

Britain is Gearing up for EU Rows: Brexit Minister

LONDON - Britain is gearing up for rows with the EU over the structure of divorce talks and the future role of the European court, fuelling an increasingly bitter war of words before negotiations begin. David Davis, Brexit minister in Prime Minister Theresa May's government, described the EU's position on the talks' format as "illogical" and said he took "slight offense" to suggestions that European courts were better than those in Britain. The atmosphere between London and Brussels has soured in recent weeks as battle lines are drawn before the complex negotiations for Britain to leave the European Union are due to start next month, a



year after June's referendum vote to quit. Asked about the EU's stance that the two sides should first make progress on citizens' rights, the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and a financial settlement before starting discussions on a future relationship, Davis said the sequencing was "illogical". "How on earth do you resolve the issue of the border with Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland unless you know what our general borders policy is, what the customs agreement is, what the free trade agreement is, whether you need to charge tariffs at the border or not?" he asked on Britain's ITV. (Reuters)

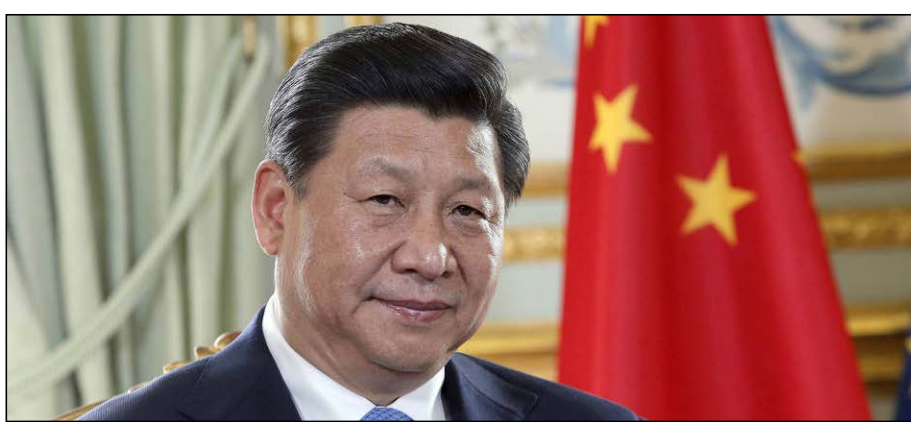
North Korea Fires Missile that Lands in Sea Near Russia

SEOUL/WASHINGTON - North Korea, defying calls to rein in its weapons program, fired a ballistic missile that landed in the sea near Russia on Sunday, days after a new leader in South Korea came to power pledging to engage Pyongyang in dialogue. The U.S. military's Pacific Command said it was assessing the type of missile that was fired but it was "not consistent with an intercontinental ballistic missile". The U.S. threat assessment has not changed from a national security standpoint, a U.S. official said. Japanese Defense Minister Tomomi Inada said the missile could be a new type. It flew for 30

minutes before dropping into the sea between North Korea's east coast and Japan. North Korea has consistently test-fired missiles in that direction. A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the missile landed 97 km (60 miles) south of Russia's Vladivostok region, prompting the White House to reference Moscow in a statement about the incident. "With the missile impacting so close to Russian soil - in fact, closer to Russia than to Japan - the President cannot imagine that Russia is pleased," the White House said, referring to U.S. President Donald Trump. (Reuters)

Xi Says Mankind Challenged by Deficit in Peace, Development, Governance

BEIJING - Deficit in peace, development and governance poses a daunting challenge to mankind, Chinese President Xi Jinping said Sunday. He spoke of a world "fraught with challenges" in a keynote speech delivered at the opening ceremony of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation. Humankind has reached an age of great progress, great transformation and profound changes, Xi said.



Global growth requires new drivers, development needs to be more inclusive and balanced, and the gap between the rich and the poor needs to be narrowed, he noted. He also pointed out that hotspots in some regions are causing instability and that terrorism is rampant. (Xinhua)

Top ASEAN Military Officials to Meet in Manila

MANILA - The military chiefs from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) started arriving in Manila Sunday to attend conferences to strengthen cooperation among ASEAN militaries in addressing common security challenges facing the region. Col. Edgard Arevalo, chief of the public affairs office of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), said in a statement that the military chiefs from the 10 ASEAN nations will attend the

ASEAN Chief of Defense Forces Informal Meeting (ACDFIM) and related meetings that will run from May 15 to May 19. He said regional issues such as maritime security, humanitarian assistance and disaster response, counter-terrorism, infectious disease management and peacekeeping will stay high in the agenda of the meeting. He said Gen. Eduardo Ano, the AFP chief of staff, ... (More on P4)... (25)

