

If Tehran Wants to Fight, That'll be The Official End of Iran, Trump Warns

WASHINGTON - President Donald Trump has warned Tehran that it would be "the official end" of the Islamic Republic if it threatens the US, just as Washington builds up its military presence near Iran under the pretext of national security.

It's unclear what triggered the US leader this time around, as Iranian officials have consistently said in recent days that they want to avoid a military confrontation with the US. Earlier on Sunday, the commander of the elite Revolutionary Guards, Major General Hossein Salami, insisted that Iran only wants peace, but isn't afraid to fight America.



Earlier, Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei also said there will be no war in the Persian Gulf. However, he added that Tehran won't be involved in talks on a new nuclear deal with the US.

The Trump administration has recently been increasing pressure on Iran with sanctions and a military buildup near its territorial waters. The US and its allies began enhanced maritime security patrols in the international waters of

the Persian Gulf this week after Washington beefed up its Fifth fleet.

A USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier strike group was deployed to the Persian Gulf and B-52 bombers were sent on patrol in the area in a move to send a message to Tehran.

Tensions in the region escalated after the US started building up its military presence, citing "a number of troubling and escalatory indications and warnings" coming from the Iranian side. It has not yet been revealed what led to the escalation, with various media reports suggesting versions from misunderstanding to Israeli influence. (RT)

Neighbor News

PM Thanks Donors for Raising Record Rs 200mln for SKMCH

ISLAMABAD - Prime Minister Imran Khan Monday thanked the donors in Islamabad for raising a record donation of Rs 200 million for Shaukat Khanam Memorial Cancer Hospital.

The donations were collected at a fundraising Iftar dinner on Sunday

where the prime minister had also addressed. On the occasion, the prime minister had said that SKMCH was the only cancer hospital in the world, being run purely on public support where almost 70 percent of patients were getting free treatment. (Monitoring Desk)

Iraq Can Mediate Between Iran, US: Official

TEHRAN - A senior Iraqi Shia cleric has warned about the negative consequences of tension between Tehran and Washington for the region, saying that Iraq can play a positive role in controlling the situation.

Ammar al-Hakim, the Leader of the National Wisdom Movement, made the remarks in a Sunday meeting with Joey Hood, the Chargé d'affaires of the US Mission in Iraq, amid heightened tension between Tehran and Washington.

During the meeting, al-Hakim described the escalation of tension as "worrying", saying that such tensions endanger the security and stability of all countries in the region.

He also hailed the positive signals recently

sent by the US for bilateral talks with Iran, and said, "These comments must serve as an introduction to achieving appropriate solutions and keeping the regional nations distant from war and blockade."

The senior cleric referred to his warm ties with both Iran and the US, and said he can play the role of a mediator to get the two sides' stances closer to each other and end the current crisis.

Also on Sunday, Iraqi lawmaker Hassan Fadad said in an interview with Baghdad Today that "Iraq played the role of mediation, and is still communicating with US and Iranian, to bring the views closer, and it is necessary to communicate with neighbors on this side." (Press TV)

Egypt Says after Bus Attack, 12 Militants Killed in Cairo

CAIRO - Egypt says security forces killed 12 members of a militant group with suspected links to the now-outlawed Muslim Brotherhood in shootouts in Cairo, just hours after a roadside bomb struck a tourist bus near the Giza Pyramids, wounding at least 17. The Interior Ministry says seven of the militants were killed in a firefight when police raided their hideout in the Sixth of October suburb. The remaining five were shot and

killed after opening fire on police storming their residences in Cairo's Shorouk suburb. The ministry says explosive devices, weapons and ammunition were found in the militants' possession. It says the militants belonged to "Hasm," an armed faction of the Brotherhood. Sunday's roadside bomb wounded at least 17 people including South African tourists. No group claimed responsibility for the attack. (Fox News)

ROME - A Saudi Arabian freighter allegedly carrying weapons that could be used in the war in Yemen has docked at the Italian port of Genoa, despite protests by harbor workers. The Saudi-flagged Bahri Yanbu is scheduled to load further cargo before departing for the Saudi port of Jeddah late Monday, according to the Italian news agency ANSA. Port workers protesting the alleged arms shipment unsuccessfully tried to prevent

