

## 'You Don't Get to Authorize US Military Interventions' US Rep. Khanna to Venezuela's Guaido

CARACAS - After self-proclaimed leader of Venezuela Juan Guaido said he might 'authorize' a US military intervention, he was rebuffed by Congressman Ro Khanna, who told him he doesn't get to make the call on "US military interventions."

"Mr. Guaido, you can proclaim yourself leader of Venezuela but you don't get to authorize US military interventions," Khanna tweeted on Saturday, adding that only the US Congress can green-light sending troops overseas.

"We will not," the Democrat from California added.

He further stressed that it is not up to "neoconservative Defense Department officials" or "defense contractor lobbyists" to authorize interventions abroad either.

Congressman Khanna was reacting to earlier remarks made by



US-backed opposition leader Juan Guaido, who didn't rule out approving a US military intervention to oust President Nicolas Maduro from power in Venezuela. He told AFP that he would do "everything that is necessary" in order to "save human lives," while acknowledging that

the deployment of American soldiers is "a very controversial subject."

The speaker of the nation's parliament, Juan Guaido, declared himself 'interim president' of Venezuela in January. His move was immediately supported by the White House. Most

South American states and some EU nations, such as the UK, France, and Germany, followed suit.

Recognizing Guaido as the legitimate leader of the nation, US President Donald Trump confirmed that direct military involvement in Venezuela is "an option." His position was later echoed by Vice President Mike Pence, who reiterated that Washington will "keep all options on the table" until democracy is "restored" in Caracas.

The Trump administration's belligerent rhetoric was met with pushback from a number of politicians. Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders said the US must "not be in the business of regime change or supporting coups." (RT)

## Neighbor News

### Iran's Zarif: Warsaw Meeting a Failure in Advance

TEHRAN - Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif says a United States-planned meeting in the Polish capital, Warsaw, that Washington had sought to turn into an anti-Iran platform has fallen flat on its face before getting off the ground.

"The Warsaw meeting was rendered doomed to failure before [its] start," Foreign Minister Zarif told ICANA, referring to the February 13-14 meeting.

The United States initially put much effort into making the Warsaw meeting an anti-Iran platform but had to back away from many of its suppositions about the

meeting because it was snubbed by most world officials.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced the meeting last month, saying it would purportedly focus on the "important element of making sure that Iran is not a destabilizing influence."

Later in the month, however, and as officials from various countries indicated their refusal to participate, US Deputy Ambassador to the United Nations Jonathan Cohen told the UN Security Council that the meeting was "not a venue to demonize or attack Iran," in an apparent about-face. (Press TV)

### Chinese Team Due in Pakistan to Finalise CPEC Projects

ISLAMABAD - A team of Chinese socio-economic development experts would visit Pakistan in the last week of current month to finalize the projects and their sites in already agreed six different areas under China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) including health, education, water supply, vocational training, poverty alleviation and agriculture.

This was disclosed by spokesman of Ministry of Planning, Development and Reforms here on Saturday.

The spokesman, in a statement, also clarified a news item published in a section of press regarding delays in implementation of CPEC, saying that none of the CPEC projects is facing

delay; rather Pakistan and China are agreed on the future trajectory of the CPEC and timely completion of its ongoing projects.

He told the successful 8th Joint Cooperation Committee meeting laid foundation for the expansion of CPEC to new heights. For future, he said joint efforts are underway, focusing on socio-economic development and accelerating cooperation in industrial development as well as agriculture.

The MoU on the formation of JWG on Socio-economic development and MoU on Poverty Reduction have been signed during the Prime Minister's visit to China in November, the spokesman added. (Agencies)

### Significant Growth in Turkmenistan's GDP by Late January

ASHGABAT - By the end of January 2019, the growth of the gross domestic product (GDP) of Turkmenistan was 6.2 percent, the Turkmen government said in a statement, Trend reports.

In general, the volume of production and the retail trade turnover grew by 4.9 and 19 percent compared to the same period last year, respectively.

The plan for the production of various types of food products has been fulfilled by 155.1 percent. The report detailing the aforementioned figures was presented at a meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan.

