

Putin Stands by China, Criticizes U.S., in Trade, Huawei Disputes

ST PETERSBURG - Aggressive U.S. tactics such as a campaign against Chinese telecoms firm Huawei will lead to trade wars - and possibly real wars - Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Friday, in a show of solidarity with China alongside its leader Xi Jinping. In some of his strongest words on the subject, Putin accused Washington of "unbridled economic egoism", singling out U.S. efforts to thwart a Russian gas pipeline to Europe and a U.S. campaign to persuade countries to bar Huawei, the world's biggest telecoms equipment maker, from supplying network gear.



His broadside, at an economic forum in St Petersburg on the same platform as Xi, was a

clear show of unity with China at a time when Beijing is locked in a trade war with Washing-

ton and Moscow's own ties with the West are at a post-Cold War low. "States which previously promoted free trade with honest and open competition have started speaking the language of trade wars and sanctions, of open economic raiding using arm-twisting and scare tactics, of eliminating competitors using so-called non-market methods," said Putin. "Look for example at the situation around Huawei which they are trying not to just squeeze out, but to unceremoniously push out of the global market. It's already being called the first technological war ... (More on P4)...(11)

Qatar Emir to Visit White House amid Gulf Tensions

WASHINGTON - Qatar Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani will meet with President Donald Trump next month as the country continues to endure the two-year economic squeeze from its US-backed Gulf Arab rivals, the White House announced Friday. The emir will meet Trump in Washington on July 9 for talks on regional politics, security and counterterrorism cooperation, according to the announcement, amid a US effort to build pressure on Gulf

power Iran. "The visit will build on the longstanding partnership between the United States and Qatar and further strengthen our already substantial economic and security ties," the White House said. Washington has sought to keep up relations with Qatar, an oil-and-gas rich state which has maintained cordial relations with Tehran even as other Gulf Arab states led by Saudi Arabia have cooperated with Trump's "maximum ... (More on P4)...(16)

EU's Barnier: New UK Leader Will Still Face Irish Border Problem

BRUSSELS - Any new British prime minister will still face the problem of what to do with the Irish border after Brexit, the European Union's negotiator for Britain's departure from the bloc said on Friday. Managing the sensitive Irish border and designing an emergency "backstop" solution to prevent the return of a hard border after Brexit has proven the most contentious element of divorce negotiations between London and the



EU. Michel Barnier, the EU's Brexit negotiator, said on Friday that the problem would not go away

after British Prime Minister Theresa May steps down. "The problem is there, created by Brexit. We have to protect peace. Stability is not a question of goods or customs. It's a question ... (More on P4)...(12)

Total Gears Up for North Sea Gas Hunt



ABOARD CULZEAN PLATFORM, NORTH SEA (United Kingdom) - Deep beneath the cold waters of the North Sea lies what French energy

giant Total hopes will help feed Britain's voracious appetite for gas. Total forecasts that the Culzean field, located more than 15,000 metres

under the seabed half-way between Scotland and Norway, will cover five percent of Britain's gas requirements. "There's still life" in North Sea production despite its dwindling energy reserves, Total's Culzean project manager Claus Vissing-Jorgensen told AFP on a recent trip to the Culzean site before drilling begins in the coming days. Accessible by helicopter, Culzean is about 45 miles (70 kilometres) east of the Aberdeen, Europe's self-proclaimed

oil capital on Scotland's northeast coast. It comprises three vast and bright yellow platforms, one of which is a structure that runs all the way to the seabed and contains drilling equipment. The other two are used for refining and living quarters for 180 people. The seabed lies 90 metres (yards) below the platforms, but drilling continues for another 15,000 metres below that. The gigantic platforms ... (More on P4)...(13)

Former President Still Looms over Kazakh Election

MOSCOW - For the first time in nearly three decades of independence, Kazakhstan is holding a presidential election without Nursultan Nazarbayev on the ballot. But the longtime leader of the oil-rich Central Asian country still casts a long shadow on the vote. Nazarbayev loyalist Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, who became acting president after Nazarbayev's surprise resignation in March, is seen as certain to win in Sunday's snap election that features seven can-

didates. The 78-year-old Nazarbayev's influence remains enormous in Kazakhstan, where he continues as head of the security council and the ruling Nur-Otan party and carries the title of "elbasy (national leader)." Tokayev proved his fealty to Nazarbayev shortly after becoming acting president by approving renaming the country's capital as Nur-Sultan in his honor. The resignation in March surprised many ... (More on P4)...(17)

US Commander Says He Believes Iranian Threat 'Is Very Real'

BAGHDAD - Iran has chosen to "step back and recalculate" after making preparations for an apparent attack against U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf region, but it is too early to conclude the threat is gone, the top commander of American forces in the Mideast said.

In an interview with three reporters accompanying him to the Gulf, Gen. Frank McKenzie said he remains concerned by Iran's potential for aggression and he would not rule out requesting additional U.S. forces to bolster defenses against Iranian missiles or other weapons. (AP)

India Sees New Deals with Moscow on Nuclear Energy, Space & High Tech as A Priority - Ambassador

NEW DELHI - India is set to diversify economic ties with Russia as new deals on the digital economy, nuclear energy, and space are expected to be sealed in September during Prime Minister Modi's visit, India's ambassador to Russia told RT.

