

Cooperation Between U.S. Midwest, China Enters New Period: Diplomat

CHICAGO - Chinese Consul-General in Chicago Zhao Jian said Friday that friendly exchanges and practical cooperation between the U.S. Midwestern states and China are entering a new period. At a reception held here to mark the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the United States, Zhao said "Chicago and the American Midwest not only play a vital role in U.S. political, economic, financial, and cultural affairs, they also play an exceedingly critical role in the advancement of amiable exchanges and cooperation between China and the United States."



China has for many years remained one of the top trade

partners for U.S. Midwestern states, as well as an important source of investment. As China and the United States are the

world's two largest economies, the cooperation potential between China and the U.S. Midwest is as vast as ever, Zhao said.

The past four decades of China-U.S. relations have proven that cooperation is the best choice for the two countries, said Zhao. "We should reflect upon our shared experiences of development, and from this, strive toward a relationship based on coordination, cooperation, and stability for the benefits of the people of the two countries as well as of the world," Zhao added. Zhao also called on the two countries to foster strategic mutual trust, seek common ground, expand common interests, and further strengthen and promote people-to-people exchanges to construct a solid basis for China-U.S. relations. (Xinhua)

'Forbidden City' Tells Germany's Complex Military History

ZOSSEN, Germany - Werner Borchert grinds out a cigarette with his leather boot, zips up his down jacket and unlocks a rusty door with a sign reading "Do not enter." He's entering anyway. Borchert is stepping into the heart of the forbidden city, a huge abandoned military complex hidden inside a fenced-off pine forest in eastern Germany. "The Kaiser, Hitler, the Soviets - all of them were militarily active here, one after the

other," says Borchert, 67, a guide offering tours of the "Haus der Offiziere," or officers' complex in the Wuensdorf neighborhood of Zossen, some 40 kilometers (25 miles) south of Berlin. He flicks a light switch in the darkness to turn on the cold, fluorescent lamps that light up seemingly endless hallways with numerous rooms branching off to the left and right. The complex, inaugurated in 1916, has housed the military of...*(More on P4)...(15)*

NEW DELHI - India is demanding that Pakistan take concrete steps against terrorists operating from its territory, while at the same time returning its top diplomat to Pakistan's capital amid an easing of tensions between the nuclear-rivals. Pakistan also announced this week that its high commissioner to India was returning to New Delhi, weeks after the two countries recalled their top diplomats for consultations as tensions flared after suicide

India Asks Pakistan for Concrete Crackdown on Terror Groups



attack on a convoy of Indian paramilitary soldiers in the Indian-held Kashmir. Indian External Affairs

Ministry spokesman Raveesh Kumar said Saturday that a reported Pakistani crackdown this week on seminaries, mosques and hospitals belonging to outlawed groups and arrest of dozens of people were not enough. (Fox News)

Brazil's Bolsonaro to Visit Trump This Month



WASHINGTON - US President Donald Trump will host his Brazilian counterpart Jair Bolsonaro on

March 19, the White House said Friday, the first meeting between the two rightwing leaders who have lavished

praise on each other. The visit was announced by Brazil's foreign ministry last month but a firm date had not been finalized. Bolsonaro, who entered office in January, has vowed to forge close ties with Washington after over a decade of leftist rule in Brazil, and has been dubbed "South America's Trump."

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Venezuela's Minister Says Major Power Outage Likely Caused by 'Cyberattack', Points Finger at US

CARACAS - A cyber-attack is likely the reason for the major blackout that left most of Venezuela in darkness, a Maduro government official said, hinting that the US may be involved in the offensive. As Venezuela is still reeling from a nationwide blackout, Nicolas Maduro's government says the emergency was the result of an external influence. The major power outage was likely prompted by a cyber-attack against the Guri hydroelectric plant

which produces 80% of the country's electricity, Jorge Rodriguez, Venezuela's communication and information minister said on Friday, according to local media. The official went on to hint that US Senator and fierce anti-Maduro campaigner Marco Rubio may be linked to the offensive. Rodriguez found it suspicious that shortly after the failure Rubio shared specific information on Twitter about the emergency that even local authorities...*(More on P4)...(16)*

