

UN Chief Urges Pakistan, India to Resolve Kashmir Issue Through Dialogue

NEW YORK - UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has urged India and Pakistan to resolve the occupied Kashmir dispute through dialogue.

Addressing a presser in New York, UN Secretary-General Spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said Guterres had repeatedly met with Pakistan and Indian officials in recent weeks in a bid to calm tension between the nuclear-armed powers. He said the UN secretary-general remains very concerned about any potential escalation between India and Pakistan over the situation.

Guterres appealed to both India and Pakistan to deal with the issue through dia-



logue and as the situation in occupied Kashmir can only be solved with the full respect of human rights.

Earlier, Guterres had said he was monitoring the

worsening situation in the valley, especially reports about tightening restrictions and mass arrests, as he called for steps to defuse tensions between India and Pakistan.

"We obviously continue to follow the situation very closely in Jammu and Kashmir, [and] also reports of restrictions and detentions in the Indian-administered side of the line of control in Jammu and Kashmir," spokesman Dujarric said.

"The secretary-general reiterates what he has been saying both publicly and privately to India and Pakistan to their leaders to exercise restraint and to take whatever steps they can to defuse tensions," he added. (Agencies)

Neighbor News

Japan Donates of Road-Maintenance Equipment to Kyrgyzstan

BISHKEK - The Japanese government provided assistance to the Karakol Road Operational Department of the Ministry of Transport and Roads of Kyrgyzstan, Trend reports citing Kabar.

In particular, the Japanese side donated road-maintenance equipment (6 machines for oil supply, 3 testers for fuel pumps for diesel engines, etc.), a total of 159 items, 951 units.

In addition, they provided consulting services: a detailed plan and procurement management. Deputy chairman of the JICA office in Kyrgyzstan, Ikeda Hiruyuke, noted that the Japanese government supported the infrastructure sector, because this is the main direction. "JICA supports road

and bridge construction projects. In addition, we conducted a study and found out that the Karakol Road Operational Department did not have enough equipment to repair their cars," he said and emphasized that a similar project is being implemented in all regions of the country. This project is aimed at increasing the export competitiveness of domestic production and strengthening the management potential of the republic's land transport network by ensuring the safety of transport links on internal highways, thereby contributing to maintaining the state of transport infrastructure and reducing interregional imbalance. (Trend)

'Putin Is a Big Voice in The World': Khan Hopes Russia Will Get Closer to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD - Russia and Pakistan should give their relations a fresh start, Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan told RT in an exclusive interview. Moscow could be part of the solution to the Kashmir crisis, he said. Khan told RT's Paula Slier that although Moscow and Islamabad were on opposite sides of the barricade during the Cold War, it is time to put the past behind and start anew.

"The world has

changed. We should develop a new relationship - and I hope we do," he stressed. After India controversially revoked the self-governing status of Kashmir last month, Pakistan has been peddling for an international response to the tensions there.

The PM noted that Russian leader Vladimir Putin is "a big voice in the world," while Russia remains among the "main powers," along with the US and China. (Agencies)

Iranian Envoy Calls for Increasing Volume of Bilateral Trade with Tajikistan

DUSHANBE - The extraordinary and plenipotentiary Iranian ambassador to Tajikistan has referred to the complementary natures of the two economies of Iran and Tajikistan, calling for increasing the volume of bilateral trade between Tehran and Dushanbe, Trend reports with reference to Mehr News Agency. The Iranian ambassador to Tajikistan Mohammad Taghi Saberi made the remarks in a meeting with the economy minister of Tajikistan on Thursday in Dushanbe, during which he expressed the readiness of the Islamic Republic of Iran to transfer its knowledge and experiences in the field of economic coop-

eration to the Central Asian country. Tajikistan's Minister of economic development and trade Nematullo Hikmatullo, for his part, referred to the presence of the Iranian businesspeople and economic agents in Tajikistan over the past decades and called for the further expansion and strengthening of economic relations between the two countries in various economic areas. The two sides attached great importance to the role of private sector economic agents, stressing the need to facilitate more trade relations between the two countries and closer cooperation between joint chambers of commerce. (Trend)

Uzbek Central Bank Joins AFI Declaration

TASHKENT - The Central Bank of Uzbekistan has joined the Mayan Declaration, reflecting the priorities and main directions of the policy of members of the Alliance for Financial Inclusion (AFI) to increase the availability, use and quality of financial services, Trend reports citing the Central Bank's press service.