PARIS - Emmanuel Macron was inaugurated Sunday as France's new president at the Elysee Palace in Paris, and immediately launched into his mission to shake up French politics, world economics and the European Union. The 39-year-old Macron is the youngest president in the country's history and the 8th president of France's Fifth Republic, which was created in 1958. A former economy minister with pro-business, pro-European views, Macron is the first French president who doesn't

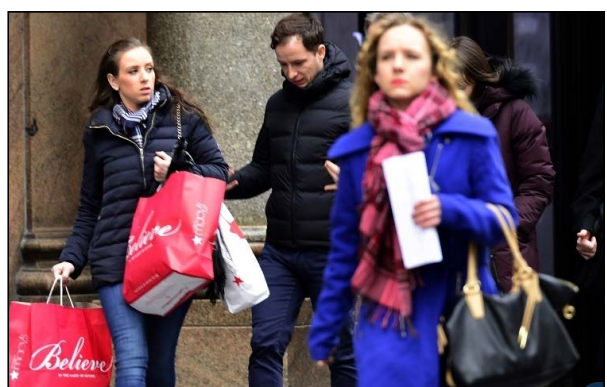
originate from the country's two mainstream parties. After Macron was formally declared president, 21 cannon shots were fired from across the Seine River at the Invalides monument, where Napoleon is entombed. Macron later solemnly paid tribute at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier beneath the Arc de Triomphe, greeting veterans and military officers in forma-



tion beneath the imposing arch. Macron takes charge of a nation that, when Britain leaves the European Union in 2019, will become the EU's only member with nuclear weapons and a permanent seat on the U.N. Security Council. (AP)

Financially Stressed in U.S. Now Prefer Saving to Spending: Poll

WASHINGTON - Though the U.S. economy improves gradually, Americans who are financially stressed still prefer saving to spending, a new poll has found. The April 5-9 Gallup poll shows that 63 percent of Americans who are worried about paying normal bills now enjoy saving more, compared to 35 percent who enjoy spending more. Among Americans who are worried about maintaining standard of living, 64 percent enjoy saving more, compared to 35 per-



cent who enjoy spending more. Among Americans who don't have enough money to live comfortably, 65 percent enjoy saving more, compared to 33 percent

who enjoy spending more. Before the 2007-2009 economic recession, Americans who were financially stressed were divided on whether they enjoyed saving ... (More on P4)... (26)

Merkel's Party Seeks Key Victory in Bellwether State Vote

DÜSSELDORF, Germany - One in five German voters are heading to the polls in a key state election Sunday, with Chancellor Angela Merkel's party hoping to deal a crushing blow to her main rival four months before national elections. About 13.1 million eligible voters in North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) are casting ballots to elect a new regional parliament for the sprawling industrial region, which has a large migrant population and has been a Social Democratic Party (SPD) stronghold for decades. But surveys ahead of the vote showed the centre-left party running neck-and-neck with Merkel's Christian Democratic Union, with some even placing the CDU ahead. The opinion polls were the latest indication that initial enthusiasm for the new SPD leader ... (More on P4)... (27)

At Least 100,000 Groups in 150 Countries Hit by Ransomware

LONDON - An unprecedented global "ransomware" attack has hit at least 100,000 organizations in 150 countries, Europe's police agency said Sunday - and predicted that more damage may be seen Monday as people return to work and switch on their computers. The attack that began Friday is believed to be the biggest online extortion attack ever recorded, spreading chaos by locking computers that run Britain's hospital network, Germany's national railway and scores of other companies, factories and government agencies worldwide. "It was essentially an indiscriminate attack across the world," Europol director Rob Wainwright said. "It's a massive reminder to sectors right across the world cyber security should be a topline strategic priority."

Jan Op Gen Oorth, spokesman for the Netherlands-based Europol, said the number of individuals who have fallen victim to the cyberextortion attack could be much higher. He said it was too early to say who is behind the onslaught and what their motivation was. The main challenge for investigators was the fast-spreading capabilities of the malware, he said, adding that so far not many people have paid the ransoms that the virus demands. The attack held hospitals and other entities hostage by freezing their computers, encrypting their data and demanding money through online bitcoin payment - \$300 at first, rising to \$600 before it destroys files hours later. (AP)

Turkmenistan Names new Prosecutor General

ASHGABAT - Turkmenistan's parliament has endorsed the appointment of Batyr Atdaev the country's prosecutor general, reads a message from the country's government. This issue was considered on the proposal of the country's President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov. Previously, Batyr Atdaev served as the deputy prime minister in charge of trade. Earlier, he was the chairman of the Supreme Chamber of Control. Former prosecutor general Amanmyrat Khallyyev was dismissed from this post after the issue of bribery and corruption among law enforcement officers was raised at the meeting of the State Security Council of Turkmenistan. (Trend)

