

# Trump Says in 'No Hurry' for Iran Strikes

WASHINGTON - President Donald Trump said Friday he is in "no hurry" to bomb Iran, revealing that US forces were "cocked and loaded" to retaliate after the downing of a US spy drone but that he called them back in order to avoid mass casualties.

"I am in no hurry," Trump said in a series of tweets detailing his thought process during the late Thursday decision to send, and then recall, US forces.

"10 minutes before the strike I stopped it," the president said, explaining that a general had told him to expect 150 deaths on the Iranian side and that he had concluded this would not be a "proportionate" response.



Trump said the Pentagon had selected three sites in Iran for bombing. The revelations by Trump were highly unusual

for a president and they gave new insight into the long-running internal debate at the White House over its Middle East policy.

Trump campaigned for the presidency on a platform of extricating the United States from military quagmires. However, some of his closest advisers, such as national security adviser John Bolton and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, are said to favor a far more muscular US strategy.

Trump has labeled Iran a danger and has sought to wreck a complex international accord on rewarding the country for allowing verification of its nuclear industry, primarily by unilaterally withdrawing from the deal.

At the same time, Trump has repeatedly sought to downplay moments of tension, ...*(More on P4)...(12)*

## Turkey Could Face Consequences If It Doesn't Change Tack, Says Greece

ATHENS - Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said on Friday Turkey could face consequences from Europe if it persisted on a course of action challenging Cyprus's right to explore for gas.

"There is an upsurge in Turkish aggression, something we don't only observe in the relations of Turkey with Greece and Cyprus, but also important countries like the United States, and with Europe," Tsipras

told reporters at the end of an EU summit. Turkey launched a second drilling ship on Thursday for natural gas operations off Cyprus, a move which risks aggravating a conflict with Cyprus over jurisdiction rights for oil and gas exploration.

At an EU summit in Brussels, leaders issued a statements saying Turkey's drilling is "illegal" and that the bloc "stands ready to respond appropriately." (Reuters)

## Iran Has 'Indisputable' Evidence US Drone Violated Airspace, FM Says

TEHRAN - Iran's deputy foreign minister claimed Thursday that his country has strong evidence that the downed US Navy surveillance drone violated Iranian airspace, adding that Tehran won't hesitate "a moment" to tackle any aggression.

"There [is] indisputable evidence about the presence of this drone in Iran's airspace," Seyyed Abbas Araqchi said in a phone call with the Swiss envoy, Markus Leitner, adding that "some parts of [the drone's] wreck-

age have been retrieved from Iranian territorial waters."

Earlier on Thursday, the Iranian military published a video which they say shows the nation's air defenses shooting down a high-altitude US Navy surveillance UAV. In the phone call, Araqchi also urged Washington to respect Iran's borders, both aerial and maritime, telling Leitner "the Islamic Republic of Iran would not hesitate for a moment to decisively defend its territory against any aggression."



A similar call was made by Majid Takht-e Ravanchi, Iran's ambassador to the UN, saying it is high time the international community pressured the US into ending its "unlawful and destabilizing" actions in the Persian Gulf. (RT)

## Putin Says US Military Action against Iran Would Be A 'Catastrophe for The Region'



MOSCOW - Russia's President Vladimir Putin warned the U.S. Thursday not to take military action against Iran following the recent

downing of an American drone and attacks on oil tankers near the Strait of Hormuz. Speaking on a televised call-in show, Putin said

U.S. military action against Iran - which Washington blames for both events -- would be a "catastrophe for the region as a minimum" and trigger an escalation of hostilities with unpredictable results.

The comments came just days after the Trump administration announced that 1,000 additional American troops would be deployed to the Middle East.

The Pentagon has said that deployment includes security forces and troops for addition-

al surveillance and intelligence gathering in the region. The downing of the drone by a surface-to-air missile earlier Thursday was the most recent Iranian provocation in the region, coming on the heels of a disputed attack on a pair of oil tankers in the Gulf of Oman last week -- which the U.S. has blamed on Iran.