Anti-Arms Trade Protests as Saudi Freighter Docks in Italy



the ship's arrival, and hoisted a banner reading "Stop the trafficking of arms, war to war." ANSA says union and port officials were in

talks on the cargo to be loaded. The 50,000-tonne ship has already called at several European ports, reportedly to pick up

weaponry. French officials said a scheduled loading of arms at Le Havre was cancelled following protests by activists. (Fox News)

Palestinians Give Cool Reception to US Peace Conference



JERUSALEM - The Palestinian prime minister said Monday that any American peace plan that ignores the Palestinian people's political aspirations for

an independent state is doomed to fail. Mohammad Shtayyeh's comments immediately cast a cloud over the American-led Mideast peace conference ex-

pected to take place in late June in the tiny Gulf Arab state of Bahrain. The White House announced Sunday it will unveil the first phase of its long-awaited Mideast peace plan at the conference, saying it will focus on economic benefits that could be reaped if the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is resolved. The plan envisions large-scale investment and infrastructure work, much of it funded by wealthy Arab

countries, in the Palestinian territories. But officials say the June 25-26 conference will not include the core political issues at the center of the conflict: final borders, the status of Jerusalem, the fate of Palestinian refugees or Israeli security demands. "Any solution to the conflict in Palestine must be political ... and based on ending the occupation," Shtayyeh, the prime minister said at a Palestinian Cabinet meeting. (AP)

South Korea Vows to Send Aid to North Quickly, May Send Food

SEOUL, South Korea - South Korea vowed Monday to move quickly on plans to provide \$8 million worth of medical and nutritional aid for North Korean children through U.N. agencies while it also considers sending broader food aid to the country, which says it is suffering its worst drought in decades. Lee Sang-min, spokesman for Seoul's Unification Ministry, said the government will discuss its plans with the World Food Program and the

United Nations Children's Fund, through which the aid would be provided, so it reaches North Korean children and pregnant women quickly. South Korea is also trying to build public and political support for providing wider food aid to North Korea, either directly or through the WFP. North Korea's state media said last week that the country was suffering its worst drought in more than a century amid reported food shortages. (AP)

Qatar Not Invited to Emergency Arab Summits in Saudi Arabia: Qatari Official

DUBAI - Qatar has not been invited to two regional summits called to discuss attacks on Saudi oil assets, a Foreign Ministry official said on Monday.

Saudi King Salman on Saturday proposed holding the two meetings in Mecca on May 30 to discuss implications of last week's drone strikes on oil installations in the kingdom and attacks on four vessels, including two Saudi oil tankers, off the coast of the United Arab Emirates.

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt have imposed an economic and diplomatic boycott on Qatar since June 2017 over allegations that Doha supports terrorism and is cosying up to regional foe Iran. Qatar denies the charges. (Reuters)

India's BJP Preparing for Return to Power after Surprise Exit Polls: Sources

NEW DELHI - India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is preparing to meet coalition partners to discuss a new government, two BJP sources said on Monday, after exit polls predicted a better-than-expected result for it in a general election.

The talks would most likely be held on Tuesday afternoon, the two sources in the BJP said. They declined to be identified as they are not authorized to speak about the meeting.

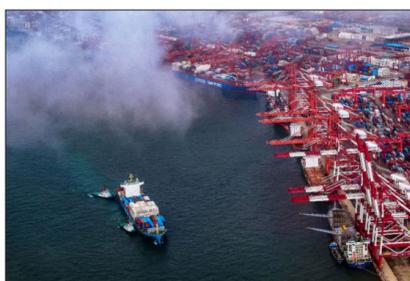
Nalin Kohli, a spokesman for the BJP, declined to comment. India's seven-phase general election, billed as the world's biggest democratic exercise, began on April 11 and ended on Sunday. Votes will be counted on Thursday and results are likely the same day. (Reuters)

EU Firms 'Caught in Crossfire' of US-China Trade War

BEIJING - European firms are "caught in the crossfire" of the US-China trade war and fewer are optimistic about their future in the world's second-largest economy, a business survey showed Monday.

The clash between Beijing and Washington does not benefit European companies, contrary to what some might have hoped at the beginning of the dispute last year, according to the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China.

"Now the trade tensions are seen as another uncertainty on the business environment, something that won't be sorted out quickly whether there is a deal or not," said



chamber vice president Charlotte Roule. "The trade tensions, according to our members, are not good for business".