It was noted in particular that the plan for the extraction of oil and gas condensate was fulfilled by 103.2 percent, natural and associated gas by 107.9 percent, processing of hydrocarbon raw materials by 113.3 percent, gasoline production by 101.3 percent, diesel fuel by 108.8 percent, lubricating oils by 100.9 percent, liquefied gas by 110.6 percent, and investment management by 113.5 percent.

Turkmenistan, according to a report by British Petroleum (BP), ranks fourth in the world in terms of natural gas reserves and currently exports it to China and Iran.

The country set a course for diversifying the local economy. The textile and petroleum industries have developed, and the oil, gas, chemical, and building material industries are actively developing. (Trend)

### Uzbekistan to Establish Development Bank

TASHKENT - Uzbek President instructed the Central Bank to create a Development Bank with a capital of \$500 million, Trend reports via Uzbek media.

"The bank's activities will cover pre-export lending, post-credit services, export subsidies, and logistics. Preparation has been going on for a long time and the work is just beginning," said Central Bank Chairman Mamariso Nurmuratov at the International Press Club session.

Deputy Minister of Investment and Foreign Trade, Executive Director of the Fund for Reconstruction and Development of Uzbekistan Shukhrat Vafayev acknowledged that it is necessary to use aggressive models of financial support for exports. "We must support exports and our support must be aggressive. We have big tasks and assignments. We are tasked with the Central Bank, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economy and Industry to develop a comprehensive export support system. Our doors are always open if the applicant has any problems," he said. (Trend)

### Mexico's Former First Lady Announces Divorce from Enrique Pena Nieto

MEXICO CITY - Just two months after Enrique Pena Nieto's tenure as Mexico's president came to an end, his wife has announced that she's divorcing him.

Angelica Rivera, the former first lady, took to Instagram on Friday to announce that after nearly nine years of marriage she would be divorcing Nieto.

"Today all my energy, strength and love are focused on continuing to be a good mother, on recovering my life and my professional career,"

Rivera said, according to a translation of a post made in Spanish.

She said she had always given her all to her marriage and deeply regrets "this very painful situation."

Rumors circulated earlier this week that the couple split back in December. Nieto's six-year term ended Dec. 1.

The pair, who wed in November 2010, were last seen together in January at the funeral of a prominent leader of his Institutional Revolutionary Party. (Fox News)

### 'New Zealand Exists!' Consternation on Twitter after Ikea Leaves Country Off Map

WELLINGTON - Ikea has apologized for an offensive world map that somehow doesn't feature New Zealand - one month after they announced plans to expand into the island nation.

The Swedish furniture giant was forced to address their harsh removal of the country from our planet after a person took to Reddit to point out their omission. The poster spotted the awkward error on the 'Björksta' world map at a Washington

DC store.

"Ikea is responsible for securing correct and compliant motifs on all our products. We can see that the process has failed regarding the product Björksta world map," a company spokesperson told the BBC.

"We regret this mistake and apologise," they said, adding that the incomplete map is currently being phased out of Ikea stores.

The timing couldn't be more awkward for the flat-pack furniture gi-



ant: the epic gaffe comes just weeks after Ikea announced its plans to expand into New Zealand at the end of 2018, and the "phase out" process has yet to reach its website, which still offers the incorrect map. (RT)

### US Energy Secretary Surprises at World Government Summit

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates - U.S. Energy Secretary Rick Perry has made a surprise visit to the World Government Summit in Dubai.

Perry took the stage Sunday to announce a robotics competition would be held later this year in the United Arab Emirates.

Perry is a former Texas governor who twice launched unsuccessful presidential campaigns. The annual World Government Summit in Dubai draws leaders from across the globe.

International Monetary



Fund chief Christine Lagarde and Prime Minister Saad al-Hariri are both expected to later address the summit. (Fox News)

### Prince Philip, 97, Gives Up Licence after Car Crash

LONDON - Queen Elizabeth II's 97-year-old husband Prince Philip on Saturday surrendered his driving licence after causing a car crash that outraged the media and stirred a debate about old age and driving.

Buckingham Palace said Philip - formally known as the Duke of Edinburgh - took the decision on his own after rolling over his Land Rover last month.

