

Xi, Trump Join Hands Making Bigger Cake

BEIJING - Before U.S. President Donald Trump began high-level talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Thursday, he was welcomed by a children's choir voicing the hopes of many people for the historic visit.

"Join hands, join hands for solidarity.
Join hands, join hands for peace.
Join hands, join hands for the world," the children sang.

The cheerful song and the deals worth 253.5 billion U.S. dollars signed by Chinese and U.S. companies during Trump's visit have



sent the world an inspiring message: the relations between the world's two biggest economies have come to a new historic starting point. The three-day visit has affirmed that the two countries have chosen cooperation rather than confrontation. It's also a good news for the world as stable China-U.S. relations will benefit not only the well-being of both peoples, but also world peace, prosperity and stability. Frictions and differences remain, but in-depth and thorough dialogues are likely to prevail, as both leaders have decided to steer bilateral ties through head-of-state diplomacy. (Xinhua)

Damascus Suburb of 400,000 Faces "Catastrophe" without Aid: UN Official

GENEVA - The Damascus suburb of Eastern Ghouta is "besieged" and 400,000 civilians there need humanitarian access otherwise they face a "complete catastrophe", the UN special advisor on humanitarian affairs Jan Egeland said on Thursday. He spoke at a press conference after a meeting of the Humanitarian Task Force on Syria, noting that a "very bleak report" was delivered from the UN side.

In Eastern Ghouta, Egeland said there are signs

of "acutely malnourished" children and people are dying because it is impossible to have a medical evacuation. There had been a de-escalation period in many areas and he said it helped a lot in terms of less displacement, less killing and less civilians maimed and killed. The reports of attacks on civilians, however, are worst in Eastern Ghouta "which is the area just next to the capital, Damascus city", said Egeland. (Xinhua)

BRUSSELS - EU Brexit chief Michel Barnier on Friday handed Britain a two-week ultimatum to make concessions on a divorce agreement if it wants to unlock the next phase of talks in December. Frenchman Barnier said it was "vital" for Britain to increase its offer on its exit bill - a figure senior EU officials put at up to 60 billion euros - to open up talks on a future trade deal. The fate of the border between British-ruled Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland has also thrown an unexpected

Barnier Gives Britain Two-Week Brexit Deadline

spanner into the works, with British negotiator David Davis ruling out the EU's preferred solution. "My answer is yes," Barnier told a press conference at the end of the sixth round of talks in Brussels, when asked if he would need "concessions" from Britain within the next two weeks to move on. "On the financial settlement, this is absolutely vital if we are to achieve sufficient progress in December. It is just a matter of settling accounts, as



with any other separation," the former European commissioner and French foreign minister said. Barnier added that he was "following attentive-

ly" the political situation in Britain where a series of government resignations has further weakened the government of Prime Minister Theresa May. (AFP)

Asia-Pacific Plays Important Role in Mapping out Free, Open Trade Regime



BEIJING - The Asia-Pacific region is expected to continue driving world economic growth and protect free trade at a time when nations are grappling with how to manage economic globaliza-

tion. Accounting for about 60 percent of global gross domestic product, the 21-member Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) makes up nearly half of world trade and 40

percent of the population on the Earth. The 25th APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting will kick off on Friday in Vietnam's central Da Nang city. In a world of growing interdependence, APEC leaders are pondering the way forward to tackle challenges to economic globalization. Since the beginning of this year, against the backdrop of a series of Black Swan events - such as Brexit - anti-globalization sentiment and protectionism have been on the rise, frustrating attempts

to lessen the divides brought by globalization. To restore confidence, China has firmly voiced its stance that building a Free Trade Area in the Asia-Pacific is a strategic initiative critical for the long-term prosperity of the region and the world. Economic globalization has promoted trade and brought tangible growth to the Asia-Pacific region in the past several decades, lifting tens of millions of people out of poverty and turning it into a growth engine for the whole world. (Xinhua)

S.Korean Farmers Strongly Oppose FTA Revision Negotiations with U.S.

