

Satellite Images Show China Is Building Its Third and Largest Aircraft Carrier: Reports

BEIJING - Images released by a Washington-based think-tank show construction on China's third and largest aircraft carrier, activity analysts believe could eventually challenge U.S. strategic superiority in East Asia.

The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington released images from April that reveal construction on China's third aircraft carrier in the Jiangnan Shipyard in Shanghai over the past six months, Reuters reported.

China has not confirmed it is building a third carrier. But the Pentagon said last week that work had begun on a vessel that would "probably be larger than the first two



and fitted with a catapult launch system to accelerate aircraft during takeoff." The CSIS images support the Pentagon's

claims. The satellite photographs show China's Type 002 aircraft carrier is slightly smaller than U.S. carriers but larger than

France's Charles de Gaulle, analysts said. It remains unclear whether the vessel would have nuclear capability.

Changing political relationships have motivated the Chinese government to accelerate the modernization of its armed forces over the past few years, the CSIS reports. Both Asian and Western militaries are seeking information regarding the purpose of China's newest aircraft carrier. Meanwhile, some analysts view its construction as a way for China to slowly undermine U.S. strategic superiority in the region, according to a series of Reuters Special Reports. ...*(More on P4)...*(7)

Neighbor News

China Starts to Build Asia's Biggest Reclaimed Water Wetland Park

BEIJING - Beijing has started to build Asia's biggest reclaimed water wetland park in its southeastern part, Tuesday's People's Daily reported.

The wetland park, with a total area of 638,000 square meters, will use reclaimed water from a nearby wastewater processing plant as the sole water source, said the newspaper report.

It may take in the maximum 500,000 tonnes of reclaimed water every day after being completed, the report said. A large part of the reclaimed water processed in the plant was

directly discharged into the Tonghui River that flew through this region, said Wang Jiwei, a senior employee from Beijing Drainage Group Co., Ltd.

With the park, the reclaimed water will flow into the wetland through underground pipes before joining the river and helping improve the surrounding environment, Wang said. The park will be completed by the end of this year, with the green area accounting for 60.8 percent and the water body taking up 25 percent of the total area. (Xinhua)

China's Top Trade Negotiator to Visit US Despite Tariffs

BEIJING - China said Tuesday its top trade negotiator will visit the United States for talks with American counterparts this week even as Washington stepped up pressure with plans to hike tariffs and complaints that Beijing was backtracking on its commitments. The commerce ministry confirmed in a brief statement that Vice Premier Liu He, President Xi Jinping's trade pointman, would visit the US on Thursday and Friday. The trip is taking place

a day later than expected after President Donald Trump jolted global markets by announcing that tariffs on \$200 billion in Chinese merchandise will more than double to 25 percent on Friday. "China always believes that mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit are the premise and the basis for reaching an agreement. Adding tariffs will not solve any problem," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said at a regular press briefing. ...*(More on P4)...*(11)

People Bring Flowers & Toys to Commemorate Superjet-100 Crash-Landing Victims

MOSCOW - The news of 41 deaths in the crash-landing of a Superjet-100 in Moscow stunned residents in the northern Russian city of Murmansk, where the plane was headed. Improvised memorials popped up at the local airport and main street. People were bringing flowers, candles and toys to the information desk of the Murmansk airport on Monday. Another improvised memorial appeared in front of a monument in the city center. The acting govern-

nor of the Murmansk Region has declared three days of mourning over Sunday's tragedy. A Superjet-100 operated by Russia's flagship carrier, Aeroflot, reported an emergency shortly after takeoff in Moscow, and the pilots decided to return to Sheremetyevo airport. Something went wrong during the landing, however. The jet bounced on the runway and its rear section caught fire. 37 people out of the 78 aboard were evacuated, but 41 others, including a heroic



steward who stayed behind helping survivors leave the plane, died. Investigators are still working to determine

the cause of the tragedy, with early reports suggesting it began with lightning striking the plane. (RT)

Nawaz Sharif to Return to Jail as Six-Week Bail Given on Medical Grounds Expires

ISLAMABAD - Former Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif will return to prison on Tuesday as the six-week bail he was granted on medical grounds has expired. He is likely to surrender himself to authorities at Lahore's Kot Lakhpat jail after Iftar in the evening, PTI reported.