Trump Says Possible to Pick new FBI Director by Next Week

WASHINGTON - U.S. President Donald Trump on Saturday pledged to move quickly on the selection of a new Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) director. Trump told reporters aboard the Air Force One as he embarked on a visit to Lynchburg, Virginia that a decision may come as soon as before he starts his first overseas trip next Friday. "Even that is possible," he told reporters when asked whether he could unveil his nominee by Friday to succeed James Comey, whose abrupt dismissal has sparked a major media firestorm and much disagreement. "I think the process is going to go quick-

ly," Trump said, adding a list of well-known figures are being considered. "They've been vetted over their lifetime essentially. But very well known, highly respected, really talented people. And that's what we want for the FBI," Trump said. U.S. media quoted an unnamed White House official as saying that 11 candidates are being considered, including acting FBI Director Andrew McCabe. The position of the FBI director was vacated Tuesday after Trump fired Comey, which has sent shockwaves through Washington as critics say the move was an attempt to ... (More on P4)... (28)

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China Pledges \$124 Billion for New Silk Road as Champion of Globalization

BEIJING - Chinese President Xi Jinping pledged \$124 billion on Sunday for his new Silk Road plan to forge a path of peace, inclusiveness and free trade, and called for the abandonment of old models based on rivalry and diplomatic power games. Xi used a summit on the initiative, attended by leaders and top officials from around the world, to bolster China's global leadership ambitions as U.S. President Donald Trump promotes "America First" and questions existing global free trade deals. "We should build an open platform of cooperation and uphold and grow an open world economy," Xi told the opening of the two-day gathering in Beijing. China has touted what

it formally calls the Belt and Road initiative as a new way to boost global development since Xi unveiled the plan in 2013, aiming to expand links between Asia, Africa, Europe and beyond underpinned by billions of dollars in infrastructure investment. Xi said the world must create conditions that promote open development and encourage the building of systems of "fair, reasonable and transparent global trade and investment rules". Hours before the summit opened, North Korea launched another ballistic missile, further testing the patience of China, its chief ally. The United States had complained to China on Friday over the inclusion of a North Korean delegation at the event. (Reuters)

Nawaz Terms Belt and Road Initiative a Powerful Tool for Overcoming Terrorism

BEIJING - Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif says Chinese initiative of One Belt and One Road would take humankind to a higher level of prosperity, peace and stability through connectivity and close contact. He was speaking at the plenary session of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation in Beijing on Sunday. The Prime Minister said Peace and development go hand in hand, and nothing can pave the path for peace and security more than economic development achieved through regional collaboration. He said the initiative signifies that geo-economics must take precedence over geo-politics, and that the centre of gravity should shift from conflict

to cooperation. The Prime Minister said as One Belt and One Road unfolds across continents, we see it fostering inclusion, creating tolerance, and promoting acceptance of cultural diversity. Pakistan sees it as a powerful tool for overcoming terrorism and extremism. Nawaz Sharif said China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a core project of One Belt One Road that aims to connect the neighbourhoods of East and West Asia. He said CPEC makes Pakistan both a conduit and destination for cross-regional investment and trade. The Prime Minister made it very clear that CPEC is an economic undertaking open to all countries in the region having no geographical boundaries. (Agencies)

Iran Faces 'Historic Decision' in Upcoming Presidential Poll: Rouhani

TEHRAN - Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has told a Tehran crowd of some 20,000 supporters that the country is "on the edge of a great historic decision" with its May 19 presidential election. Rohani, 68, told the crowd at Tehran's Azadi Stadium that "we should not let Iran become isolated again." Rohani is seeking a second four-year term. He is currently facing five rivals, but some could withdraw in favor of more prominent candidates. The president is viewed as the "moderate" choice and many see the election as something of a referendum on the policies that led to a landmark deal with international powers that saw Tehran curb its nuclear program in exchange for some sanctions relief. The crowd at Rohani's rally sometimes chanted the names of Mir Hossein Mosavi and Mehdi Karrubi, both popular reformist candidates from the 2009 presidential election who were placed under house arrest in 2011. They also chanted the name of Mohammad Khatami, who was the country's president from 1997 to 2005, but who has since been banned from any appearances in the Iranian media. (Agencies)

Mirziyoyev Meets Erdoğan

TASHKENT - Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev on Sunday met with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan within the frameworks of the Belt and Road forum. The pace of implementation of the agreements, reached at the negotiations, which had taken place in Samarkand on 18 November 2016, were discussed at the meeting. A particular attention was paid to developing mutually beneficial trade-economic and investment cooperation, modernizing a tourist infrastructure, imple-

menting projects in the spheres of textiles, leather, chemicals and pharmaceuticals, construction materials and processing of agricultural products. Shavkat Mirziyoyev underlined that this meeting is a favourable opportunity to exchange views on further developing cooperation between Uzbekistan and Turkey. President of Turkey accentuated the willingness of his country to elevate the relations with Uzbekistan to a new level, corresponding to the interests of the two countries. (Agencies)