kalimantan province on Borneo island, known for rainforests and orangutans. President Joko Widodo said intense studies over the past three years had resulted in the choice of the location on the eastern side of Borneo island. The new capital city, which has not yet been

named, will be in the middle of the vast archipelago nation and already has relatively complete infrastructure because it is near the cities of Balikpapan and Samarinda, Widodo said.

He said the burden has become too heavy on Jakarta on Java island as the center of government, finance, business, trade and services as well as the location of the country's largest airport and seaport. Widodo said the decision ...*(More on P4)...(16)*

Hong Kong Government Warns of Great Danger after Weekend of Violence

HONG KONG - Illegal violence is pushing Hong Kong to the brink of great danger, the city government said on Monday, after a weekend of clashes that included the first gun-shot and the arrest of 86 people, the youngest just 12. Police fired water cannon and volleys of tear gas in running battles with protesters who threw bricks and petrol bombs on Sunday, the second day of weekend clashes in the Chinese-ruled city.

Six officers drew their pistols and one officer fired a warning shot into the air, police said in a statement, adding that 215 rounds of tear gas and 74 rubber bullets were fired over the two days.

"The ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

No Cheap Way Out: Brussels Says Britain Must Pay EU Bill in Full in Case of No-Deal Brexit

LONDON - A no-deal Brexit will not excuse Britain of its previously-agreed upon financial obligations to the European Union, Brussels has cautioned. London has signaled that it will pay only a fraction of the 'divorce bill' from the EU.

All commitments taken by EU member states "should be honored," European Commission spokeswoman Mina Andreeva said on Monday, adding that this is "especially true" in a no-deal scenario where the UK agreed to specific terms during EU membership.

She said that the EU wanted to avoid a threat of "judicial action," and believed that "settling accounts is essential to starting of a ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

Russia Nuclear Missile Explosion Resulted in Radioactive Isotopes Found in Test Samples after Accident

MOSCOW - Radioactive isotopes have been discovered by Russia's state weather agency in test samples more than two weeks after a mysterious and deadly explosion earlier this month at a naval weapons testing range in the northwestern part of the country, the agency disclosed Monday.

The Aug. 8 blast took place at a military shooting range in Nyonska, in the far northern Arkhangelsk region. Russia's Defense Ministry initially said the blast killed two people and injured six, but the state-controlled nuclear



agency, Rosatom, later disclosed the explosion killed five of its workers and injured three others. Rosatom said the explosion occurred while engineers were testing "a nuclear isotope power source" for a rocket and were thrown into the

sea by the explosion. The mysterious explosion was followed by a brief rise in radiation levels in nearby Severodvinsk, a city of 183,000, but the authorities insisted the recorded levels didn't pose ...*(More on P4)...(13)*

Issues Between Pakistan, India Bilateral, Modi Tells Trump

PARIS - Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said that all issues between India and Pakistan were "bilateral in nature."

Modi, who is currently in France to participate in the G7 Summit, made the remarks during a meeting with US President Donald Trump on the sidelines of the intergovernmental moot, ANI reported.

"All issues between India & Pakistan are bilateral in nature, that is why we don't bother any other country re-

garding them," Modi said.

He said India and Pakistan were together before the partition in 1947 and that he was "confident that we can discuss our problems and solve them, together."

The Indian premier also claimed he has told Prime Minister Imran Khan that they should work together for the welfare of their two countries. Trump, meanwhile, said he spoke to Modi about the situation in occupied ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

Neighbor News

Pakistan Attaches High Value to Ties with Sri Lanka: PM

ISLAMABAD - Prime Minister Imran Khan Monday said that Pakistan deeply valued its close and friendly relations with Sri Lanka which had been nurtured over decades through a continuous interaction at bilateral, regional and interna-

tional levels. The prime minister was talking to a Sri Lankan delegation that called on him to gift eye corneas to sight-disabled people in Pakistan, PM office media wing in a press release said. (Monitoring Desk)

Iran's Most Advanced Destroyer Deployed to Gulf of Aden

TEHRAN - Iran has deployed its most advanced destroyer Sahand to the Gulf of Aden in a mission aimed at providing security for Iranian vessels in the high seas. Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, the chief of staff of the Iranian Army, said the warship is being accompanied by a logistical vessel and the Kharg helicopter carrier on the voyage, IRNA reported on Monday.

