

## China Says U.S. Criticism over South China Sea Is Slander

BEIJING - Remarks by U.S. officials on China's role in the South China Sea are slanderous, its foreign ministry said on Monday, after the United States voiced concern over reports of Chinese interference with oil and gas activities in the disputed waters.

China's claims in the South China Sea, through which about \$5 trillion in shipborne trade passes each year, are contested, all or in part, by Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam. On Saturday, the U.S. State Department said China's repeated provocative actions aimed at the offshore oil and gas development of other claimant states threatened regional energy security and



undermined the free and open Indo-Pacific energy market.

U.S. President Donald Trump's hawkish national security adviser John Bolton also said on Twitter that China's coercive behavior towards its Southeast Asian neighbors was counterproductive and threatened regional peace and stability, echoing earlier comments by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

In Beijing, Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said such comments by Bolton and Pompeo were baseless, adding that the United States and other "external forces" were stirring up trouble in the South China Sea. (Reuters)

### UN Nuclear Watchdog Chief Amano Dies at 72

VIENNA - The head of the UN's nuclear watchdog, Yukiya Amano, has died after suffering poor health for some time, the International Atomic Energy Agency said on Monday, as international tensions run high over Iran's nuclear activities.

The longtime Japanese diplomat, who was 72, held the IAEA's top job since December 2009. "The secretariat of the International Atomic Energy Agency regrets to inform with deepest sadness of the passing away of Director Gen-

eral Yukiya Amano," the IAEA said in a statement.

It said that Amano died on July 18. But his family had only informed the IAEA late Sunday, "with the specific request not to disclose it until the family funeral had taken place on 22 July in a quiet atmosphere."

No details were given about the cause of death, but Amano had been ill for some months. During his 10 years at the helm, Amano oversaw the signing of a ...*(More on P4)...(16)*

### Turkey Will Retaliate If U.S. Imposes Sanctions over S-400s: Minister

ANKARA - Turkey would retaliate against what it called an unacceptable threat of U.S. sanctions over Ankara's purchase of Russian S-400 missile defenses, its foreign minister said on Monday, adding he thinks President Donald Trump wants to avoid such measures.

Turkey began receiving deliveries of the surface-to-air S-400 systems earlier this month, prompting the United States to begin removing the NATO ally from its F-35 stealth fighter program over security concerns. (Reuters)



### Under 'Dark Cloud' of Brexit, UK Minister Quits before Johnson Becomes PM



LONDON - A British minister and longstanding critic of Boris Johnson quit on Monday, the latest resignation be-

fore the presumed new prime minister takes office with a "do or die" pledge to leave the European Union with or

without a deal.

The resignation of Alan Duncan, a junior foreign office minister, underlines the strength of feeling in the governing Conservative Party and parliament against a no-deal Brexit which many businesses say would be catastrophic for the economy.

With economic growth stalling - the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) said on Monday there was a one-in-four chance the Brexit crisis has already tipped

Britain into recession - many lawmakers are increasingly concerned.

Duncan follows Margot James, who stepped down as a culture minister last week, describing as "quite incredible" Johnson's promise to leave the EU by Oct. 31 regardless of whether a deal is in place to smooth its departure.

On Sunday, finance minister Philip Hammond also said he would resign rather than be sacked by Johnson, promising to fight with ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

### Ukrainian President's Party Set to Triumph in Parliament Election

KIEV - Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's party is projected to win the snap parliamentary election, said the country's Central Election Commission on Monday.

The latest counting suggested that members of the president's Servant of the People party are leading in 117 single-mandate constituencies, while the Opposition Platform - For Life party comes in a distant second place, according to the election commission.

The commanding lead will give Zelenskyy control

of parliament as he has been seeking to form a new government following his landslide victory in April's presidential election.

The Ukrainian parliament consists of 450 seats, of which half will be taken through party lists and the other half by a majority vote in single-mandate electoral districts.

The Servant of the People party is also winning the party lists voting, garnering over 42 percent of the votes, as the preliminary results showed. (Xinhua)

## Neighbor News

### Iran Busted 17 Spies Linked to CIA, Some Received Death Sentence - Media

TEHRAN - Iranian secret services uncovered a 17-member spy ring working against the country, according to state-affiliated media. Some of the agents have been given capital punishment.

