

China Urges US to Abandon 'Long Arm Jurisdiction' & Show Restraint on Iran & Trade War Issues

BEIJING - Beijing has warned the US against taking the ongoing trade war "too far," and once again criticized Washington's unilateralist diplomacy, calling upon it to show "restraint" in the escalating standoff with Tehran. The remarks were made by the country's top diplomat, Wang Yi, during phone talks with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, China's Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Saturday. The US State Department shared few details of the conversation. The Chinese foreign minister urged the US to not go "too far" in escalating the current trade war, reiterating Beijing's willingness to settle differences through negotiations.



The two diplomats also discussed the situation in the Middle East, in particular the standoff between the US and Iran. Beijing called upon both parties to show restraint

and avoid further escalation - while emphasizing its firm position against Washington's "long arm jurisdiction" policies. Tensions in the Middle East have been soaring over the past few weeks, with the US repeatedly - and without any solid proof - accusing Iran of plotting attacks on American citizens and interests. Washington has significantly ramped up its military presence in the region, deploying strategic bombers and sending a carrier group. Tehran maintains that it is not seeking war with anyone, but has repeatedly warned that it is capable of defending itself from any attack. (RT)

Neighbor News

IRGC Chief: Iran Not after War, But Not Afraid of One Either

TEHRAN - The chief commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) says Iran does not seek war but is not afraid of one either. Making a speech on Sunday, Major General Hossein Salami said that Iran was currently facing a threat close to its territory and thus the IRGC had operationalized its resources against that threat. "When a threat is posed from afar, we think about it [only] on a strategic level, but when it comes close, we become active on operational levels as well," he said. He emphasized that Iran did not intend to be the aggressor party. "We are not after war

but we are not afraid of war either; though, before us, enemies do not have the will to wage war and are afraid of fighting [too]," Major General Salami said. He stressed that Iran was prepared in all defensive areas. On April 8, the United States blacklisted the IRGC, prompting Iran to reciprocate by designating American forces based in West Asia as terrorists. The US has also deployed an aircraft carrier, a bomber task force, and an assault ship to the Persian Gulf, claiming that IRGC boats in Iranian waters in the Persian Gulf were equipped with missiles. (Press TV)

Pope Pays Tribute to Journalists Who Were Killed; Says Press Freedom Vital

VATICAN CITY - Pope Francis paid tribute on Saturday to journalists killed while doing their jobs, saying media freedom is a key indicator of a country's health. In an address to the Foreign Press Association in Italy, he urged journalists to shun fake news and continue reporting on the plight of people who no longer make headlines but are still suffering, specifically mentioning the Rohingya and Yazidi. "I listened in pain to the statistics about your

colleagues killed while carrying out their work with courage and dedication in so many countries to report on what is happening in wars and other dramatic situations in which so many of our brothers and sisters in the world live," he said. Francis had just heard the association's president, Patricia Thomas of Associated Press Television, talk about journalists killed, imprisoned, wounded or threatened in their line of work. ...*(More on P4)...(16)*

WASHINGTON - House Democrats will hear from former CIA director John Brennan about the situation in Iran, inviting him to speak next week amid heightened concerns over the Trump administration's sudden moves in the region. Brennan, an outspoken critic of President Donald Trump, is scheduled to talk to House Democrats at a private weekly caucus meeting Tuesday, according to a Democratic aide and another person familiar

Former CIA Chief Brennan to Brief Dems on Iran

with the private meeting. Both were granted anonymity to discuss the meeting. The invitation to Brennan and Wendy Sherman, the former State Department official and top negotiator of the Iran nuclear deal, offers counterprogramming to the Trump administration's closed-door briefing for lawmakers also planned for Tuesday on Capitol Hill. Democratic lawmakers are likely to attend both sessions. The Trump administration recently sent



an aircraft carrier and other military resources to the Persian Gulf region, and withdrew nonessential personnel from Iraq, raising alarm among Democrats and some Republicans on Capitol Hill over the possibility of a confrontation with Iran. Trump in recent days downplayed any potential ...*(More on P4)...(13)*

'No Other Options': US Will Deliver F-35s, While Turkey Will Get S-400... And S-500, Erdogan Says



ISTANBUL - The US will 'sooner or later' have to face reality and understand that Turkey's purchase of Russian S-400 systems is a done deal, President Erdogan said,

noting that the current agreement is just the beginning. "We're done with the S-400. There is absolutely no question of stepping back on the S-400. It is a

defense system, not an attack system," Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Saturday during a televised question and answer session with university students in Istanbul, adding that the first deliveries of the Russian anti-aircraft weapon system are expected in July. Explaining that Russian military hardware is offered on "very favorable terms" and with no

strings attached, Erdogan said that Ankara is also potentially seeking to acquire the next generation S-500 systems - or even engage in co-production partnership - once Russia completes development of its newest mobile surface-to-air missile system. The \$2.5 billion defense deal with Moscow enraged Washington, which threatened its NATO ally with all kinds of sanctions while offering to substitute the Russian systems with Patriot batteries - a carrot Ankara has been ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

Canada Aims to Ratify Trade Deal after Lifting of Tariffs

OTTAWA - Ottawa announced the lifting of tariffs on steel and aluminum imports from Canada and Mexico. Ottawa and Mexico City also announced the elimination of reciprocal duties. The steep US tariffs imposed last year - 25 percent on steel and 10 percent on aluminum - became a major stumbling block to ratifying a new North American trade pact negotiated last year by the three countries. With the removal of the obstacle, "our government ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

