

India PM to Host China's Xi for Informal Summit

NEW DELHI - Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will host Chinese President Xi Jinping this year for an informal summit, an Indian foreign ministry spokesman said on Wednesday, after meeting several times over the past year to try to defuse tension.

The two held their first informal summit in Wuhan in April 2018 and at that meeting Xi had accepted Modi's invitation to come to India for a second meeting.

"The two sides are in touch, through diplomatic channels, to finalize the date and venue for the meeting," the spokesman said.

China is an "all-weather" friend with India's neighbor and long-time foe Pakistan, and a military standoff at the



Indian-Chinese high-altitude Himalayan border in 2017 rekindled fears of war.

Modi may also hold his first bilateral meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump over two years on the sidelines of the G20 summit

in June in Osaka, Japan, a source aware of the development said.

Trump caused alarm across the world after he raised tariffs on \$200 billion worth of goods from China on May 10, prompting

Beijing to say it would hit back with its own higher duties.

Both Modi and Trump are expected to talk again at the U.N. General Assembly session in September in New York, the source said, declining to be identified as he was not authorized to speak to the media.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo might also stop over in New Delhi ahead of the G20 summit, The Hindu newspaper reported, citing sources.

The Trump administration on Tuesday dropped India from a list of countries it monitors for currency manipulation, after finding that New Delhi did not engage in persistent, ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

Cuba/US Scientific Cooperation Declines Under Trump

NEW YORK - The degradation of relations between the U.S. and Cuba under President Donald Trump has begun to cut into scientific and medical cooperation on issues ranging from treatment of infectious diseases to coral reef preservation. A biomedical fellowship exchange program has been put on hold. Cuban cardiac nurses have stopped providing training to universities in Georgia and Maryland. A Cuban marine researcher has stopped accepting invitations to

events in the U.S. because it's nearly impossible to get visas.

The economic crackdown on Cuba does not specifically target science or academic and professional travel for U.S. citizens to the island, which is still allowed without having to ask for permission to the Department of Treasury. Scientists, however, say uncertainty around cooperation has already prompted fewer trips to Cuba and some projects have already been affected. ...*(More on P4)...(19)*

WASHINGTON - Turkish pilots might be excluded from participating in the F-35 training program, in yet another attempt by Washington to force its NATO ally out of the S-400 air defense system deal with Russia, according to a new report.

The US is "seriously considering suspending training for Turkish pilots on advanced F-35 fighter jets," two anonymous sources told Reuters on Tuesday, without elaborating if the decision was already

made.

Currently, four Turkish pilots and 47 military personnel are stationed in Luke Air Force Base in Arizona, where they are being taught how to handle the fifth-generation stealth jets. However, Ankara also has its servicemen training in Russia for the use of the S-400 air defense systems, first units of which are scheduled to be delivered to Turkey in the summer.

The government of President Recep Erdogan maintains that

US May Suspend Turkish Pilots from F-35 Training Program over S-400 Deal



it needs both F-35s and the Russian S-400 systems to protect its sovereignty in the troubled region. The US, however, is steaming ahead

with its arm-twisting tactics trying to coerce Ankara to back down of \$2.5 billion defense deal with Moscow. ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

More Satellites Than Stars? SpaceX Could Ruin Night Sky as We Know It, Astronomers Worry



A SpaceX launch of 60 highly-reflective satellites has focused astronomers' concerns on the overpopulation of Earth's orbit, with thou-

sands of broadband-beaming devices due to launch in coming years, threatening celestial views. While SpaceX didn't

cause the problem - there are already 2,100 active satellites in Earth's orbit, according to the Satellite Industry Association - the launch this weekend did crystallize it. Footage shot by a Netherlands astronomer showed the 60 satellites far outshining the stars around them as they climbed toward their eventual position at 550km altitude. SpaceX hopes to one day have 12,000 satellites orbiting the planet, beaming all the high-speed internet humanity

could ever want - and it is only one of several companies eyeing the satellite internet sector. "If many of the satellites in these new mega-constellations had that kind of steady brightness, then in 20 years or less, for a good part the night anywhere in the world, the human eye would see more satellites than stars," Bill Keel, a University of Alabama astronomer, told AFP. SpaceX CEO Elon Musk argued that bringing super-fast connections ...*(More on P4)...(16)*

Scientists Accuse Hungary of Seeking "Total Political Control" Over Research

BUDAPEST - Hungary's oldest and biggest scientific institute accused the government on Wednesday of trying to take "total political control" of vital research through plans to set up a new state body to oversee funding and work.