"After careful consideration the Duke of Edinburgh has taken the decision to voluntarily surrender his driving licence," Buckingham Palace said in a brief statement. Police in the eastern part of England where the accident happened outside a royal residence said they had passed Philip's file to prosecutors to determine whether anyone should be charged. "Norfolk Police can confirm that the 97-year-old driver of the Land Rover involved in the collision at Sandringham ... voluntarily surrendered his licence to officers," said a police statement. (AFP)

### Trump's World Bank Pick, an Ally for the Lender's Critics?

WASHINGTON - President Donald Trump's choice to lead the World Bank is a firebrand critic of the world's largest anti-poverty lender - an institution he has called wasteful, corrupt and overly generous to China.

Those complaints are similar to those voiced by others in the development community. But that does not mean they have found a new ally in David Malpass, the senior US Treasury official who has pledged to reform the bank. Nancy Pelosi, the newly reinstated Democratic speaker of the US House of Representatives, says Trump's choice threatens to "undermine the institution's mission." (AFP)

### Pilot Strike at Taiwan's China Airlines Drags into 3rd Day

TAIPEI, Taiwan - A strike among pilots at Taiwan's flag carrier China Airlines dragged into a third day Sunday, resulting in further flight cancellations.

There was no immediate word of a settlement as the pilots' union remained firm in its demands for an additional backup pilot on flights lasting eight hours or more, a more transparent system of promotion, a year-end bonus and other concessions.

The official Central News Agency said a total of 47 flights will have been canceled by Sunday.

The strike came in the middle of the Lunar New Year travel rush. About 70 percent of the carrier's 1,300 pilots belong to the union, which has accused management of insincerity and mistreating its workforce to keep costs down. (AP)

### Protesters Rally in Russia in Support of Opposition Activist



MOSCOW - Protesters in several Russian cities have taken to the streets in solidarity with an opposition activist. Anastasia Shevchenko from the southern city of Rostov-on-Don last month became the first person to be charged under a new Russian law that carries a

prison term for "participation in the activities of an undesirable organization." Shevchenko works for Open Russia, an organization funded by exiled billionaire Mikhail Khodorkovsky. Russia passed a much-criticized law in 2015 to list groups that it believes to be

harming national interests as "undesirable."

The TV channel Dozhd reported Sunday about 100 people were rallying in support of Shevchenko in Moscow. Several dozen were also on the streets of St. Petersburg and Yekaterinburg. (Fox News)

### Ukraine Detains Dozens of Far-Right Activists in Kiev

KIEV, Ukraine - Several dozen far-right activists in Ukraine have been detained after clashes with police in the capital of Kiev.

Far-right activists on Saturday tried to storm a police station in Kiev after several others were detained at a campaign event for presidential candidate Yulia Tymoshenko. The activists were demanding justice in the killing of an anti-corruption activist. They suspect

that a member of Tymoshenko's party was involved in the slaying.

The National Police said late Saturday that it had detained 40 people and opened three criminal cases investigating violence against law enforcement officers. Later Saturday, several dozen masked men staged an impromptu picket and threw flares at the residence of the Ukrainian interior minister to protest the detentions. (Fox News)

### Chinese President Sends Congratulatory Message to 32nd AU Summit

BEIJING - Chinese President Xi Jinping on Sunday sent a congratulatory message on the holding of the 32nd African Union (AU) summit in the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa.

Calling the AU a banner of unity and strength, Xi said that since last year, under the leadership of AU, African integration process has made significant progress, African countries have continued to speak in one voice on major international and regional issues and Africa's global influence has increasingly grown.

"I warmly congratulate the AU on the progress and sincerely wish that it will continue to unite and lead African countries towards new and greater achievements," Xi said.

Xi stressed that in September last year, the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) was a huge success, during which he joined hands with leaders of the African countries and the AU to draw a blueprint for the development of China-Africa relations.

China is willing to work with Africa to implement the FOCAC Beijing Summit outcomes, promoting the alignment of the joint construction of the Belt and Road with the implementation of the AU Agenda 2063, the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda as well as other development strategies of African countries, Xi said. (Xinhua)