No Patriots, No F-35s: Pentagon to Empty Turkish Army's Shopping Cart If It Goes on with S-400 Deal

WASHINGTON - Neither the F-35 fifth-generation fighter jet nor the Patriot air defense system will be available to the Turkish military once they get the Russian-made S-400 surface-to-air missiles, a Pentagon spokesman threatened. "I can tell you that if Turkey takes the S-400s there would be grave consequences in terms of our military relationship with them," Charles Summers, acting chief spokesman for the Pentagon, was quoted by US media. "If they take the S-400s, they would not get the F-35s and Patriots," he told an informal press briefing. The stern warning came after Ankara missed a so-called "soft deadline" set by Washington...*(More on P4)...(17)*

British Government Condemned after Islamic State Teenager's Baby Dies

LONDON - A decision by Britain to strip a teenage girl of her citizenship after she joined Islamic State in Syria was described as a "stain on the conscience" of the government on Saturday after her three-week old baby died. Shamima Begum was stripped of her citizenship on security grounds last month, leaving her in a detention camp in Syria where her baby died, the third of the 19-year-old's infant children to die since she traveled to Syria in 2015. The opposition Labour party said the move to leave an innocent child in a refugee camp, where infant mortality rates are high, was morally reprehensible. A lawmaker in the ruling Conservative party said...*(More on P4)...(18)*

Canada Political Crisis Hurts Trudeau's Image as Elections Loom

OTTAWA - Justin Trudeau rose to power in Canada as a champion of feminism and indigenous rights, quickly earning him golden boy status at home and abroad as a progressive leader. But a major political scandal that sparked the resignation of two of his ministers -- both women, one indigenous -- has tarnished his image just seven months before national elections. Pundits say the 47-year-old premier faces a tough battle just to stay in office, with the latest polls showing his Liberals trailing the Conservatives for the first time.



For weeks, Trudeau's government has been rocked by accusations of meddling in the criminal prosecution of engineering giant SNC-Lavalin, which was charged with corruption over alleged bribes paid to secure contracts in Libya. His attorney general Jody Wilson-Raybould, who said she experienced "consistent and sustained" political pressure to shield the company from a trial, stepped down. Budget minister Jane Philpott followed suit, as did longtime Trudeau friend and top aide Gerry Butts...*(More on P4)...(14)*

Netanyahu Campaign Draws Accusations of Incitement

JERUSALEM - Israel's prime minister is portraying an Arab lawmaker, Ahmad Tibi, as a threat to national security in a campaign that critics say questions the loyalty of the country's Arab citizens ahead of April elections. Benjamin Netanyahu has been slumping in the polls after the announcement of his pending corruption indictment. The prime minister has been repeating a campaign mantra, using his

own nickname: "Bibi or Tibi." The slogan highlights Netanyahu's efforts to paint his challengers as conspiring with Arab Israelis and a hostile media to oust him. Tibi says he is concerned about what he views as Netanyahu's attempt to demonize Israel's Arab minority. Arabs make up about 20 percent of Israel's 9 million residents. They hold full citizenship rights but have faced decades of discrimination. (Fox News)

UNEP Plans to Create Big Data Platform on Environment

NAIROBI - The UN Environment on Saturday announced plans to create big data platform to transform global environmental situation. Pascal Peduzzi, an official with the Global Resource Information Database (GRID-Geneva), said the platform will start operational for a period of three years.

"We want to harvest the data globally to fasten the achievement of the sustainable development goals and other environment problems," Peduzzi said in Nairobi ahead of the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) to be held in Nairobi next week. He told delegates attending a side event meeting that the platform that is known as "world's environment situation room" aims to build an open-source platform for big data on the environment, and to explore new space in artificial intelligence and machine learning.