Iran claimed the U.S. drone on Thursday was over Iranian airspace when it was shot down. A ministry spokesman, ...*(More on P4)...(13)*

## EU Leaders Warn Next British Pm: No Brexit Renegotiation

BRUSSELS - The EU's leaders Friday fired a Brexit warning to whoever wins the battle to become the next British prime minister, insisting the existing divorce deal will not be changed. Hot favourite Boris Johnson faces foreign minister Jeremy Hunt in a run-off vote to decide who takes on the tricky task of piloting the country's departure from the EU.

Both say they want to renegotiate the deal that May struck with Brussels after two years of painful negotiation -- a deal which British lawmakers have rejected three times. At a leaders' summit in Brussels, European Council President Donald Tusk said the bloc would remain "very precise and also patient" despite the high political drama unfolding in Westminster. "Maybe the process of Brexit will be even more exciting than before because of some ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

## Georgia Parliament Head Quits after 240 Injured in Crackdown

TBILISI - The head of Georgia's parliament quit Friday after at least 240 people were injured in a police crackdown on mass protests, which erupted over a controversial address to lawmakers by a Russian MP.

Opposition leaders have vowed to hold demonstrations until parliament is dissolved and snap elections are held. Rallies broke out in the capital Tbilisi on Thursday after a Russian lawmaker addressed parliament from the speaker's seat -- a deeply controversial move in a country at loggerheads with Moscow. Police fired rubber bullets and tear gas at crowds, leaving at least 160 demonstrators and 80 officers injured according to the health ministry. ...*(More on P4)...(16)*

## Nuclear Waste, Rising Seas and Trump: Marshall Islands Struggles to Stay Above Water

GENEVA - The Marshall Islands is literally struggling to stay above water but its President Hilda Heine told Reuters she had saved her breath rather than try to persuade U.S. President Donald Trump to hear its climate change message.

Heine met Trump at the White House last month, along with the presidents of Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia, both of which are also under threat from rising sea levels. But they did not talk about climate change.

"We made a conscious decision to discuss those things that we think we could accomplish, rather than spend time talking about ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

## Xi's DPRK Visit Writes New Chapter of Friendship, Promotes Peninsula Stability

PYONGYANG - Chinese President Xi Jinping's two-day state visit to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) is a major diplomatic action that comes as the world is undergoing changes unseen in a century and the international situation is seeing complex and profound changes, a senior Chinese official said on Friday.

According to Song Tao, head of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), the visit, which coincides with the 70th anniversary of the diplomatic ties between China and the DPRK, is also Xi's first trip to the neighboring country since he became



the Chinese president and general secretary of the Central Committee of the CPC, which bears key significance for the development of bilateral ties.

A NEW CHAPTER FOR TRADITIONAL FRIENDSHIP The DPRK has attached a great importance to Xi's visit and received the Chinese leader with grand and warm wel-

come, Song noted, saying that Kim Jong Un, chairman of the Workers' Party of Korea and chairman of the State Affairs Commission of the DPRK, and his wife, Ri Sol Ju, welcomed Xi and his wife, Peng Liyuan, at the airport, and accompanied the couple for various activities during the visit. The two leaders had ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

## Japan Set to Provide Vaccines to Children in Developing Countries

TOKYO - The Japanese government on Friday said it will provide 1.3 million vaccines to children in developing countries.

Japan's contribution comprises about 4 billion U.S. dollars to cover the cost of the vaccines, as well as its commitment to trying to prevent one million

deaths caused by various diseases. By 2021, Japan has also said it will facilitate quality education being accessible to around 9 million children in developing countries, and by 2022 construct infrastructure to protect 5 million people from disasters. (Xinhua)

## India Uses Yoga Diplomacy to Assert Rising Global Influence

NEW DELHI - If China has panda diplomacy, India has yoga. Prime Minister Narendra Modi successfully lobbied the United Nations to designate June 21 International Yoga Day in his first year in power in 2014. Since then, just as China under President Xi Jinping has given countries pandas for their zoos in a show of goodwill, Modi has used one of India's most popular exports to assert his nation's rising place in the world. On Friday, the fifth annual International Yoga Day, Modi practiced various yoga "asanas" alongside an estimated 40,000 people in India's eastern state of Jharkhand as members of his Cabinet and foreign envoys rolled out their yoga mats in cities around the world.