The flotilla is the 63rd Iranian naval group to be dispatched on overseas operation, he added, saying the group will be escorting Iranian ships in the Sea of Aden and the Persian Gulf. The mission is Sahand's maiden long-term voyage. The vessel joined the Navy's southern fleet last December.

It is the third of Mowj-class frigates built by Iran after the Jamaran and the Damavand, but its enhanced operational capabilities and size make it twice as powerful in terms of offensive and defensive features.

It has been indigenously designed and produced in separate modules, and primarily boasts the capability to evade radar.

While accompanied by its logistical vessel, Sahand, which is outfitted with four engines, can sail 150 days in a row in far oceans and tumultuous maritime conditions. It has been equipped with state-of-the-art torpedo launchers, various anti-ship and anti-aircraft guns, surface-to-surface and surface-to-air missile systems, precision defense mechanism, anti-submarine defense system, enhanced operating range and maneuverability, and different electronic apparatuses. Captain Abbas Fazeli-Nia, the commander overseeing the Navy's production facilities, said the destroyer has also been provided with interception, fire control, radar jamming, and long-range cruise missile systems as well as a radar system of itself and various sensors. (Press TV)

Central Bank of Uzbekistan Publishes New Exchange Rates

TASHKENT - Recently, there has been a drop in the dollar against the sum in Uzbekistan, while the European currency rate is more mixed, Trend reports with reference to the Central Bank of Uzbekistan.

Starting from August 27, one dollar in the country will cost 9,373.93 soums (-10.07), and one euro - 10,446.31 (+52.59).

The Russian ruble fell slightly and amount-

ed to 1,321.61 soums (-9.47).

Earlier Trend reported that Central Bank of Uzbekistan no longer sets prices for the sale and purchase of foreign currency. Prices for the purchase and sale of currency are now formed on the market independently. Furthermore, from August 20, commercial banks began selling foreign currency in cash through exchange offices. (Trend)

High-Level Delegation of Turkmenistan's Ahal Region Meets with Heads of Iranian Provinces

ASHGABAT - On August 25-27, 2019, high-level Turkmen delegation of the Ahal region of Turkmenistan is participating in the exhibition of goods produced in the Ahal region, which is taking place in Mashhad city of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Trend reports referring to Turkmen Foreign Ministry.

High-level representatives of the state and private sectors of Iran and Turkmenistan, local companies and residents are participating in the exhibition.

At the opening ceremony of the exhibition, the Turkmen officials noted the high level of Turkmen-Iranian relations and underlined that the cooperation between the representatives of the private sectors of two countries, particularly in the field of industry, metallurgy and agriculture, favorably affects the social and economic growth of Turkmenistan and Iran. As part of the visit of the Turkmen delegation

to Iran, several meetings were held with the heads of Iran's Razavi Khorasan and North Khorasan provinces.

In July, Ilyas Gayypov, the Consul General of Turkmenistan in Mashhad, was received by Razm Hosseini, Governor of Iran's Razavi Khorasan. The province, which has a 500 km joint border with Turkmenistan, has good potential in rail transit and the export sector.

Turkmenistan and Iran border on the Caspian Sea and have a long land border. Over the years of long-term cooperation, they have implemented a number of large-scale joint projects including, among others, the Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran railway and the creation of international Uzbekistan-Turkmenistan-Iran-Oman corridor, which is intended to contribute to increasing trade and economic cooperation between Central Asian and Middle Eastern states. (Trend)