In March, the country's Supreme Court had granted Sharif interim bail after his counsel argued that the former prime minister urgently needed angiography. The Supreme Court has rejected his review petition seeking extension in the bail, and another plea to allow him to travel abroad for treatment. Sharif, who is serving

a sentence in a corruption case, is expected to arrive at the prison in a rally of the workers of his party, the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz). The Home Department of the Punjab province had earlier said his arrival in the form of a rally would be against the law.

In its order giving him bail, the Supreme Court had said that several senior doctors had suggested that Sharif's history of hypertension, cardiac and renal ailments may present a "mild-moderate risk" if he is to undergo angiography. The court had said granting him relief for a limited period was a "reasonable request". (Monitoring Desk)

Was It Hard-Boiled? Australian PM Egged in Protest over Migrant Detention Policy



ALBURY - The moment an activist attempted to crack an egg on the head of Australian PM Scott Morrison has been captured on video. Both Morrison and the egg

survived intact, though an elderly woman got knocked over in the ensuing scuffle. Morrison was ambushed by a young female protester as

he campaigned at the Country Women's Association State Conference in Albury, New South Wales, on Monday. After Morrison delivered his speech, he went into the crowd, blending in with the predominantly female attendees. As he was chatting the voters up, a woman approached from behind in what looked like an attempt to smash an egg on Morrison's head. It is unclear if it went according to plan, as the egg appeared to either

have bounced off Morrison's head or to have missed it by an inch. In any case, it apparently landed on the floor, fully intact. A photo posted by ABC News reporter Dan Conifer shows presumably the same egg without a hint of a scratch or a crack. The woman was immediately rounded-on by Morrison's security detail. In the chaos that ensued, an elderly woman got knocked down and had to be helped up by Morrison himself. ...*(More on P4)...*(8)

Climate Change Missing as US Defends Arctic Policy

ROVANIEMI, Finland - The Arctic is melting, but don't ask U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to talk about climate change. Nor to agree on a text that mentions it. For the Trump administration, disappearing sea ice in the world's "high north" is first and foremost an opportunity to exploit rather than a crisis to mitigate. That position was made clear by Pompeo over two days as the foreign ministers of the eight members of the Arctic

Council met in Finland, which is wrapping up its two-year chairmanship of the Arctic Council. Finnish Foreign Ministry Timo Soini said Tuesday there will be no joint declaration as the summit couldn't get the United States to agree on a text that includes language about climate change. Instead, he said there would be statements from ministers and Finland which currently holds the chair of the Arctic Council. Bill ...*(More on P4)...*(12)

Pompeo Cancels Berlin Trip at Last Minute

BERLIN - U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has canceled a planned visit to Berlin on Tuesday, a U.S. Embassy spokesman said, citing scheduling reasons. "Unfortunately, we must reschedule the Berlin meetings due to pressing issues. We look forward to rescheduling this important set of meetings. The Secretary looks forward to being in Berlin soon," the U.S. Embassy cited a State Department spokesperson as saying. (Reuters)

Pope Makes Historic First Visit to North Macedonia

SKOPJE, North Macedonia - Pope Francis made the first-ever papal visit to North Macedonia on Tuesday and sought to encourage its efforts to integrate into European institutions after its name change resolved a decades-long dispute with Greece.

In a meeting with government authorities, Francis praised North Macedonia's multi-ethnic and multi-faith culture and said its example of being a bridge between East and West showed that peaceful coexistence can exist in a country rich with diversity.

"These particular features are also highly significant for increased integration with the nations of Europe," he said. "It is my hope that this integration will develop in a way that is beneficial for the entire region of the Western Balkans, with unfailing respect for diversity and for fundamental rights." North Macedonia's previous constitutional name was the Republic of Macedonia. ...*(More on P4)...*(13)

Guido Blames Coup Backers for 'Failing to Follow Through' in Venezuela

CARACAS - US-backed Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaido blames "people who failed to follow through" for the demise of last week's attempt to overthrow President Nicolas Maduro's government - but believes there's still hope.

"There were people who failed to follow through," Guaido told AFP on Monday, but "it doesn't mean that they won't do it soon." The self-appointed interim president didn't specify who his backers were, but they aren't the only one he has blamed for Maduro's refusal to quietly go away.