SEOUL - South Korean farmers on Friday expressed strong opposition to negotiations with the United States to revise the South Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA), demanding the annulment of the trade deal. The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy said in a press release that it held a public hearing earlier in the day to collect public opinions on the negotiations to amend the KORUS FTA as part of the domestic process on trade pact. The hearing, however, was stopped as farmers

entered the hearing venue to protest against the revision negotiations, occupying rostrums and shouting for the annulment of the bilateral FTA. They hurled eggs and shoes, as well as insults, toward government officials. The farmers tussled with security men, demanding the stop of the public hearing, according to local media reports. Farmers held a separate press conference outside the venue, saying the KORUS FTA, which came into force in 2012, should be immediately scrapped. (Xinhua)

EU Moves to Speed Troop Deployments in and Outside Europe

BRUSSELS - The European Union is moving to lift barriers to the rapid deployment of the 28 nations' armies to confront aggressors within Europe or abroad. Transport Commissioner Violeta Bulc, unveiling the plan Friday, said that "we need to be able to react effectively to internal and external crisis situations." The aim is to upgrade infrastructure like bridges, roads and runways that can't handle heavy military equipment and cut customs and administrative red tape, which cause delays, higher costs and leave Europe vulnerable to attack. The European Commission will by March recommend what action should be taken, who should do it and by when. (AP)

World Should Condemn 'Very Possession' of Nuclear Weapons: Pope

VATICAN CITY - Pope Francis, in some his strongest comments ever on nuclear weapons, said on Friday that the world should condemn not only their possible use but "their very possession". The appeal came at the start of a two-day conference on nuclear disarmament that has brought together 11 Nobel Peace Prize winners, as well as United Nations and NATO officials, discussing prospects for a world free of nuclear weapons. Addressing the group, Francis spoke of "the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental effects of any employment of nuclear devices" and added: "If we also take into account the risk of an accidental detonation as a result of error of any kind, the threat of their use, as well as their very possession, is to be firmly condemned." (Reuters)

Britain, India in Tug-of-War over Seat at World Court

UNITED NATIONS - Britain and India were in a tug-of-war on Thursday at UN headquarters in New York over whose candidate would return to the International Court of Justice. After a whole day of work, the UN General Assembly and the Security Council were able to elect four judges for The Hague-based world court. The fifth vacancy was hotly contested by British jurist Christopher Greenwood and India's Dalveer Bhandari. Both



were seeking re-election. Under the Statute of the International Court of Justice, the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, a candidate has to obtain an absolute majority in both chambers

to get elected - 97 out of 193 votes in the General Assembly and eight out of 15 in the Security Council. Voting in the two chambers must be held concurrently. (Xinhua)

Tillerson Concerned over Saudi Purge, Monitoring Hariri Situation

WASHINGTON - Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's recent political purge raises concerns and remains unclear but does not appear to amount to mass arrests, U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson told reporters on Friday. Separately, Tillerson said there was no indication that Lebanon's former prime minister, Saad al-Hariri, was being held in Saudi Arabia against his will but that the United States was monitoring the situation, according to a press pool report of his remarks. Tillerson, who is traveling with President Donald Trump on an Asia trip,

made the comments following talks with his Saudi counterpart this week. Salman, Saudi Arabia's future king, has tightened his grip on power through an anti-corruption purge by arresting royals, ministers and investors including billionaire Alwaleed bin Talal who is one of the kingdom's most prominent businessmen. He was among 11 princes, four ministers and tens of former ministers who were detained. Asked about the Saudi purge, Tillerson said he had spoken with Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir about the situation on Wednesday and that the recent crackdown did not yet amount to formal arrests. (Reuters)

We'll Buy Arms from Russia, Philippines' Duterte Tells Putin

DANANG, Vietnam - Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte thanked Moscow on Friday for its "timely assistance" in defeating pro-Islamic State militants who took over a southern city for months, expressing his willingness to buy Russian weapons. Duterte last month declared the liberation of Marawi City from Islamist militants after 154 days of fighting, which killed more than 1,100 people, including 165 soldiers, and displaced nearly 400,000 residents. "I want to build a strong armed forces and a strong police and the reason is very important for you to know that we are eyeing - we are buying arms from Russia this time," Duterte told Russian President Vladimir Putin on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Vietnam. The Philippines was to buy more than 20,000 assault rifles from the United States, but some senators, concerned with Duterte's human rights record and rising killings, blocked that sale. But China and Russia, whose relations with the Philippines have vastly improved in recent months, donated a total of 11,000 assault rifles and trucks. "Your timely assistance to my country helped us replenish the old arms and the spent bores that were fired repeatedly and we have a new stock," he said, in transcripts sent to Manila by the presidential communications office. Manila and Moscow signed a military deal on logistics, including a contract with a state-owned company for the supply of equipment, during the first-ever visit by a Russian defense minister to the Philippines last month. (Reuters)