The regulator joined the declaration at the AFI annual forum in Rwanda on September 11-13, held under the motto "Using Technologies to Engage Women and Youth". Uzbekistan has become the 78th organization to adopt the Mayan Declaration.

The Central Bank has committed to developing a National Strategy for increasing financial accessibility by January 2020, which will include measures such as the introduction of an instant payment system, the launch of remote identification of individuals and an educational site. AFI is an international organization that brings together regulatory financial institutions in about 90 developing countries. The main objective of the alliance is to develop measures to expand public access to financial services. Uzbekistan became a member of AFI last August. (Trend)

AOC Condemns Republican PAC Ad That Shows Her Face on Fire

NEW YORK - Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez slammed a Republican political action committee ad that opened with an image of her face being consumed by flames, which ran during Thursday night's Democratic debate. "Republicans are running TV ads setting pictures of me on fire to convince people they aren't racist," the New York Democrat tweeted Thursday night after the ad ran during the debate on ABC. "Life is weird!"

The ad by the New Faces GOP PAC, headed by former congressional candidate Elizabeth Heng, opens with an image of Ocasio-Cortez's face. "This is the face of socialism and ignorance," Heng narrates as the image burns and melts away to reveal skeletons and then an image of a woman and four children. "Does Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez know the horror of socialism? My father was minutes from death in Cambodia before ... (More on P4)...(13)

NUR-SULTAN - The education sector in Kazakhstan is riddled top to bottom with corruption - that is a dirty open secret that even children know about. It is deeply unusual, however, for mid-ranking officials in the Education Ministry to publicly blow the whistle on their superiors for alleged graft, as Anar Kairbekova did recently. Kairbekova, who runs the ministry's procurement department, issued a public statement on August 27 accusing

two senior colleagues of embezzling dozens of thousands of dollars by means of a shady supply contract. In late 2018, Aryn Orsariyev, the executive secretary at the ministry, signed off on payment of a 48 million tenge (\$124,000) supply agreement fee despite cautions that the service was unlikely to be delivered, Kairbekova said. Last week, the procurement chief posted copies of internal memos that she had documented how she warned her

Kazakhstan: Fighting in the Open at the Education Ministry



colleagues that the contract was unlikely to be completed because of time and technical constraints. The agreement was signed on December 14 and was supposed to be delivered by year's end. ... (More on P4)...(11)

Johnson, Juncker to Meet in Brexit Breakthrough Bid



LONDON - British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker will hold face-to-face

talks next week in a bid to break the Brexit impasse. European and British officials say the meeting will take place Mon-

day in Luxembourg. No further details were provided. It comes as lower-level Brexit negotiations have produced few signs of progress as the Oct. 31 deadline for Britain's departure from the European Union nears.

The key stumbling block remains the so-called Irish backstop, a maneuver to prevent both sides from putting in a hard border between Ireland, which is in the EU, and Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom. British offi-

cials fear the backstop could keep Britain tied to EU rules and regulations even after it withdraws from the bloc. With concerns about the social and economic costs of a "no-deal" Brexit rising, Britain's Parliament has passed a law saying the prime minister must seek an extension to the Brexit deadline if no deal is reached by mid-October. Johnson has indicated he will not do so, insisting Britain will leave the EU on Oct. 31 even without a divorce deal. (PBS)

As Democrats Spar over Health Care, Obamacare Still Popular with Voters

WASHINGTON - n the run-up to the 2020 presidential election, health care has emerged as one of the most important - and divisive - issues as Democratic candidates spar over supporting Medicare for All versus building on the Obama-era Affordable Care Act. But as some progressive Democrats, like Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders, make the case for providing government-funded health care to all Americans, a poll

released Thursday by the Kaiser Family Foundation revealed that most Democratic voters prefer expanding the ACA. About 55 percent of respondents said they wanted a candidate to keep the ACA intact, while continuing to work on it, compared to 40 percent of Democratic voters who wanted to repeal the largest legislative achievement of the Obama administration and replace it with Medicare for All. (Fox Business)