Guaido previously blamed the military for not rushing to his side after he called on them to defect last Tuesday, though he stressed his door is still open to anyone who wants to defect. "We still need more

soldiers, and maybe we need more officials of the regime to be willing to support it," he told the Washington Post on Saturday, and he indicated to AFP that interest has increased. "There have been ...*(More on P4)...*(9)

Turkey to Re-Run Istanbul Election Lost by Erdogan's AKP

ANKARA/ISTANBUL - Turkish authorities on Monday scrapped the result of a vote for Istanbul mayor lost by President Tayyip Erdogan's candidate, responding to calls by his AK Party for a re-run, in a move that hit the lira and drew opposition accusations of "dictatorship." The High Election Board ruled that a fresh Istanbul mayoral contest will be held on June 23. The AK Party representative on the board, Recep Ozel, said the decision was based on unsigned results documents from the

March 31 election and on some ballot box officials not being civil servants. Turkey's main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP), which narrowly won the mayor's office in the country's largest city, called the ruling a "plain dictatorship." Kati Piri, the European Parliament's Turkey rapporteur, said the decision "ends the credibility of democratic transition of power through elections" in the country. Reuters witnesses said people were banging ...*(More on P4)...*(10)

U.S. Sending Carrier, Bombers to Mideast Is 'Psychological Warfare': Iran

DUBAI - Iran's top security body dismissed as "psychological warfare" a U.S. announcement that a carrier strike group and bombers are being sent to the Middle East as a message to Tehran, the semi-official Tasnim news agency reported on Tuesday.

U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton said on Sunday the United States was deploying the Abraham Lincoln carrier strike group and a bomber task force to the Middle East. "Bolton's statement is a clumsy use of a burnt-out happening for psychological warfare," Tasnim quoted Keyvan Khosravi, spokesman for the Supreme National Security Council, as saying. Khosravi said the carrier had arrived in the Mediterranean weeks ago.

U.S. acting Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan said on Monday he had approved dispatching the carrier strike group and bombers due to indications of a "credible threat by Iranian regime forces". Shanahan provided no details of the underlying intelligence.

Iran's state-run Press TV earlier said: "The deployment seems to be a 'regularly scheduled' one by the U.S. Navy, and Bolton has just tried to talk it up." Iran said last month it was prepared for a U.S. decision to end waivers granted to buyers of Iranian oil, as the elite Revolutionary Guards repeated their threat to close the strategic Strait of Hormuz in the Gulf if Tehran was barred from using it. (Reuters)

Trump to Impose Additional Sanctions against Iran: Report

TEHRAN - The administration of US President Donald Trump will announce new sanctions on Iran this coming week, a report says. The sanctions are expected to be announced on Wednesday, May 8, which marks the one year anniversary of Trump's withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal.

The new sanctions are meant to have significant impacts on a new sector of the Iranian economy, Axios reported Sunday, citing two senior administration officials. The officials, however, did not elaborate on the sector the sanctions would target, but did say it would

not be energy, the news outlet added.

This comes as The Wall Street Journal reported last week that the US would impose new sanctions on the Islamic Republic, targeting its petrochemical sales.

The Trump administration also imposed sanctions on Iran's export of enriched uranium on Friday but at the same time renewed three key waivers that would allow European allies, Russia and China to cooperate with Tehran on civil nuclear program. "Any involvement in transferring enriched uranium out of Iran in exchange for natural uranium will now be exposed to sanctions. (Press TV)

US Sanctions against Iran, Cuba, Venezuela Breach Human Rights: UN Expert

TEHRAN - A UN rights expert has slammed unilateral US sanctions against Iran, Cuba and Venezuela, saying the use of economic measures for political purposes violates human rights and international law.

In a statement released on Monday, Idriss Jazairy, UN special rapporteur on the negative impact of the unilateral coercive measures, warned that the US bans against the trio might precipitate man-made humanitarian catastrophes. "Regime change through economic measures likely to lead to the denial of basic human rights and indeed possibly to starvation has never been

an accepted practice of international relations," he said.

"Real concerns and serious political differences between governments must never be resolved by precipitating economic and humanitarian disasters, making ordinary people pawns and hostages thereof," he added. Jazairy also voiced worries about Washington's termination of sanctions waivers for major Iranian crude buyers, saying the move harms not only the Iranian nation, but also their trade partners. "The extraterritorial application of unilateral sanctions is clearly contrary to international law," he said. (Press TV)