Neighbor News

Xi Leaves for APEC Summit, State Visits to Vietnam, Laos

BEIJING - Chinese President Xi Jinping left Beijing on Friday for the 25th Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Economic Leaders' Meeting in Vietnam. After attending the APEC summit in Da Nang, Xi will pay state visits to Vietnam and Laos. It is Xi's first overseas trip after the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in October. Xi's entourage includes Ding Xuexiang, member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, member of the

CPC Central Committee, member of the Secretariat of the CPC Central Committee and director of the General Office of the CPC Central Committee; Liu He, member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, director of the General Office of the Central Leading Group for Financial and Economic Affairs; and Yang Jiechi, member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and State Councillor. (Xinhua)

EU and Iran Defend Nuclear Deal, Under Fire from Trump

SAMARKAND, Uzbekistan - Senior officials from the European Union and Iran spoke up on Friday in defense of the agreement limiting Tehran's nuclear program, as the pact comes under heavy pressure from U.S. President Donald Trump. The nuclear deal was "a major achievement of European and international multilateral diplomacy", EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini told a conference in Uzbekistan. "The European Union will make sure it will continue to be fully implemented by all, in all its parts," she said. Trump on Oct. 13 dealt a blow to the pact by refusing to certify that Tehran was complying with the accord, under which Iran agreed to curb its nuclear program in return for relief from economic sanctions. International inspectors said it was complying.

The U.S. Congress has until mid-December to decide whether to reimpose sanctions lifted by the deal. Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif also spoke on Friday at the United Nations-sponsored conference on Central Asian security and development in Samarkand. "By clinching the nuclear deal and fulfilling all our commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, we have in action proved our compliance with the principle of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament," he said, without mentioning Trump directly. UZBEK THAW Mogherini said the EU's ties with ex-Soviet Central Asia were at an all-time high following moves by Uzbekistan's new government to open up the previously isolated nation. (Reuters)

CPEC Offers Huge Opportunity for Pakistan: PM

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan's Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Thursday said that China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project offered huge opportunity for Pakistan and the provincial governments were involved in all stages of the CPEC planning with special focus on the development of Balochistan. The prime minister stated this while chairing a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) at PM's Office. The meeting reviewed progress on various CPEC projects in view of the upcoming 7th meeting of the Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC). Ahsan Iqbal, Minister for Interior; and the Planning Commission of Pakistan presented an overall structure of CPEC, its institutional framework, project portfolios, current progress and future plans.

The Cabinet Committee reviewed progress on Road Infrastructure Projects and their projected completion dates. The Railways Division made a presentation on feasibility of MLI project including its detailed design and financing plan. Aviation Division presented detailed design and financing plan of Gwadar International Airport. The Cabinet Committee was briefed on Energy Sector Projects including Gwadar Power Project, Karot and Kohala Hydel Power Projects, Mattiari-Lahore and Mattiari-Faisalabad HVDC Lines and coal projects in Thar. The Cabinet Committee was informed that significant work has been completed on Energy Projects, which constituted a major portion of the CPEC. The Committee was also apprised regarding the measures undertaken for security of CPEC projects. (Monitoring Desk)

Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan Sign Border Agreement

ASHGABAT - Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan signed a border agreement, determining the "points of junction" between the countries on October 10. The signing ceremony was held in Uzbek Samarkand city, with participation of the Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan Abdulaziz Kamilov and his counterparts from Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan Kairat Abdurkhanov and Rashid

Meredov., Uzbek media reported. Previously, the Uzbek and Kyrgyz Foreign Ministers Abdulaziz Kamilov and Erlan Abdyldaev signed the agreement on the settlement of 85 percent of the borderline, within a visit of the Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambayev to Tashkent. The other 15 percent (217 kilometers) are expected to be settled in December 2017. (Trend)