All the suspects in question were arrested by Iran's Ministry of Intelligence, the semi-official Fars News Agency reported.

They were working as private contractors "in the economic, nuclear, infrastructural, military and cyber areas... where they collected classified information," the report said.

Some of the suspected agents were allegedly recruited by CIA officers while applying for

US visas. Others were approached on the sidelines of scientific events in European, African, and Asian countries. Tehran did not say when the spy ring was exposed, but announced the arrests were made throughout the last Iranian calendar year, which ended in March 2019.

It is reported that the suspects were equipped with top-notch communication gear which they used to hand over intelligence to their American handlers. It included, among other items, containers disguised as stones. Agents were trained to retrieve these from urban or mountainous areas using complex procedures. (RT)

### 'He Is Criminal': Imran Khan Vows 'No Air Conditioning, No TV' for Jailed Ex-PM Sharif

ISLAMABAD - Pakistani PM Imran Khan promised he would make sure that a billionaire ex-PM who is now serving a seven-year sentence for corruption does not get any perks such as home-cooked meals, TV, or air conditioning behind bars.

Addressing reports that Nawaz Sharif, a former Pakistani PM who was sentenced to seven years in prison in December, is enjoying a cozy life with home-cooked meals, television, and an air conditioner, Khan told a Pakistani diaspora in Washington that once he is back home, Sharif would be having none of that.

"I am going to go back and make sure there is no air conditioning or no TV for Nawaz Sharif who is a criminal. I know Maryam Bibi [Sharif's daughter and leader of Pakistan Muslim League party] will make some noise, but I say to her, return the money. It's as simple as

that," he said.

Sharif was convicted on a corruption charge stemming from the 2016 Panama Papers revelations. He is still considered one of the richest men in Pakistan, with a net worth estimated at \$1.9 billion as of December 2018.

Khan said that allowing Sharif to have preferential treatment in jail would be unfair to the Pakistani people. "Nawaz Sharif wants food from home in jail, he wants air conditioning in jail. But in a country where half the population has no air conditioning or TV, what kind of punishment would this be?"

The Pakistani PM, who was the nation's most celebrated cricketer before turning to politics, was addressing a packed audience of about 30,000 Pakistanis in Capital One Arena in Washington, ahead of a much-anticipated meeting with US President Donald Trump scheduled for Monday. (RT)

### Turkmenistan Develops Medical Cooperation with Russia, Israel

ASHGABAT - Memorandums and an agreement on cooperation in the field of medicine between the Ministry of Health and Medical Industry of Turkmenistan and relevant institutions of Russia and Israel were signed in the Turkmen capital of Ashgabat, Trend reports referring to Turkmen Dovlet Habarlary state news agency.

Memorandums of understanding were concluded with the Federal State Budgetary Institution "National Medical Research Center of Obstetrics, Gynecology of Perinatology named after Academician V.I. Kulakov"; Moscow Clinical Hospital named after S.P. Botkin;

the Scientific and Clinical Center of Cardiology and the A.N. Bakulev National Medical Research Center of Cardiovascular Surgery; and Russian Ilizarov Scientific Center for Restorative Traumatology and Orthopaedics.

An agreement was also signed with the Ministry of Health of Tatarstan (a federal subject of Russia) on cooperation in the project "Development of simulation technologies in Turkmenistan in the system of medical education." Moreover, a plan for cooperation in the field of health and medicine for 2019-2024 has been approved with the Israeli Ministry of Health. (Trend)

### Dollar Rate in Uzbekistan Grows by 40 Soums

TASHKENT - The Central Bank of Uzbekistan has published new exchange rates, which will be effective from July 23, Trend reports with reference to bank.

The dollar continues to grow this week. The US currency rose by 40.1 soums. Starting from tomorrow, 1 dollar will cost 8,624.51 soums.

The euro is also going up. The value of the European currency rose to 9676.7 soums, having increased by 2.83 soums compared with the previous week.

