China's President in India for Summit Amid Kashmir Tensions

MAMALLAPURAM, India — Chinese President Xi Jinping arrived in India on Friday for meetings with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a time of tensions over Beijing's support for Pakistan in opposing India's downgrading of Kashmir's semi-autonomy and continuing restrictions on the disputed region.

Xi was greeted at the Chennai airport by Tamil Nadu state Gov. Patwarilal Purohit as a cultural group beat drums and blew horns.

India's foreign ministry said Xi and Modi will meet in the seaside temple town of Mamallapuram later Friday and Saturday.

Their one-to-one meeting in Wuhan in China in April last year also was preceded by tensions caused by a 10-week standoff between their armed forces on the Bhutan border.

Mamallapuram is decorated with arches studded with fruits and green vegetables. Hundreds of young children in traditional dress carrying posters with photographs of Xi and Modi waited for hours ...(More on P4)...(10)

EU, UK Find the will to Get a Brexit Deal, Work on the way

BRUSSELS — The European Union said Friday that talks with the U.K. to find an amicable divorce deal were back on track, despite huge challenges and a looming end-of-month deadline for Britain to leave the bloc.

EU Council President Donald Tusk said he has "received promising signals" from Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar that a Brexit deal is still possible, so he has extended a deadline to continue the Brexit talks.

Tusk, speaking in Nicosia, said "for the first time" Varadkar and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson saw a pathway toward a deal, adding that "even the slightest chance must be used" to avoid a no-deal Brexit.

Immediately, the wheels of the negotiating machinery started churning again. Johnson's Brexit Secretary, Stephen Barclay, got a warm welcome from EU negotiator Michel ...(More on P4)...(15)

'Border on Fire' as Turkey Intensifies Syria Campaign

ISTANBUL - Turkey stepped up its air and artillery strikes on Kurdish militia in northeast Syria on Friday, escalating an offensive that has drawn warnings of humanitarian catastrophe and turned Republican lawmakers against U.S. President Donald Trump.

The incursion, launched after Trump withdrew U.S. troops who had been fighting alongside Kurdish forces against Islamic State militants, has opened a new front in the eight-year-old Syrian civil war and drawn fierce international criticism.

In Washington, Trump - fending off accusations that he abandoned the Kurds, loyal allies of the United States - suggested that Washington could mediate in the conflict, while also raising the possibility of imposing sanctions on Turkey.

On Friday, Turkish warplanes and artillery struck around Syria's Ras al Ain, one of two

border towns that have been the focus of the offensive. Reuters journalists heard gunfire there from across the frontier in the Turkish town of Ceylanpinar.

A convoy of 20 armored vehicles carrying ...(More on P4)...(11)

Iran: Oil Tanker Struck by Rockets Off Saudi Arabia

TEHRAN, IRAN - Two rockets struck an Iranian tanker traveling through the Red Sea off the coast of Saudi Arabia on Friday, Iranian officials said, the latest incident in the region amid months of heightened tensions between Tehran and the U.S.

There was no word from Saudi Arabia on the reported attack, and Saudi officials did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Iranian state television said the explosion damaged two storerooms aboard the unnamed oil tanker and caused an oil leak into the Red Sea near the Saudi port city of Jiddah.

The state-run IRNA news agency, quoting Iran›s National Iranian Tanker Co., identified the stricken vessel as the Sabity. That vessel last turned on its tracking devices in August near the Iranian port city of Bandar Abbas.

US 5th Fleet ‹aware›

Lt. Pete Pagano, a spokesman for the U.S. Navy›s 5th Fleet overseeing the Mideast, said authorities there were "aware of reports of this incident," but declined to comment further.

The reported attack comes after the U.S. has alleged that in past months Iran attacked oil tankers near the Strait of Hormuz, at the mouth of ...(More on P4)...(12)

Turkey-Syria Payback: Norway Suspends Arms Sales to Erdogan Regime, Exposing Cracks in NATO Solidarity

OSLO - Turkey's incursion into northeastern Syria this week has been met with international condemnation – but it's also induced something of a schism between members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

On Thursday, Norway's Foreign Minister Ine Soreide announced in an email to AFP that, given the complexity and ever-changing nature of the situation, "as a precautionary measure" the foreign ministry "will not handle any new demands for exports of defense material or material for multiple uses to Turkey."

