

U.S. Hopes for 'Good Deliverables' During Trump's China Visit

BEIJING - The United States hopes there will be some "very good deliverables" when President Donald Trump visits China, U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross said on Monday, striking an upbeat tone amid trade tensions between the two countries.

Trump will likely visit China in November as part of a trip that will take him to an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit in the Philippines and an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Vietnam.

China's relationship with the United States has been strained by the Trump ad-



ministration's criticism of China's trade practices and by demands that Beijing do more to pressure North Korea to halt its nuclear weapons and missiles programs. Meeting in Beijing, Ross told Chinese Premier Li Keqiang he and his delegation had been greeted very warmly which augurs well for Trump's forthcoming trip to meet Chinese President Xi Jinping. "We are looking forward to a very good session including a lot of American CEOs and we hope there will be some very good deliverables," Ross said, in comments in front of reporters. (Reuters)

Qatar Says Trump Wants to Fix Gulf Crisis with Dialogue

PARIS - Qatar's foreign minister said on Monday that U.S. President Donald Trump was stepping up efforts for a diplomatic solution to the crisis in the Gulf. Trump initially took a hard line against Qatar, calling it a "high level" sponsor of terrorism after Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt shook the region by cutting political and trade ties with the small state in June.

The action suspended air and shipping routes with the world's biggest exporter of liquefied natural gas, which is home to the region's biggest U.S. mili-

tary base. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani told reporters in Paris that he had seen a "greater desire" from Trump to fix the stand-off through discussion. "He has stated very clearly that he doesn't want to see conflict among friends. So there is a determination by the U.S. to solve this by dialogue." In Trump's initial comments in June, he suggested he had helped plan the Qatar action with Arab leaders, though last week he said he expected the dispute to be solved quickly. (Reuters)

Labour Papers over Brexit Splits with Fighting Talk

BRIGHTON, United Kingdom - Britain's main opposition Labour party is performing a delicate balancing act on Brexit even as it prepares to take on Prime Minister Theresa May's negotiating strategy. Brexit spokesman Keir Starmer told Labour's annual conference in Brighton on Monday that the party was ready to "take charge" of negotiations with Brussels if May's government collapsed due to its own splits.

After months of bickering within the cabinet, Starmer said: "Labour are now the grown-ups in the room". But the party, whose better-than-expected performance in a June election deprived May of her parliamentary majority, is locked in its own battle over Britain's future outside the European Union. Starmer accused the Conservative government of a "dogmatic disregard of the national interest" and "post-imperial delu-



sions", as he put forward what he said was Labour's own "pragmatic approach". He said May had copied his own policy set out last

month of retaining access to the European single market during a transition period after Britain leaves the EU in March 2019. (AFP)

Turkish, Russian Presidents Stress Territorial Integrity of Iraq, Syria



ISTANBUL - Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin spoke over the phone on Monday,

stressing territorial integrity of both Iraq and Syria, according to Turkish presidential sources. The two leaders also exchanged views on the

day, said the sources. The phone conversation came as Iraqi Kurds are pressing ahead on the day with an independence referendum despite

opposition from Turkey, Iran, the United States and the United Nations, sparking concerns about fresh conflicts in the turmoil-hit region, as Ankara and Tehran have both resorted to war games ahead of the vote. Erdogan has just vowed not to allow a "terror state" to be established along the border with Turkey, threatening punitive measures against the Iraqi Kurdish region within days, including barring it from exporting gas via Turkey. (Xinhua)

Erdogan Vows Not to Allow "Terror State" Established Along Border

ISTANBUL - Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday vowed not to allow a "terror state" to be established along the border with Turkey. Turkey will announce measures against the independence vote by the Iraqi Kurdish region later this week, he said. "This is an empty dream for them," Erdogan told an international meeting in Istanbul. "We can suddenly step in one night." He referred to Turkey's

last military operation in northern Syria, in which Ankara seized Jarablus, al-Rai and al-Bab from the Islamic State. As the Iraqi Kurdish region relies heavily on Turkey for access to the outside world, the Turkish leader hinted at barring it from exporting gas via Turkey, the Iraqi Kurds' lifeline. "When we close the valve, all will be finished," Erdogan said, noting "The entrance and exit will be closed" as well. (Xinhua)

Polish President Seeks more Power over Courts in Judiciary Reform

WARSAW - Poland's president demanded a greater say in nominating judges on Monday, despite blocking a similar reform by his own party that the European Union had said was undermining democracy.

President Andrzej Duda, an ally of the ruling Law and Justice (PiS) party, unexpectedly vetoed the party's own reform legislation in July, following nationwide protests and warnings from Poland's Western allies about a politicization of the courts.

The EU is already at loggerheads with the PiS government over a range of issues and a meeting of the bloc's foreign ministers on Monday was expected to gauge the appetite for taking punitive action against Warsaw. The eurosceptic PiS says reform of the judicial system is needed because the courts are slow, inefficient and steeped in a communist-era mentality. But critics of the government plans said its proposed rules were part of a drive toward authoritarianism.

Duda's counter-proposals on judicial reform - which have to be approved by lawmakers to take effect - would still increase political control over the courts, though he envisages this being exercised by the president as well as by parliament. "I believe this reform is of great social importance and will be enforced," he told reporters.