The Russian ruble has grown slightly. Its value increased by 0.58 soums and amounted to 136.92 soums. (Trend)

### Britain's May Chairs Emergency Session on Seized Tanker

LONDON - British Prime Minister Theresa May chaired an emergency security session on Monday to discuss how to respond to Iran's seizure of a British-flagged tanker in the Strait of Hormuz.

The meeting of security ministers and officials discussed how to secure shipping in the sensitive region, which is vital to the world's oil supply.

Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt plans to brief Parliament on the Friday seizure of the Stena Impero tanker and its crew of 23, now in a heavily guarded Iranian port.

Also on Monday, Iran released new video



showing the ship's crew for the first time, an apparent attempt to show they were unharmed. None of the 23 are British nationals but are mostly Indian and also Filipino, Russian and Latvian nationals.

May's official spokesman, James Slack, said Iran has seized a ship

under false and illegal pretenses and it needs to release it and its crew immediately.

He said giving an individual naval escort to all U.K.-flagged ships is not an option because of the volume of traffic. But he denied cuts have made the Royal Navy too small. (AP)

### India Successfully Launches Chandrayaan 2 Rover Mission to Moon's South Pole

NEW DELHI - India's space agency has successfully launched a lunar mission after the first was rescheduled due to a technical glitch. It is set to land on the Moon's South Pole in the hope of making some groundbreaking discoveries.

Chandrayaan-2 lifted off on Monday at the Satish Dhawan Space Center, located several miles inland from the Bay of Bengal. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) used its

640-ton GSLV Mark-III rocket for the mission.

A round of applause was heard at the mission control room shortly after the launch, with scientists and engineers watching the rocket take off towards orbit. A short while later, the agency reported that the launch vehicle successfully brought the spacecraft into the outer atmosphere, meaning that India's most complex mission in space had just begun. (RT)

### Death Toll from India, Nepal, Bangladesh Floods Jumps to Over 300

DHAKA/NEW DELHI - The death toll from severe flooding in parts of India, Nepal and Bangladesh rose to more than 300 on Monday, even as heavy rains are starting to ebb and water levels started to recede in some of the worst-affected areas.

Heavy rains and overflowing rivers swamped vast swathes of eastern India more than week ago, and officials on Monday said so far 102 people have died in Bihar state, 35 more than what the state government had estimated on Thursday.

Torrential rains in Bangladesh killed more than 47 people in the last two weeks and at least 120 are missing and feared dead following severe floods and landslides in mostly mountainous Nepal, authorities from the two countries said.

Parts of Pakistan have also been flooded.

In Bangladesh, at least 700,000 people have been displaced. Deaths due to flooding in the region more than doubled in the last five days.

At least five districts in central Bangladesh are at the risk of being flooded, as water levels of two rivers are still rising, an official at the Bangladesh Water Development Board told Reuters.

Authorities are struggling to deliver relief supplies to marooned people. "We have enough relief materials but the main problem is to reach out to the people," Foyez Ahmed, deputy commissioner of Bangladesh's Bogra district, said. (Reuters)

### Kushner to Head to Mideast to Push Palestinian Economic Plan

WASHINGTON - President Donald Trump's son-in-law and senior adviser, Jared Kushner, is returning to the Mideast at month's end to promote the administration's \$50 billion economic support plan for the Palestinians that they've rejected because it ignores their political demands.

Kushner outlined the plan's ambitious investment and development goals at a Bahrain conference last month. It relies heavily on private sector investment in the West Bank, Gaza as well as Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon. (AP)

### NYC Recovers Power Supply to Some After Heat Wave Outage

NEW YORK - The utility company Con Edison has restored the power supply to about 13,000 people in southeast Brooklyn in New York City (NYC), according to a statement released Monday.

Meanwhile, 40,000 people in the city are still without electricity, about 20,000 of whom are customers in Brooklyn, NYC Mayor Bill De Blasio has said.

"It's still hot and people have a right to be frustrated," De Blasio tweeted. "We're pushing Con Ed to get power back as fast as possible."

NYC entered a state of emergency on Friday due to the first heat wave of this summer, which is affecting most of the Midwest and Northeast.

The mayor said that the city's emergency management was deploying personnel on the ground in case of emergency and to ensure people's safety.

Con Edison, the utility service that has been ...*(More on P4)...(17)*