France's Macron Forced to Curb His Ambitions for Europe

PARIS - French President Emmanuel Macron sees himself as Europe's savior and next week's European Parliament elections as a make-or-break moment for the beleaguered European Union. But Macron is no longer the fresh-faced force who marched into a surprising presidential victory to the rousing EU anthem two years ago. His pro-Europe vision has collided with populists and national interests across the continent. And at home, his political vision has given rise to France's raucous yellow vest uprising over his government's pro-business policies. ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

'Enemies of Freedom'? Germany Launches Anti-Rightwing Crusade amid Austrian Govt Crisis

BERLIN - German politicians, including Chancellor Angela Merkel, have rushed to take advantage of the government crisis in neighboring Austria for their own political goals, uniting in a crusade against right-wing forces. As Austria reels from a scandal involving Vice Chancellor Heinz-Christian Strache, which has put the nation on the brink of snap elections, in Germany, politicians and officials of almost all political backgrounds seized the opportunity to demonize 'right-wing populists' ... and teach their neighbors how they should do politics. "Europe is a union of countries that have decided to cooperate on a basis of common values," Merkel told journalists in the Croatian capital, Zagreb, answering a question about the situation in Austria. ...*(More on P4)...(19)*

Saudi Arabia Calls Urgent Gulf, Arab League Meetings Over Tensions

RIYADH - Saudi Arabia has called for urgent meetings of the regional Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab League to discuss escalating tensions in the Gulf, the Saudi official news agency said on Saturday. The Saudi Press Agency said King Salman had invited Gulf leaders and Arab states to two emergency summits in Mecca on May 30 to discuss recent "aggressions and their consequences" in the region. Tensions have soared in the Gulf with the US deploying an aircraft carrier and bombers to the region over alleged threats from Iran. Four ships including two Saudi oil tankers were damaged in mysterious



sabotage attacks Sunday off Fujairah, an emirate located at the crucial entrance to the Gulf. That incident was followed by drone strikes Tuesday by Yemen's Huthi rebels on a major Saudi oil pipeline, which provided an alternative export route if the Strait of Hormuz closed. Iran has repeatedly threatened to prevent

shipping in Hormuz in case of a military confrontation with the United States, which has imposed sanctions on Tehran in recent months. Despite international scepticism, the US government has been pointing to increasing threats from Iran, a long-time enemy and also a rival of US allies Israel and Saudi Arabia. (AFP)

'All Decent People' Oppose 'Damaging' Russia Sanctions, Salvini Says Ahead of EU Elections

ROME - EU sanctions targeting Russia don't work and "all decent people" support removing them, Italian Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini said ahead of next week's European Parliamentary elections. "I continue to believe that we don't need sanctions. The issue of their removal unites all decent people," Salvini told Sputnik new agency

after holding a major rally that included leaders of 11 right-wing European parties in Milan on Saturday. The leader of the right-wing League party argued that the economic warfare between the EU and Russia has "caused damage and resolved nothing." "If a tool does not work, it is removed," he added. ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

Australia's Leader Vows to Get Back to Work after Shock Win

SYDNEY - A Jubilant Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison vowed Sunday to get straight back to work after a shock election victory by his conservative government that has left bewildered voters wondering how they were taken by surprise. The opposition Labor Party, meanwhile, began another bout of post-election soul searching while starting the task of finding a new leader, after Bill Shorten stepped down following an emphatic defeat Saturday in a poll many had seen as unlosable for his party.

Center-left Labor, which has governed Australia for only 38 of its 118 years as a federation, was rated an overwhelming favorite, both in opinion polls and with odds-makers, to topple the conservative Liberal-National coalition government after its six years in power. Instead, Morrison - who became prime minister only last August when a contentious internal party vote dumped Malcolm Turnbull as its leader - swept the coalition to victory with what is likely to be an increased representation in Parliament. The result is much the same as the last election, which delivered the government a single-seat majority in 2016. Since then, public expectations have taken a roller coaster ride based on the media's reporting of polls. Opinion polling has been a factor in conservative and Labor governments ousting four of their own prime ministers in the past decade, mostly recently elevating ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

For Iranians, Economic Crisis Looms Larger Than US Tensions

TEHRAN, Iran - Across Iran's capital, the talk always seems to come back to how things may get worse. Battered by U.S. sanctions and its depreciating rial currency, Iran's 80 million people struggle to buy meat, medicine and other staples of daily life. Now they wonder aloud about America's intentions as it rushes an aircraft carrier and other forces to the region over a still-unexplained threat it perceives from Iran. The Associated Press spoke to a variety of people on Tehran's streets recently, ranging from young and old, women wearing the all-encompassing black chador to those loosely covering their hair. Most say they believe a war will not come to the region, though they remain

Pakistan Post Opens 41 Rest Houses for Tourists

ISLAMABAD - The Pakistan Post Saturday announced to open its 41 rest houses, located at scenic locations, for domestic and foreign tourists at remarkably low prices. The move was in line with the vision of Prime Minister Imran Khan, who had been a strong proponent of promoting tourism in the country by offering cost-effective accommodations to the travelers at scenic locations, a senior official of the Pakistan Post told APP. "The initiative will not only boost tourist activities across the country but also help generate more revenue for the department," the official said. He said the rest houses from Karachi to Murree were upgraded on the instructions of Minister for Communications and Postal Services Murad Saeed who had put serious efforts in that regard. The rest houses were being used by the officials of Pakistan Post but now the general public could have access to those places for recreational activities. According to a Pakistan Post notification, the tourists will now be able to stay in its rest houses at economical rates. The postal rest house has been divided into three categories. (Monitoring Desk)