The government is drafting legislation to strip the Hungarian Academy of Sciences of its network of research institutions and hand over their buildings and assets to the new council, news website Index.

hu on Tuesday. Right-wing prime minister Viktor Orban, who took power in 2010, has tightened controls over public life, including the courts, the media and education - moves that have put him on a collision course with the European Union. The government has said he wants to shake up funding to encourage more lucrative and innovative research. "The modifications would amount to total government - ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

US Treasury Again Says China Is Not Manipulating Currency

WASHINGTON - The US Treasury expanded the number of countries subject to scrutiny in a semi-annual report released Tuesday, but again found that neither China nor any other trading partners was manipulating its currency. Treasury urged the Asian giant to avoid allowing the renminbi (RMB) to weaken persistently -- which would give its products more competitive advantage. Germany remained on the US "monitoring list" due to its large trade surplus, as did Japan and South Korea, indicating they "merit close attention to their currency practices." (AFP)

Nigerian President Buhari Sworn in for Second Term

ABUJA - Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari was sworn in for a second term in office on Wednesday, vowing once more to tackle crippling security threats and root out corruption in Africa's key economy.

The 76-year old leader, in power since 2015 and re-elected in February, took the oath of office for a second four-year term in the capital Abuja.

"I do solemnly swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to the Federal Republic of Nigeria," Buhari said, dressed in simple white robes and traditional embroidered cap. "I will preserve, protect and defend the constitution."

Buhari took the oath of office at what officials called a "low-key" ceremony. It included red-carpet arrival flanked by bagpipers into a stadium packed with dignitaries and military guard of honour. ...*(More on P4)...(21)*

Obeying Washington? 'New' NATO Strategy Parrots Hawkish US Posture

WASHINGTON - While details of NATO's new military strategy are still unknown, odds are the alliance is simply falling in line with recent updates to US doctrine and seeking to outgun all potential adversaries, a military expert tells RT.

Citing a "new security situation" as well as "challenges in the east and the south" and a "nuclear threat" from Moscow, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg announced last week that the alliance has adopted a new military strategy. Details of the document are not yet public.



"What's surprising is not that NATO has updated its military strategy, but that it took so long to do so," Mikhail Khodarenok, retired colonel in the Russian Aerospace Forces, told RT.

Washington updated its national security strat-

egy in 2017, national defense strategy and nuclear posture in 2018, and missile defense posture in early 2019, the military analyst noted. NATO's new strategy document is probably just catching up with all of those, he added. ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

UK PM Candidate Boris Johnson to Face Court Over Brexit Comments

LONDON - Boris Johnson, the favorite to replace Theresa May as British prime minister, must appear in court over allegations he lied to the public about Brexit, a judge ruled on Wednesday.

The judge at London's Westminster Magistrates' Court ruled that Johnson, the former foreign secretary and ex-London mayor, must answer a private summons alleging he had committed three offences of miscon-

duct in a public office.

These relate to claims that Johnson made in the run-up to and aftermath of the 2016 European Union referendum when he was one of the leading campaigners for Britain to leave the bloc. Britons voted by 52-48% to leave.

"During both time periods outlined above, the (proposed) defendant repeatedly lied and misled the British public as ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

Global Partners Seek to Continue Working with Huawei Despite U.S. Ban

BEIJING - Many tech companies around the world have expressed support for the Chinese telecom firm Huawei, saying they will continue their cooperation with the company as analysts said the U.S. ban on Huawei has created a disruptive ripple effect.

The U.S. government said recently that it will "prohibit transactions posing an unacceptable risk" to the country by declaring a national emergency over what it claims are technological threats, and announced restrictions on the sale and transfer of U.S. technologies to Huawei.

In response, Ren Zhengfei, the company's founder and president, said last week that Huawei never wants to "walk alone" in global markets and has seen widespread global support.

NOT ABOUT SECURITY

Despite intensive inspections by some governments for years, no "backdoor" has been found in Huawei's products so far, German tech analyst Paul Dalg was quoted by local media as saying.