The diplomat made the remarks during a major Russian economic forum, currently being held in Saint Petersburg. In an interview with RT, Bala Venkatesh Varma, who was appointed India's ambassador to Russia in August 2018, hailed "time-tested historically friendly relations" between the countries but insisted that both nations "can do more." Economic diversification of our relations is a priority, also in new sectors like digital ... (More on P4)...(18)

India to Buy 100 More of The Israeli Bunker-Buster Bombs Used in Attack on Pakistan Terror Camp

NEW DELHI - The Indian Air Force has inked a deal with an Israeli defense firm to restock its arsenal with an advanced version of a bunker-buster bomb it had used in an airstrike against an alleged terrorist hideout in Pakistan in February. New Delhi will purchase 100 more SPICE-2000 bombs for an estimated \$43.2 million. SPICE stands for "smart, precise-impact and cost-effective" and is manufactured by the Israeli defense technology company Rafael. The munitions are expected to be delivered to the Indian Air Force (IAF)



within the next three months. Designed to destroy bunkers and other buildings, the bombs are an advanced version of the munitions deployed when the IAF attacked the suspected terrorist compound in Balakot, Pakistan, ear-

lier this year. Islamabad responded with strikes of its own the next day, eventually downing an Indian F-16 after a brief dogfight. The high-tech SPICE bomb has a range of 60 km and uses real-time data to adjust its ... (More on P4)...(14)

Hundreds of African Migrants Cross US-Mexico Border in Texas Over Past Week: Reports

EL PASO, Texas - More than 500 migrants from African nations -- including Angola, Cameroon and the Republic of Congo -- have been apprehended in Texas, at the Del Rio Border Patrol sector of the U.S.-Mexico border, since May 30, according to U.S. Customs and Border Protection. One group of 116 African migrants apprehended by border agents last week were caught wading across the Rio Grande in order to gain access to

the U.S., authorities said. Del Rio sector's chief patrol agent, Raul L. Ortiz, told BBC News that language barriers and cultural differences were causing "additional burdens on processing stations" as border agents process migrants who come from areas other than Spanish- or Portuguese-speaking Central and South America. It remained unclear what route the African ... (More on P4)...(15)

Neighbor News

China's Logistics Continues to Expand

BEIJING - China's logistics activities remained expansionary in May, industrial data showed. The Logistics Performance Index stood at 52.8 in May, dipping 0.7 percentage points from April, according to the China Federation of Logistics and Purchasing. A reading above 50

indicates expansion, while below it reflects contraction. The sub-indices for logistics new orders and inventory turnover also edged down in May, but remained above 50. The sub-index for business expectation stood at 58.6, indicating stable market demand. (Xinhua)

Turkmen President: Turkmenistan's Geostrategic Role Is Growing

ASHGABAT - Today, the geostrategic role of Turkmenistan on the Eurasian continent as an important intersection of transit and transport corridors is growing, Trend reports referring to the local Al-Tyn Asyr TV channel, which in turn quotes President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov.

Special attention should be paid to observing the order of the movement of goods and vehicles across the customs borders of the country, as was stressed by the head of state at a meeting of the State Security Council of Turkmenistan, instructing to keep the conduct of relevant procedures under proper control and in accordance with the requirements of international standards, according to the report.

The report also says that the Chairman of the State Customs Service Ataturdy Osmanow presented a report on equipping subordinate institutions with modern

technical means that allow strict control of cargo passing through the state border. In this context, it was noted that as part of improving the work of the service, the volumes of services rendered under the digital system are increasing, and special importance is attached to increasing the effectiveness of cooperation in this area with reputable international organizations.

Turkmenistan shares land borders with Kazakhstan, Iran, Uzbekistan and Afghanistan, and has maritime borders with Azerbaijan, Russia, Kazakhstan and Iran via the Caspian Sea. Ashgabat considers it a priority to develop the large-scale North-South and East-West transport corridors, increase the capabilities of the Central Asia-Persian Gulf communication network and develop transport links in the Caspian-Black Sea region. (Trend)

Iran Says Macron's Remarks to Deepen Distrust Among JCPOA Parties

TEHRAN - Iran says comments made by the French president in his meeting with US President Donald Trump will be of no help to saving the Iran nuclear deal and will just further deepen distrust among its signatories. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi made the remarks on Friday, reacting to Emmanuel Macron's call for fresh negotiations to "extend the terms of the JCPOA," as the nuclear deal is officially called. "Under the current circumstances, their move to raise issues beyond the JCPOA will not only fail to help save the JCPOA, but will also prepare the grounds for further distrust among the parties remaining in the agree-

ment," the spokesman said. Such moves will also take the US closer to the goal behind its withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal, namely the collapse of the multilateral deal, he added. In a Thursday meeting with Trump, Macron listed four common priorities of the US and France in addressing "Iranian behavior": preventing Iran from getting a nuclear weapon, reducing Iran's ballistic activity, containing Iran's regional activity and establishing peace in the region. "I think we do share the same objective on Iran," Macron said, calling for fresh negotiations to extend the terms of the JCPOA and to achieve those goals. (Press TV)

Govt's Economic Reforms Agenda to Come to Fruition Soon: President

ISLAMABAD - President Dr Arif Alvi Thursday said the government's efforts to bring ease of doing business and economic stability in the country would come to fruition soon. In a meeting with a delegation of businessmen in Karachi, the president said the government would extend all-out support to the local and foreign investors to promote business and trade activities, said a President House statement.

He hoped that the government would soon overcome the economic challenges confronting

the country. The members of the delegation shared Eid greetings with the president and also apprised him of their problems. Meanwhile, the President also hosted an Open House at the Governor House in Karachi to exchange Eid greetings with the people from cross sections of society. The people, including diplomats, political leaders and renowned figures from different fields greeted the president on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr and expressed their good wishes for him. (Monitoring Desk)