

Trump Vows he Won't Let China 'Do Nothing' on N. Korea

WASHINGTON - US President Donald Trump warned Saturday that he would "no longer" allow China to "do nothing" on North Korea, after the belligerent hermit state launched an intercontinental ballistic missile test. In his critique, which came in two tweets, Trump linked trade woes with the Asian giant to policy on North Korea, after South Korea indicated it was speeding the deployment of a US missile defense that has infuriated China. "I am very disappointed in China. Our foolish past leaders have allowed them to make hundreds of billions of dollars a year in trade, yet they do NOTHING for us with North Korea, just talk,"



Trump wrote. "We will no longer allow this to continue. China could easily solve this problem!" Trump has vowed to take "all necessary steps to ensure the security of the American homeland and protect our allies in the region." The US and South Korea conducted a live-fire exercise using surface-to-surface missiles after the launch, the US army said. The heads of the US and South Korean militaries discussed "military response options" after North Korea's launch, the Pentagon said. China, Pyongyang's main economic and diplomatic ally, opposes any military intervention and calls for a resolution through dialogue. (AFP)

Neighbor News

Xi Calls for Strong Military to Defeat Invading Enemies, Safeguard World Peace

ZHURIHE, Inner Mongolia - President Xi Jinping said Sunday China needs a strong military more than ever, urging building the People's Liberation Army (PLA) into world-class armed forces with confidence and capability to "defeat all invading enemies" and "safeguard world peace." Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, delivered a speech after overseeing a grand military parade at the Zhuruihe training base in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region to mark the PLA's 90th anniversary, which falls on Aug. 1. "The world is not all at peace, and peace must be safeguarded," said Xi. "Today, we are closer to the goal of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation than any other time in history, and we need to build a strong people's military more than any other time in history." Enjoying peace is a bliss for the people while protecting peace is the responsibility of the people's army, Xi said. He urged the PLA to fully implement the CPC's thoughts on building a strong military, follow the path of strengthening the army with Chinese characteristics, strive for the CPC's target on strengthening the PLA under the new circumstances, and build the heroic PLA into a world-class military. This was the first time that China has commemorated Army Day with a military parade since the founding of New China in 1949. (Xinhua)

British Government Divided on Free Movement after Brexit

LONDON - Allowing free movement of people after Britain leaves the European Union would not "keep faith" with the Brexit vote, the international trade secretary said, underlining divisions in the government over the issue. Liam Fox told the Sunday Times that senior government ministers had not reached a consensus on retaining free movement of people for a transitional period, a proposal outlined by Chancellor Philip Hammond on Friday. Hammond had said

should be no immediate changes to immigration or trading rules when Britain leaves the EU in March 2019, and the status quo could endure until mid-2022. "If there have been discussions on that, I have not been party to them," Fox told the newspaper. "I have not been involved in any discussion on that, nor have I signified my agreement to anything like that." Divisions between ministers over Brexit strategy have become more open after Prime Minister Theresa May lost her majority in an early election she called in June. With May away on holiday, the debate has intensified. Hammond has led a push within the government to



secure a business-friendly Brexit that avoids a sudden change in 2019 in the relationship between Britain and the EU, which buys nearly half the country's exports. (Reuters)

Turkey's Erdogan Regenerates Gov't, Party ahead of 2019 Elections

ANKARA - Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan undertook the difficult task to regenerate both government and his ruling party ahead of the crucial 2019 elections, after having complained of a "fatigue" amongst his political entourage. Erdogan, who has been ruling Turkey since 2002, first as prime minister and then president, had a very narrow victory, 51 percent in the April constitutional referendum, which granted him extensive executive powers. Despite the victory, with the opposition claims of rigged results, the president expressed concerns that the state of things at his Justice and Development Party (AKP) was not as he expected. After regaining the leadership of the AKP in May following constitutional referendum, Erdogan refuses any defiance inside his "home" which vowed to rejuvenate the cabinet. He put up the first step of the rejuvenation with replacing and swapping 11 ministers on July 19, (Xinhua)