The future 5G security standard should be discussed on a content level with neutral cybersecurity experts, not be misused as a leverage for an international trade conflict, Dalg said.

Mahmoud Raya, editor-in-chief of Lebanese "China in Arab Eyes" news website, said the United States "has been taking a lot of illegal and unfriendly measures against Chinese companies ...*(More on P4)...(22)*

Neighbor News

Iran's Rouhani Suggests U.S. Talks Possible If Sanctions Lifted

LONDON - Iranian President Hassan Rouhani signaled on Wednesday that talks with the United States might be possible if Washington lifted sanctions, days after U.S. President Donald Trump said a deal with Tehran on its nuclear programme was conceivable.

Washington withdrew last year from a 2015 international nuclear deal with Tehran, and is ratcheting up sanctions in efforts to shut down Iran's economy by ending its international sales of crude oil. Trump said on Monday: "I really believe that Iran would like to make a deal, and I think that's very smart of them, and I think that's a possibility to happen."

Rouhani said in re-

marks carried by state television: "Whenever they lift the unjust sanctions and fulfill their commitments and return to the negotiations table, which they left themselves, the door is not closed."

"But our people judge you by your actions, not your words."

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said on Tuesday that Iran saw no prospect of negotiations with the United States.

Tensions have risen between Iran and the United States since Washington deployed military resources including a carrier strike group and bombers and announced plans to deploy 1,500 troops to the Middle East, prompting fears of a conflict. (Reuters)

Pakistan Extends Airspace Closure on Indian Border to June 14

ISLAMABAD - Pakistani airspace on its eastern border with India will remain closed until June 14, a civil aviation official said on Wednesday, the latest extension months after a standoff between the arch rivals.

Pakistan closed its airspace in February after a Pakistan-based militant group in Indian-controlled Kashmir led to aerial bombing missions on each other's soil and a fighter dogfight over Kashmir.

Foreign carriers using Indian airspace have been forced to take

costly detours because they cannot fly over Pakistan. The closure mainly affects flights from Europe to South-east Asia.

"The closure will continue until June 14," a spokesperson for Pakistan's Civil Aviation Authority told Reuters, without giving further details.

Pakistan lies in the middle of a vital aviation corridor and the airspace restrictions impact hundreds of commercial and cargo flights each day, adding flight time for passengers and fuel costs for airlines. (Reuters)

China, Pakistan Cooperate to Cultivate Technical Talents

TIANJIN - Ali Arqam, a 19-year-old Pakistani student, participated in an international small robot mouse maze-solving competition held in north China's Tianjin Municipality earlier this month and obtained good results.

Ali studies at the Pakistan Luban Workshop, majoring in electric automation technology.

It is worthy of note that in this year's competition, many participants were from the Luban Workshops across the world.

"I've learned a lot at the workshop and will

pass on the knowledge to more local people after graduation," Ali said.

The establishment of Pakistan Luban Workshop is a vocational education cooperation program between China and Pakistan.

Named after Lu Ban, an ancient and great Chinese woodcraft

master and inventor, the workshop aims at improving academic education of top technical talents and serving the local economy and society via vocational training. (Agencies)

Turkmenistan Aims to Cooperate with Bahrain in Chemical Industry

ASHGABAT - The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan hosted a meeting with Ahmed Ali Al Sharyan, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Bahrain's Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company (GPIC), Trend reports referring to the Turkmen Foreign Ministry.

According to the Ministry, the parties discussed a wide range of issues in priority areas of bilateral cooperation.

In particular, the possibilities of implementing joint projects in oil, gas and chemical industries, and the prospects for the production of ammonia and nitrogen were considered, the information says.

As reported, earlier GPIC held talks with representatives of Turkmengas, Turkmennebit (Turkmenneft) and Turkmenhimiya (Turkmenchemistry)

state concerns, during which the issue on creation of a joint coordination working group was discussed among others.

The Turkmenhimiya State Concern plans to increase the volume and range of mineral fertilizers. The country has already launched production of key types of mineral fertilizers.

Ammonia-urea plants successfully operate in the cities of Tejen and Mary, a urea plant has been commissioned in the city of Garabogaz of the Balkan Region. A workshop for the production of sulfuric acid was commissioned at the Turkmenabnat Chemical Plant, where it is also planned to master the production of potash-nitrogen fertilizers from ammonium nitric acid and potassium chloride. (Trend)