"It is clear there is growing unease among some members regarding Turkey's actions, and it is likely Norway's move will be followed by other NATO members as well," Nile Gardiner, the ...(More on P4)...(16)

Marc Thiessen: Trump's Abandonment of the Kurds Is a Recipe for Endless War, not a Strategy to End one

WASHINGTON - President Trump has defended his shameful abandonment of our Kurdish allies in Syria, declaring that "I was elected on getting out of these ridiculous endless wars" that have left America "bogged down, watching over a quagmire." Listening to the president, Americans might think that we still have large numbers of U.S. troops fighting on fronts across the Middle East. We do not.

The days when we deployed hundreds of thousands ...(More on P4)...(17)

Nigerian Police Vows to Curb Attacks on Schools in Northern State

LAGOS - The police in Nigeria on Friday said it was making relentless efforts to stop recent attacks by hoodlums on schools in north Nigeria›s Kaduna state.

State police chief Ali Janga, who gave the assurance in a statement reaching Xinhua, said security personnel are working round the clock to tame the recent change of tactics by the enemies of peace who now resort to soft targets.

A local security source had told Xinhua on Thursday that a group of unidentified gunmen attacked a secondary school in north Nigeria›s Kaduna, abducting the principal of the school.

The incident came barely a week after the abduction of six female pupils and two staff of the Engravers College, in Chikun area of the state.

Janga said the police would prevent future occurrence of such unfortunate incidents, ...(More on P4)...(18)

Ethiopian PM Abiy Ahmed Wins Nobel Peace Prize

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia — Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed won the Nobel Peace Prize for 2019 in recognition of his efforts to end his country's two-decade border conflict with Eritrea.

The Norwegian Nobel Institute on Friday also praised the "important reforms" that Abiy, Ethiopia's leader since April 2018, has launched at home. The prize comes as Abiy faces pressure to uphold the sweeping freedoms he introduced, and critics warn that his ability to deal with rising domestic unrest may be slipping.

The Nobel committee said some people may consider it too early to give him the prize, but "it is now that Abiy Ahmed's efforts need recognition and deserve encouragement."

The award, the 100th Nobel Peace Prize, reflects the committee's taste for trying to encourage works in progress.

Abiy said he was "humbled and thrilled."

In a call with the Nobel committee, he laid out his hope that the award will be taken "positively" by other African leaders "to work on (the) peacebuilding process on our continent."

Abiy, 43, took office ...(More on P4)...(13)

Turkey is a Great Power in this Great Region and with Great Power Comes Great Responsibility

ISTANBUL - NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg is visiting Turkey on Friday (11 October 2019) to discuss preparations for the NATO leaders' meeting in London this December, marking NATO's 70th anniversary. In his meeting with Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu in Istanbul today, the Secretary General thanked Turkey for its commitment and many contributions to NATO.

In his meetings in Istanbul, Mr Stoltenberg also discussed the situation in Syria. He underlined that "while Turkey has legitimate security concerns, I expect Turkey to act with restraint." Mr. Stoltenberg expressed his "serious concerns about the risk of further destabilising the region, escalating tensions, and even more human suffering". He emphasized that "We have a common enemy – Da'esh. ...(More on P4)...(14)

U.S. Migrant Policy Sends Thousands of Children Including Hundreds of Babies Back to Mexico

TIJUANA, Mexico - Since January, the U.S. government has ordered 13,000 migrants under 18, including more than 400 infants, to wait with their families in Mexico for U.S. immigration court hearings, a Reuters analysis of government data found.

Along the U.S.-Mexico border, babies and toddlers are living in high-crime cities - often in crowded shelters and tents or on the streets - for the weeks or months it takes to get a U.S. asylum hearing.

The risk of violence and illness runs high and is of particular concern for families with young children or those with chronic health conditions, according to interviews with health professionals, migrants, aid workers and advocates.

The children, whose numbers have not been previously reported, are among tens of thousands of migrants returned to Mexico under a Trump administration policy known as the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP). Most are from Guatemala, Honduras or El Salvador.

U.S. immigration officials did not respond to requests for comment on Reuters' data findings.