Both opposition and government politicians appeared critical of Duda's proposals, however, suggesting PiS' plans to overhaul the court system will take time. "We want the reform to be thorough, effective," PiS spokeswoman Beata Mazurek told reporters. (Reuters)

Merkel's New Gov't Formation to be Tricky Task

BERLIN - The new federal German parliament, the Bundestag, will house more representatives than ever before, according to preliminary results released by the chief federal election official on Monday.

Both parties of the grand coalition between the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and Chancellor Merkel's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) have lost a large amount of voter support. The right-wing Alternative for Germany (AfD) is the third strongest force gaining voters from all



political camps and mobilizing non-voters. Merkel is to remain chancellor, but the negotiations on coalitions are likely to be difficult.

The incumbent chancellor will preside over four more years, but

the party suffered great losses. Merkel said she had hoped for a better result, but that the union had achieved its strategic objectives to become the strongest force and now it had the mandate to form a government. (Xinhua)

Xi, British PM Discuss Bilateral Ties, Korean Peninsula Situation over Phone

BEIJING - Chinese President Xi Jinping held a telephone conversation on Monday with British Prime Minister Theresa May on bilateral ties and the situation on the Korean Peninsula. In the phone conversation, Xi recalled that during the Group of 20 summit held in July in Germany's Hamburg, he and May agreed to deepen the 21st century-oriented China-Britain global comprehensive strategic partnership and continue building the "Golden Era" of bilateral relations. This year marks the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Britain at the ambassadorial level. The two sides should

maintain high-level exchanges, promote institutional dialogue in various fields, preserve the robust momentum of China-Britain economic and trade and cultural exchange and cooperation, deepen the alignment of development strategies between the two countries within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, and strengthen coordination in preserving world peace and development, Xi added. A prosperous, stable and open Britain and European Union conforms to the interests of all parties, Xi told May, adding that China is willing to promote continued development of China-Britain and China-EU relations. (Xinhua)

Neighbor News

Xi Encourages University Students to Contribute to Strong Army

BEIJING - Chinese President Xi Jinping has encouraged eight students from Nankai University, who joined the army this year, to help the country achieve its goal of building a strong army.

Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, made the remarks in a letter, which he wrote Saturday and was made public Monday, replying to the eight students.

"I am gratified by your aspiration and passion after hearing that you temporarily leave campus and throw yourselves into military camps, with the ideal of serving the country," Xi wrote. "There were many literary men with ideals and integrity who

renounced the pen for the sword in history, and a number of Nankai University students rushed to the battlefield to shed blood or devote their lives during the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression."

The president said that the eight students had set a great example to young Chinese. He told them to cherish the opportunity serving in the army and commit themselves to the country's goal of building a strong army.

The students, including offspring of veterans who fought during the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea (1950-53) and children of anti-terrorism heroes in Xinjiang, recently wrote a letter to Xi before heading to military camps. (Xinhua)

Pakistan, Russian Militaries Hold Joint Anti-Terror Exercises

ISLAMABAD - A two-week long joint exercise codenamed as "DRUZBA 2017" between special forces of Pakistan and Russia Armies started in Mineralnye Vody, Russia, Pakistani army said on Monday.

The opening ceremony was attended by senior military officials of special forces of both countries, the army's media wing Inter-Services Public Relations said in a statement.

The joint exercise will focus on counter terrorism operations, hostage

and rescue, cordon and search operation, it said. The joint exercise will enhance and further strengthen military ties between both countries and share Pakistan Army's experience in war against terrorism, the statement said.

It has been the second time in one year that Pakistan and Russia are holding joint military exercises. A contingent of 100 Russian troops had taken part in joint exercises in Pakistan in September last year. (Xinhua)

Iran, Russia Support Iraq's Territorial Integrity

TEHRAN - Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin on Monday stressed their support for the Iraqi government and the territorial integrity of Iraq, official IRNA news agency reported.

The announcement was made following a telephone conversation between Rouhani and Putin on Monday.

Territorial integrity of the countries and irrevers-

ibility of their borders in the region is of high importance for Iran, Rouhani said with reference to the Iraqi Kurdistan's Monday independence referendum.

Rouhani urged the coordination and cooperation of regional states to this end.

For his part, Putin said that "The Russian government supports the Baghdad central government and Iraq's territorial integrity." (Xinhua)

Uzbekistan Set to Modernize Power System

TASHKENT - Uzbekistan, a Central Asian state with diverse energy resources, is keen on improving its power sector by modernizing existing facilities, Azernews reported.

The nation of over 30 million population will spend over \$292 million for the modernization and reconstruction of backbone substations until 2022.

The Uzbek president has already approved the feasibility study for the project, Sputnik reported. Uzbekistan is the most energy hungry country in Europe and Central Asia. Nearly 40 percent of available electricity generation capacity is outdated or will reach the end of its lifespan by 2017.

In total, it is planned to reconstruct 22 major substations in Tashkent and another 10 in the regions within the program. This will significantly reduce technical losses and operating and maintenance

costs. In addition, it is planned to purchase mobile substations of 110 kV medium voltage and emergency recovery systems, which are necessary for the prompt elimination of disconnections on the main power transmission lines.

This new technology will increase the sustainability of the national energy system. The project will also help reduce greenhouse gas emissions in an amount equal to the annual energy consumption of over 6 million families in Uzbekistan.

The works will be financed through \$75.3 million of Uzbekenergo's own funds, a \$92 million loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and a \$58 million loan from the International Development Association. Another \$66.8 million are invested by the government of the republic in the form of tax and customs privileges. (Trend)