Pakistan Set to Elect New Prime Minister Tuesday

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan's lawmakers will elect a new prime minister on Tuesday to replace ousted leader Nawaz Sharif, with ruling party stalwart Shahid Khaqan Abbasi expected to become interim leader until Sharif's own brother is eligible. The confirmation from parliament came after Pakistan's President Mamnoon Hussain convened a special session following Sharif's decision to put forward his ally Abbasi as interim leader and named his brother Shahbaz, 65, as long-term successor. Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party holds a majority with 188 seats in the 342-member parliament, so it should be able to swiftly install its choice, barring any defections from its own ranks. A quick handover could ease political upheaval sparked by the Supreme Court's decision on Friday to disqualify Sharif for not declaring a source of income. The court also ordered a criminal investigation into him and his family. Abbasi on Sunday vowed to continue Sharif's work. "I hope that God will help me in furthering Nawaz Sharif's policies," Abbasi told reporters in Islamabad, adding to speculation that Sharif will continue to run the show behind the scenes. The turmoil and the premature end to Sharif's third stint in power has also raised questions about Pakistan's democracy as no prime minister has completed a full term in power since independence from British colonial rule in 1947. (Reuters)

New Chief of Staff Takes over at White House Come Monday

WASHINGTON - Retired Marine Gen. John Kelly is a battle-hardened commander who would bring a background of military discipline and order to President Donald Trump's roiling White House as the new chief of staff. Kelly's experience as Homeland Security secretary and a veteran of three tours in Iraq - along with a sobering family tragedy - suggests he'll be a loyal manager for Trump when he starts the job Monday. "He has been a true star of my administration," the president tweeted Friday,

announcing that his current secretary of homeland security was in, and White House chief of staff Reince Priebus was out. Trump called Kelly a "great leader" and "great American." He called Priebus, ousted after a tumultuous six months, a "good man." As Homeland Security secretary, Kelly has taken the lead on some of Trump's most controversial policies, including his executive orders suspending the admission of refugees and temporarily barring visitors from several Muslim-majority nations. (AP)

US Successfully Tests Missile Intercept System

WASHINGTON - American forces successfully tried out Sunday a missile interception system the US hopes to set up on the Korean peninsula, military officials said following a trial just days after North Korea's second test of an ICBM. In the American test of the so-called THAAD system, a medium-range missile was launched from a US Air Force C-17 aircraft flying over the Pacific and a THAAD unit in Alaska "detected, tracked and intercepted the target," the US Missile Defense

Agency said. It said this was the 15th successful intercept in 15 tests for the weapons system known as THAAD, which stands for Terminal High Altitude Area Defense. South Korea said Saturday it will speed up deployment of a THAAD battery on its territory because of the latest North Korean test of an intercontinental ballistic missile. Parts of the THAAD defense system were brought into South Korea under the government of ousted president Park Geun-Hye. But new leader Moon Jae-In suspended deployment of the programme last month, citing the need for a new environmental impact assessment. However, South Korean Defense Minister Song Young-Moo said Saturday that Seoul will now begin consultations on the



"tentative deployment" parts of the THAAD battery in response to the latest North Korean test. The THAAD deployment has infuriated China, which has long argued it will destabilize the region. (AFP)

Iran Rules to Halt to Missile Tests as Tension with US Rises

TEHRAN - A defiant Iran vowed on Saturday to press ahead with its missile programme and condemned new US sanctions, as tensions rise after the West hardened its tone against the Islamic republic. In the latest incident, Tehran and Washington accused each other's naval forces of provocative manoeuvres in the Gulf that culminated in a US helicopter firing warning flares. The US Navy said it had reacted to unresponsive vessels belonging to the Revolutionary Guards closing in on American ships at high speed, a charge denied by Iran which described the American Guard Corps naval vessels approaching US naval forces at a high rate of speed. (AFP)

Iran No Longer Needs Turkmenistan's Natural Gas

ASHGABAT - An Iranian MP says the country will no longer need to import natural gas from its northern neighbour Turkmenistan. The 175-km pipeline, which measures up to environmental standards, will meet the need for natural gas in north of the country, said Qarehkhani, who sits on the Parliament's Energy Commission. With the pipeline coming on line, he said, there will be no drop in the pressure of the supplied natural gas anymore. (Agencies)

