

Hillary Clinton Warns Britain on Potential Trade Deal with Trump

LONDON - Former U.S. presidential candidate Hillary Clinton cautioned Britain on Sunday over its push to secure a trade deal with U.S. President Donald Trump after it leaves the European Union.

Clinton, the Democratic Party candidate who lost out to Trump in last November's election, also said Britain would face serious disruption if it left the EU without a negotiated deal with Brussels. The British government has talked up the prospect of bilateral trade deals with the United States and others as one of the major benefits of leaving the EU following last year's surprise referendum



vote to leave. Asked about the prospects of a British-U.S. deal, Clinton told the BBC: "You're making a trade deal with somebody who says he doesn't believe in trade, so I'm not quite sure how that's going to play out over the next few years."

British Prime Minister Theresa May visited Trump in January to talk trade. The countries share \$200 billion of trade each year. But May has since intervened in a dispute between U.S. aerospace firm Boeing and Canadian planemaker Bombardier, lobbying in the interests of Bombardier to try to protect jobs at its factory in Northern Ireland. (Reuters)

Neighbor News

China Boosts Security for Upcoming CPC Congress

BEIJING - Public security forces and volunteers are being mobilized nationwide to boost security as the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) prepares to convene on October 18 in Beijing. Cai Qi, secretary of the Beijing Municipal Committee of the CPC, said that all departments should strengthen coordination during the 19th CPC congress to ensure security in Beijing "at the highest level, with the strongest organization and the most effective measures." He also noted that ordinary citizens should be deployed on this mission, the Beijing Daily reported.

Easily identifiable volunteers wearing bright red armbands, some of whom are senior citizens, can be seen in both

Beijing's wide streets and narrow alleys. In some important locations, they take shifts to ensure there is vigilance round the clock. Recent years have seen these volunteer groups making great contributions to cracking down on illegal activities.

Meanwhile, armed police are also strengthening their efforts in patrolling Tiananmen Square. Passengers on Beijing-bound trains from many cities are also subject to more stringent checks. In Shanghai, passengers have to go through a facial recognition security system. Beijing's not alone in upgrading its security levels. Other provinces are also joining the effort with many military and police forces holding emergency drills. (Agencies)

Pakistan, Iran Discuss Border Security, Economic Ties

ISLAMABAD - A delegation from Balochistan called on Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Morteza Sarmadi and discussed bilateral and regional issues, including border security.

The delegation, headed by Balochistan Assembly Speaker Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani, held talks with Sarmadi on Saturday over border security, visa issuance, gas export, establishing Quetta-Zahedan flights, electricity export, boosting economic cooperation and resolving banking issues.

The delegation arrived in Shiraz, southern Iran on October 10 and held talks with local officials in Fars Province as well. The members of the parliamentary delegation from Pakistan's Balochistan also met Iran's parliament speaker Ali Larijani and President Hassan Rouhani's deputy for women and family affairs. They also exchanged views on the development of economic cooperation and removal of obstacles on the way of banking relations. (Agencies)

Trump is in No Position to Verify Iran's Compliance with Nuclear Deal: Zarif

TEHRAN - Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has stressed that US President Donald Trump is in no position to verify Iran's compliance with the nuclear deal.

Zarif made the remarks on Saturday during a live interview with Iranian national TV in response to Trump, who failed to recertify the international nuclear agreement on Friday.

"Trump is in no position to verify Iran's compliance with the JCPOA," the top diplomat stated, asserting that quitting the deal is among Tehran's options.

Zarif further noted that regulations within the American government are not related to Tehran and the US must honor its international commitments under the agreement, known as Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

"The American domestic regulations are not credible for us and the US is required to remain committed to its international commitments. The JCPOA is not an agreement between Iran and the US to need Congress certification," he said.

Speaking from the White House on Friday, Trump said he would not recertify that Tehran is complying with the 2015 nuclear agreement.

The president is required by US law to certify every 90 days whether or not Iran is complying with the nuclear deal. He has certified the deal twice since coming to office.

The US Congress has 60 days to decide whether to reimpose economic sanctions against Tehran, removed under the accord.

The Iranian foreign minister further accused the Trump administration of following the agenda of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the region. (Presstv)

Uzbekistan, WB Discuss Ways of Co-Op Expansion

TASHKENT - The Uzbek delegation met with World Bank (WB) Vice President for Europe and Central Asia Cyril Muller. The meeting was held as part of the Uzbek delegation's participation in the autumn sessions of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in Washington.

According to the Uzbek embassy in the US, during the talks the sides exchanged views on the priorities for further development of bilateral cooperation.

The key directions of expansion of partnership relations and implementation of perspective projects in such spheres as modernization of the energy, irrigation sectors, development of transport and social infrastructure, processing of agricultural products were discussed.

Muller underlined the importance of the bilateral meeting with World Bank President Jim Yong Kim on September 20, 2017 as part of Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's visit to New York. (Trend)

Spanish Minister Says any Unclear Response from Puigdemont to be Taken as "Yes"

MADRID - Spanish Interior Minister Juan Ignacio Zoido said on Saturday that any vague answer from Catalan regional leader Carles Puigdemont over whether or not he declared the independence of the Catalan region from Spain Tuesday would be taken as a "yes" by the Spanish government who would then take steps to suspend the autonomy of the region.

Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy on Wednesday sent Puigdemont a formal petition for him to "confirm" whether

or not the Catalan region's parliament had declared independence from Spain in its session held on Tuesday night. Rajoy has consistently said he will not discuss the issue "outside of the law."