"Let our motto be yoga for peace, harmony and progress," Modi said before joining the hourlong practice. Most of India's 191 embassies and consulates worldwide organized yoga sessions to commemorate the day, according to the foreign ministry.

The ministry shared photos of yoga flash mobs on the streets of Kiev, colorful yoga mats around Brussels' Triumphal Arch, sun salutations under the Washington Monument, hundreds in seated prayer pose at Moscow's Tagansky Park and more than 500 people in identical transparent ponchos and black pants in front of the Yellow Crane Tower in rainy Wuhan, China. At an ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

## Neighbor News

### Parliamentarians Recommend Various Options to Make Budget People Friendly

ISLAMABAD - Parliamentarians from Treasury and Opposition benches on Friday participated in the budget discussion and recommended various options to make it more effective and helpful for improving the living standard of country's people. Parliamentarians from government benches termed the budget as

positive for people of the country that will be helpful in improving the economic situation of the country besides changing the life of common man. However MNAs from opposition benches criticized the budget, suggesting the government to include inputs from the parliamentarians for further improving it. (Monitoring Desk)

### Iran Will Take US to UN Over Drone Encroachment: Zarif

TEHRAN - Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif says the country will take the case of US drone encroaching on its territory to the United Nations to prove Washington is lying about the aircraft having been shot down over international waters. Zarif made the remarks in a tweet on Thursday, in reference to remarks made by the US military alleging that its spy drone has been shot down over the high seas. Earlier on Thursday, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) announced that its air defense force had shot down an intruding American spy drone in the country's southern coastal province of Hormozgan.

In a statement issued, the IRGC said the US-made Global Hawk surveillance drone was brought down by its Air Force near the Kouh-e Mobarak region - which sits in the central district of Jask County - after the

aircraft violated Iranian airspace. Hours after the incident, the US military confirmed that one of its drones had been shot, claiming that the incident took place in international airspace. Navy Captain Bill Urban, a spokesman for the US military's Central Command, also alleged that it was "an unprovoked attack." The top Iranian diplomat added that the Islamic Republic does not seek war with any country, but Iranians "will zealously defend our skies, land & waters." He further noted that encroaching on Iran's territory was another aggressive step taken by the United States against Iran after it waged economic terrorism against Tehran and conducted covert action against it. The Islamic Republic uses the term to refer to the United States' re-enforcement of draconian sanctions against the Iranian nation. (Press TV)

### Caspian Green Ports of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan Aim for Next Level

ASHGABAT - The OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities Co-ordinator together with the Director of the Port of Baku launched the project Promoting Green Ports and Connectivity in the Caspian Sea Region, Trend reports with reference to the press office of the port.

The project aims to support Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan in strengthening green ports and connectivity in the Caspian Sea Region. Feasibility studies, expert workshops and delegation visits to leading international green ports will explore how to make best use of renewable energy, digitalization and trade and transport facilitation to promote sustainable connectivity. The project will be

implemented in partnership with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, UN-ECE and leading private sector experts. During a workshop on digitalization held with the Port of Baku, participants discussed plans to establish a digital platform to facilitate data exchange between Caspian Sea Ports in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. At the trade facilitation workshop, participants discussed how the ports would benefit from reduced border crossing times and enhanced co-operation between authorities. "The new Port of Baku completely operates in line with the modern standards," said the Director-General of the Port of Baku, Dr. Taleh Ziyadov. (Trend)

### Turkmenistan, Singapore Hold Political Consultations

ASHGABAT - Turkmen-Singapore political consultations were held in Singapore, Trend reports with reference to the Turkmen Foreign Ministry.

The parties discussed the possibility of organizing high-level visits and holding a business forum between the business circles of the two countries, the report said. "Yugneftegaz" company registered in Sin-

gapore operates in the oil and gas market of Turkmenistan. The international company Olam International Ltd, headquartered in Singapore, has taken one of the leading positions in terms of Turkmen cotton purchases in recent years. Earlier it was reported that Singapore offers its services in staff training in the field of civil aviation and maritime transport. (Trend)