According to the Department of Homeland Security, decisions about whether a person is placed in MPP are made by border agents on a case-by-case basis and include consultation with medical professionals. Unaccompanied minors should not be sent back to Mexico, according to the program ...()

Neighbor News

Iran Signs Marine Cooperation Agreement with Caspian Sea Littoral States

TEHRAN - Iran and Caspian Sea littoral states signed a marine cooperation agreement in security, training, technical work, search and rescue operations on Friday, Press TV reported.

Iranian Navy Commander Hossein Khanzadi signed the agreement in the Russian city of Saint Petersburg along with his Russian, Azeri, Kazakh, Turkmen counterparts on Friday.

On the sidelines of the meeting, Khanzadi held multilateral meetings with the navy commanders of Russia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan.

The Iranian navy chief also announced that Russia and Iran have planned to hold a joint navy exercise in the Indian Ocean in the near future. (Xinhua)

Declaration on Strategic Economic Co-op of CIS Countries Signed in Ashgabat

ASHGABAT - The Summit of the CIS Heads of State in Ashgabat city has ended with the signing ceremony of the final documents aimed at strengthening and development of constructive interaction in the CIS format, Trend reports referring to the Turkmenistan State News Agency.

These documents include Declaration on Strategic Economic Cooperation of the CIS Member States and an appeal to their peoples and the world community in connection with the 75th anniversary of the Victory of the Soviet people in the Great Patriotic War of -1941 1945.

The documents were also signed on Uzbekistan's chairmanship in the CIS and on holding the next meeting of the Council of CIS Heads of State in Tashkent Oct. 2020 ,16. (Trend)

Ashgabat, Dushanbe Ready to Step up Trade & Economic Partnership

DUSHANBE - Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov met his Tajik counterpart Emomali Rahmon in Ashgabat Oct. 11, Trend reports with reference to the Turkmen government.

The parties discussed the prospects for bilateral cooperation and noted the progressive dynamics of interstate dialogue.

The need to intensify trade and economic partnership was noted at the meeting, the report said.

A separate topic of discussion was cooperation in the transport and communications sector, which is conditioned by the favorable geographical position and transit capabilities of the two states.

An exchange of views also took place on a number of issues of regional and international policy of mutual interest.

As was reported in July, Tajikistan is completing construction of the first mountain tunnel as part of a project to build an additional branch "D" of the interstate gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to China. It is expected that construction of the Tajik section of the gas pipeline will be completed in 2024.

Branch "D" will become an integral part of the Central Asia-China gas pipeline, completing the existing branches "A", "B", "C", which pass from Turkmenistan through Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Upon completion, the total capacity of the pipeline will reach 85 billion cubic meters of gas per year.

The Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Tajikistan (TAT) railway construction project was also mentioned among the joint profitable economic projects.

In addition, it was reported that Turkmenistan may supply electricity in transit through Afghanistan to Tajikistan in the autumn-winter period. (Trend)

Imran Calls Out Int'l Media for Giving Kashmir Issue Less Coverage Than Hong Kong

ISLAMABAD - As a large number of people gathered in Islamabad after Friday prayer to form a 'human chain' in a show of solidarity with the people of Indian-occupied Kashmir, Prime Minister Imran Khan called out the international media for continuing to give "headline coverage" to the ongoing Hong Kong protests but "ignoring the dire human rights crisis" in the held valley.

Kashmiris have been living under curfew-like conditions since Aug 5 when the hardline BJP government revoked Article 370 of the Indian constitution which had ensured a special status for the disputed valley since the partition.

Prime Minister Imran Khan, who was slated to join the human chain as it passed through the Prime Minister Office, also addressed the participants as well as the nation.

In his address, the premier regretted the "wall-to-wall coverage" of the Hong Kong protests by international media, and the relative silence surrounding the treatment of the people of Kashmir.

Earlier in the day, drawing parallels between Hong Kong protests and Kashmir lockdown, he wrote on Twitter: "I am puzzled as to how international media continues to give headline coverage to Hong Kong protests but ignores the dire human rights crisis in IOJK — an internationally recognised disputed territory illegally annexed by India with 900,000 troops imposing a siege on 8 million Kashmiris [contd] for over 2 months, with a complete blackout of communications, thousands imprisoned — including [the] entire spectrum of political leadership plus children — and a growing humanitarian crisis."(Agencies)