B-2 Stealth Bomber Flies Just 60 Feet Above Impressed Plane Spotters' Heads

GLOUCESTERSHIRE - Plane spotters in the U.K. were left in awe at the world's most expensive and secretive plane as it soared just 60 feet over their heads. It was one of three U.S. Air Force B-2 stealth bombers in the country taking part in a European training mission. The aircraft were photographed on Wednesday by Steve King at RAF Fairford, in Gloucestershire, after they returned from a training exercise in Iceland.

King, 37, said he perched on a hill at the start of the runway to catch them from underneath when they came into land. The most expensive and secretive planes to ever be ... (More on P4)...(14)

Russia Ready for Ukraine Peace Talks but Sets Preconditions

MOSCOW - Russia is ready to take part in a four-way summit in Paris to try to breathe life into the stalled Ukrainian peace process but has strict preconditions for such a meeting, a senior Kremlin aide said on Friday. The aide, Yuri Ushakov, told reporters that Russia was willing in principle to take part in such a summit that would gather the leaders of Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany, an idea pushed by French President Emmanuel Macron. But Ushakov said no date had yet been fixed and that Moscow had three preconditions before it would agree to attend.

Rival armed forces in eastern Ukraine should be ... (More on P4)...(15)

IMF Sees Namibia Growing in 2020 after Three-Year Contraction

WINDHOEK - Namibia's economy will return to growth in 2020 after contracting for three straight years, but a failure to implement structural reforms could keep the southwest African nation stuck in a low-growth trap, according to the International Monetary Fund. The economy of the world's largest marine-diamond producer has been hit by a regional drought and a slump in South Africa, its bigger neighbor that it tracks closely and to whose currency the Namibian dollar is pegged.



Gross domestic product will contract by 0.2% this year, before expanding at 1.6% in 2020, the Washington-based lender said in an emailed statement following an article 4 consultation in the country. However, "absent structural reforms, growth

is expected to converge to a long-term level of about 3%, which is too low to deliver meaningful improvements in per capita income and reduce unemployment," the IMF said. These steps include lowering regulatory ... (More on P4)...(12)

US Mulling Additional Troops in NE Syria to Ease Tensions with Turkey: Report

ISTANBUL - The US military is weighing shifting a small number of additional troops to northeast Syria as part of ongoing efforts to establish a buffer zone along the Syrian-Turkish border, CNN reported, citing a US defense official. The official said no decision had been made and that if any additional forces are sent to Syria they would likely be redeployed from elsewhere in the region. The troops would patrol the proposed buffer zone. The US and Turkey have

been working to establish the buffer zone, which the US calls a "security mechanism," in northeast Syria as part of a bid to prevent a military incursion into the area that would target Syrian Kurdish groups, a potential operation that the US fears could undermine the fight against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). The New York Times was first to report the possible additional deployment, saying it would involve some 150 troops. (Turkish Minute)

UAE Says 6 Troops Killed in 'Collision,' Without Elaborating

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates - Six Emirati troops have been killed in a "collision," the United Arab Emirates said Friday, without elaborating or offering a location or time for the incident that comes after the federation of sheikhdoms began pulling out of a Saudi-led war in Yemen.

Details about what happened remained vague, with the state-run WAM news agency citing the General Command of the UAE Armed Forces for the information. However, Yemeni officials speaking to The Associated Press said the troops were killed in a road crash in southern Yemen.

Among the six troops killed was a captain, the WAM report said, identifying those killed by name.

"The General Command of the Armed Forces extends its condolences and sympathy to the families of the martyrs," its statement said. "May Allah Almighty grant them peace and forgiveness and life in paradise."

The statement gave no details of the crash, nor the vehicles involved. Yemeni security officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, told The Associated Press that the Emirati troops died in a traffic crash in Yemen's southern Shabwa province. They spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to speak to journalists. Shabwa is held by the Emirati-backed Southern Transitional Council and largely has avoided conflict for much of the war, though ... (More on P4)...(16)