"We are moving to this platform because we have realized that there are powerful computers that analyze images in three minutes as opposed to the old single data analysis," Peduzzi said that the system will help in gathering information on climate change and environmental degradation and connect the results to policy makers for appropriate and immediate action. "The platform will act as an accelerator and incubator of start-up innovation for the environment, as it examines the enabling policies and actions required...*(More on P4)...(19)*

Neighbor News

No Person, Outfit Will Be Allowed to Carry out Terror Acts Using Pakistan Soil: Imran Khan

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has said that no person or organization would be allowed to carry out terror acts in other countries by using the soil of Pakistan, a media report said Saturday. Addressing his first public gathering on Friday in Thar district of the Sindh province since becoming the prime minister, Khan said his government was fully committed to protecting religious minorities across the country," the Dawn newspaper quoted him as saying. Khan said his govern-

ment was acting upon the teachings of the country's founding father Mohammad Ali Jinnah who had called for ensuring full protection to all races and religions in Pakistan. Imran Khan has said that no person or organization would be allowed to carry out terror acts in other countries by using the soil of Pakistan. His comments came as Pakistan is under global pressure to act against terrorism and militant groups operating from its soil after the Pulwama terror attack. (Agencies)

Tajikistan: Internet Just Got Way More Expensive

DUSHANBE - The internet in Tajikistan is not just bad now - it is also becoming very expensive. The state anti-monopoly agency announced this week that as of March 27, mobile telecommunication services providers will be able to sell online data for no less than 5 dirhams per megabyte. Once sales tax and other surcharges are factored in, that will translate into a rate of more than \$6.50 per Gigabyte of traffic, up from the \$3.40 minimum that mobile service providers are currently permitted to charge.

As Asia-Plus newspaper reported in its paper edition, published on March 7, the March 4 diktat was justified by a curious in-

terpretation of the law of supply and demand. The antimonopoly agency says that mobile operators will now be in a position to provide better online speeds. Implicit in that argument is the notion that many will simply no longer be able to go online as much as they do now, thereby freeing up bandwidth for those who can shoulder the expense. This also contradicts earlier statements by officials. In January, the deputy head of the telecommunications service, Ilhomjon Atojev, insisted at a press conference that by the end of this month the internet would become faster and fall in price. (Agencies)

Iran President Voices Readiness to Cooperate with New Judiciary Chief

TEHRAN - Iran's President Hassan Rouhani has congratulated Hojjatoleslam Ebrahim Raesi on his appointment as the new Judiciary chief, expressing his readiness for mutual cooperation. In a message released on Saturday, Rouhani highlighted the importance of the Judiciary in the Islamic establishment as well as its responsibility to strengthen social capital and people's trust in the system.

"The judiciary of the Islamic Republic of Iran is the most important symbol of our Islamic system's resolve to defend people's rights, implement justice and ensure social security," he said. "Without a doubt, carrying out this important mission will be possible

with the judiciary's independence, away from factional and partisan considerations, and disregarding the pressure of some media and propaganda powers." Rouhani also voiced the government's preparedness to cooperate with the Judiciary. "I hereby express the government's readiness to cooperate and interact with the Judiciary to realize the noble causes of the Islamic system and fully implement the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran," he said. On Thursday, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei appointed Raesi as the head of Iran's Judiciary replacing Ayatollah Sadeq Amoli Larjani. (Press TV)

Uzbekistan to Eliminate Problems of Foreign Exchange Market

TASHKENT - Measures to eliminate problems in the currency market of Uzbekistan will be taken this year, Trend reports with reference to the Chairman of Uzbek Central Bank, Mamariso Nurmuratov. He spoke about the plans of the regulator for 2019.

Further liberalization of the foreign exchange market will be based on the exchange rate, its stability and dynamics, the volume of transactions in the foreign exchange market, coordination of foreign exchange operations. "Work on the further liberalization of the foreign exchange market has already begun. First of all, we are planning

to remove the restrictions related to the foreign economic activity of business entities that operate in the domestic market. In 2019, we will reconsider all the elements, even the smallest, that impede the streamlining of the foreign exchange market. We identified one of the main tasks to remove these restrictions in 2019. The central bank will take the necessary measures to simplify the interaction between banks and customers. In other words, we will take measures to eliminate problems that cause questions to business entities and the public in the foreign exchange market," Mamariso Nurmuratov said. (Trend)