Puigdemont has been asked to clarify his position until Monday. "If he (Puigdemont) responds with any ambiguity it will mean he doesn't want dialogue with the government and the government will have to take the corresponding measures," he said. (Xinhua)

Merkel Back at the Polls before Tough Coalition Talks

BERLIN - German Chancellor Angela Merkel faces a regional vote test Sunday, after winning a fourth term with a disappointing showing that has forced her to embark on high-stakes coalition talks.

Three weeks after German voters handed Merkel's Christian Democratic Union its worst result in decades, the leader of Europe's biggest economy is locked in another poll battle - this time, in the region of Lower Saxony.

Latest surveys show the CDU lagging behind the Social Democratic Party (SPD) in the state, the fourth most populous in Germany and home of scandal-tainted Volkswagen.

"A victory in Lower Saxony is important for Merkel because it would strengthen her and show that her party can still win state elections," said Oskar Niedermayer of Berlin's Free University. Merkel's rival, SPD leader Martin



Schulz is also desperately seeking to top the vote, after suffering a humiliating defeat in the national election. Lower Saxony was forced into a snap vote af-

ter the ruling coalition of SPD and the left-leaning Greens collapsed when it lost its wafer-thin majority due to the defection of a single lawmaker. (AFP)

Britain, Germany Committed to Iran Nuclear Deal: May's Office



LONDON - Britain and Germany agreed on Sunday they remained

committed to the nuclear deal with Iran after a U.S. decision to decertify

the agreement, a spokeswoman said after a call between Prime Minister

Theresa May and German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

"They agreed the UK and Germany both remained firmly committed to the deal," the spokeswoman said in a statement.

"They also agreed the international community needed to continue to come together to push back against Iran's destabilizing regional activity, and to explore ways of addressing concerns about Iran's ballistic missile program." (Reuters)

Nearly 700,000 Iraqis from War-Torn Mosul Still Displaced: NGO

BAGHDAD - Nearly 700,000 Iraqis from the former jihadist stronghold of Mosul and nearby areas are still displaced despite the city's recapture in July, the Norwegian Refugee Council said Sunday.

"One year since the start of the battle to retake Mosul from the Islamic State group (IS), some 673,000 Iraqis from the city and its surroundings remain displaced and unable to go back to their destroyed neighbourhoods," it said. "More than half of them may have lost their of-

ficial civil documents - from birth certificates to property deeds - which will make rebuilding their lives even harder," added the humanitarian group, which operates in Iraq. Mosul was seized by the jihadists in 2014 during an offensive that saw them take control of large parts of Iraq and neighbouring Syria. "The battle of Mosul is over, but for hundreds of thousands who fled the city, their suffering and despair continues," said the NRC's Iraq country director Heidi Diedrich. (AFP)

U.S.-Led Forces Transfer IS Militants from Raqqa to Deir Al-Zour: Media

DAMASCUS - Dozens of the Islamic State (IS) militants are being transferred under the protection of the U.S.-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) from the northern city of Raqqa towards Deir al-Zour province in eastern Syria, state news agency SANA reported Saturday.

Citing activists, SANA said the U.S.-led coalition's warplanes are flying over Raqqa, the de facto capital of IS, without conducting airstrikes over the past two days. SANA said the United States and the SDF had struck an agreement with IS for their evacuation from Raqqa to Deir al-Zour, where the Syrian government forces are fighting the IS militants.

"This U.S.-Daesh agreement is not the first, as several similar agreements have preceded this one in the city of Tabqa, Mansura and Karama in the countryside of Raqqa, under which IS militants were transferred to areas the Syrian army is fighting the terrorist group," SANA said, suggesting that the United States is supporting the IS. The state news agency said the agreement sparks questions about the goal of the United States and the SDF.

It said that the United States had evacuated tens of IS leaders from Deir al-Zour before the Syrian army reached their areas.

It said the new agreement came days after the Russian defense ministry accused the U.S. forces in the Tanf area of lending a blind eye, while around 400 terrorists crossed the area where the U.S. forces were stationed. SANA also reminded of the U.S. attack on Syrian military positions in the Tharda mountain last year, during which 90 Syrian soldiers were killed, and the IS managed to take over the area in the countryside of Deir al-Zour. (Xinhua)

Austrians Go to the Polls in Parliamentary Election

VIENNA - Some 6.4 million Austrian voters began heading to over 10,000 polling booths on Sunday to elect the members of the National Council - the lower house of the parliament. Almost 900,000 voters asked for absentee ballots, which give voters the option of either sending their vote card in via post, handing it in person ahead of the election, or voting on the election day at any polling booth in the country.

The absentee votes will not be counted at the



close of polling booths early Sunday evening, which means any close results may not be decided until a final result comes out later in the week.

Going by recent polling trends, the center-right

People's Party headed by Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz has got a good lead in most polls, while the Social Democrats and far-right Freedom Party could see a close finish for the second. (Xinhua)

UK Finance Minister's Future Questioned by PM May's Allies as Budget Nears

LONDON - Britain's finance minister Philip Hammond on Sunday faced mounting questions over his future weeks ahead of a budget announcement, finding himself at the center of an increasingly fraught debate over Britain's departure from the European Union. The EU last week declared a "disturbing deadlock" in talks with Prime Minister Theresa May's government on arrangements to leave the bloc, raising the chances of Britain quitting without a negotiated deal and increasing criticism of the government's handling of Brexit.

On Sunday an unnamed source from the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)

said May must warn Hammond he faces the sack unless he changes his approach to Brexit, the Sunday Telegraph reported. The DUP is a small Northern Irish political party which is keeping May's minority government in power.

"We are very concerned about Philip Hammond's behavior," the senior parliamentary DUP source told the newspaper. "It is evident to us that he is winding people up and causing unnecessary division within the Conservative Party at a crucial time in the Brexit negotiations." A DUP spokesman later said the party did not recognize the "inaccurate" comments. (Reuters)