According to the survey, the trade war is one of the top concerns for European firms in China (23 percent), after the Chinese economic slowdown (45 percent), the global economy (27

percent) and rising labour costs in China (23 percent). The study, which received replies from 585 firms, was conducted in January, as trans-Pacific trade tensions eased. They ratcheted up again in early May with the United States and China slapping steep increases in punitive customs tariffs on each other. (AFP)

Ukraine's New Leader Gets Sworn in, Dissolves Parliament

KIEV, Ukraine - Ukrainian TV star Volodymyr Zelensky was sworn in as the country's new president on Monday, promised to stop the war in the country's east against Russian-backed separatists and immediately disbanded parliament, which he has branded as a group only interested in self-enrichment. Even before he disbanded the Supreme Rada, which had been one of his cam-

paign promises, the 41-year-old Zelensky had upended the traditions of Ukrainian politics. He ditched the idea of a traditional motorcade to his inauguration, walking to the parliament through a park packed with people. Flanked by four bodyguards, he was giving high-fives to some spectators and even stopped to take a selfie with one of them. (Fox News)

China's Technology Tactics Irk Its Trading Partners

BEIJING - For four decades, Beijing has cajoled or pressured foreign companies to hand over technology. And its trading partners say if that didn't work, China stole what it wanted.

Communist leaders deflected demands for change until foreign frustration erupted into a showdown with President Donald Trump. He sent shockwaves through their export industries by slapping punitive tariffs of up to 25% on Chinese goods.

Europe, Japan and other trading partners object to Trump's tactics but echo American complaints. They say Beijing's tactics violate its market-opening commitments under the World Trade Organization.

American prosecutors go further. They say the Communist Party is the ringleader of a global industrial spying operation. Chinese leaders have promised stronger patent protections and other legal changes. Foreign experts say that will make little difference if the party won't enforce them.

The share of companies in a survey by the European Union Chamber of Commerce that said they felt compelled to hand over technology doubled from two years ago to 20 percent. "It is unacceptable that this practice continues," a chamber vice president, Charlotte Roule, said Monday. "Ending its persistence needs to be a priority." Here are some tactics Beijing's trading partners complain it uses to improperly obtain foreign technology. (AP)

32 Dead in Tajik Prison Riot

DUSHANBE - Three prison guards and 29 inmates have been killed in a high-security prison in Tajikistan after convicted Islamic State militants started a riot, the Central Asian nation's Justice Ministry said on Monday, reports Trend citing Reuters.

The ministry said the riot broke out late on Sunday in the prison in the city of Vakhdat, 10 km (six miles) east of the capital Dushanbe, as militants armed themselves with knives and killed three guards and five fellow prisoners.

One of the instigators of the riot was Bekhruz Gulmurod, a son of

Gulmurod Khalimov, a Tajik special forces colonel who defected to Islamic State in 2015 and, according to the ministry, has since been killed in Syria.

Security forces have killed 24 militants and restored order in the prison which has 1,500 inmates, the ministry added.

Islamic State, which at one point controlled large swathes of land in Syria and Iraq but has now lost its strongholds, claimed responsibility for another Tajik prison riot last November, which followed a deadly attack by its followers on Western tourists in July 2018. (Trend)

Turkmenistan, UN Discuss Disaster Risk Reduction

ASHGABAT - A meeting between the delegation of the Ministry of Defense of Turkmenistan and Paola Albrito, Head of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) Regional Office for Europe, was held in Geneva, Switzerland, Trend reports referring to the Turkmen Foreign Ministry.

The parties discussed matters of cooperation, the information reads. The meeting was held on the margins of the 6th session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GP2019) entitled "Progress in achieving sustainability: towards sustainable and inclusive societies".

The event was carried out within the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The Academy of Sciences of Turkmenistan, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), launched a national project for assessing seismic risks,

and preventing and responding to potential earthquakes.

The project, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, is funded by the Turkmen government and will be implemented by 2020. It is planned to conduct an assessment of the seismic stability of buildings and structures of Ashgabat.

Turkmenistan is located in a seismically dangerous zone. On the night of October 6, 1948, a magnitude 10 earthquake occurred in Ashgabat and claimed numerous lives.

More than 20 digital stationary and dozens of autonomous, mobile seismic stations monitor the seismic activity in Turkmenistan. One of these mobile seismic stations is located in the Karakum Desert. The territory of the country is characterized by the presence of structurally unstable subsoil bases and, due to climatic conditions, a high corrosivity. (Trend)