8,000 to Leave Syria-Lebanon Border Zone as Ceasefire Deal Advances

BEIRUT - About 8,000 people have registered to leave the Lebanese border region near Arsal for a rebel-held area of Syria as part of a local ceasefire between Hezbollah and the Nusra Front, a security source in Lebanon said on Sunday. The local ceasefire came into effect on Thursday and will involve the departure of all Nusra militants from the area around Arsal along with any of the civilians living in the area's refugee camps who wish to leave with them. The first step in the ceasefire took place on Sunday as the two sides started to exchange the bodies of fighters killed in clashes between them. Five Hezbollah prisoners held by Nusra will be released as part of the agreement.

Egypt, Russia Discuss Efforts for WMD-Free Mideast

CAIRO - Egyptian and Russian senior diplomats met here on Saturday to discuss efforts for no weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in the Middle East, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry said in a statement. The two sides underscored methods to enhance efforts for establishing a Mideast WMD-free zone through joint preparatory committees ahead of the review conference of the 1995 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) scheduled in 2020, said the ministry's statement. The Egyptian side was led by Hesham Badr, assistant foreign minister for multilateral and international security affairs, while the Russian delegation was headed by Mikhail Ulyanov, Foreign Ministry's director of department of security affairs and disarmament. (Xinhua)

Saudi Arabia Says Calls for Internationalization of Holy Sites 'A Declaration of War'

DUBAI - Saudi Arabia's foreign minister called Qatar's demands for an internationalization of the Muslim hajj pilgrimage a declaration of war against the kingdom, Saudi-owned Al Arabiya television said on Sunday, although it was unclear whether Qatar had actually made any such demand. "Qatar's demands to internationalize the holy sites is aggressive and a declaration of war against the kingdom," Adel al-Jubeir was quoted saying on Al Arabiya's website. "We re-



serve the right to respond to anyone who is working on the internationalization of the holy sites," he said. However, it was unclear whether Qatar made the demand. It did accuse the Saudis of politicizing Hajj and addressed the

United Nations Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion on Saturday, expressing concern about obstacles facing Qataris who want to attend hajj this year. No one from the Qatari government was immediately available for comment. (Reuters)

Four Arab Countries Say Ready for Qatar Dialogue with Conditions

DUBAI - The four Arab countries which have cut ties with Qatar said on Sunday they were ready for talks to tackle the dispute if Doha showed willingness to deal with their demands. The foreign ministers of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) met in the Bahraini capital Manama to discuss the crisis that has raised tensions across the region. Diplomatic efforts led by Kuwait and backed by Western powers have failed to end the dispute, in which the four

states have severed travel and communications with Qatar. "The four countries are ready for dialogue with Qatar with the condition that it announces its sincere willingness to stop funding terrorism and extremism and its commitment to not interfere in other countries' foreign affairs and respond to the 13 demands," Bahrain's foreign minister, Sheikh Khalid bin Ahmed al-Khalifa, told a joint news conference after the meeting. They announced no new economic sanctions on the Gulf state. (Reuters)

Clinton Lost, but Republicans Still Want to Investigate her

WASHINGTON - Democrat Hillary Clinton lost the 2016 election to President Donald Trump, but some Republicans in Congress are intensifying their calls to investigate her and other Obama administration officials. As investigations into Russian meddling and possible links to Trump's campaign have escalated on both sides of the Capitol, some Republicans argue that the investigations should have a greater focus on Democrats. Democrats who have pushed the election probes "have started a war of investigative attrition," said GOP Rep. Steve King of Iowa, a member of the House Judiciary Committee. Several officials from former President Barack Obama's administration and Clinton's campaign have appeared before or been interviewed by the House and Senate Intelligence Committees as part of the Russia investigation, along with Trump campaign officials. The GOP-led committees are investigating whether Trump's campaign had any links to Russian interference in last year's election. The chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, Rep. Devin Nunes, R-Calif., has continued a separate investigation into whether Obama administration officials inappropriately made requests to "unmask" identities of Trump campaign officials in intelligence reports. The House Judiciary Committee, which has declined to investigate the Russian meddling, approved a resolution this past week to request documents related to the FBI's now-closed investigation of Clinton's emails. (AP)