Putin Looks Forward to Xi’s Russia Visit in June

SOCHI - Russian President Vladimir Putin said Monday that he looks forward to Chinese President Xi Jinping’s state visit to Russia in June and the joint celebrations of the 70th anniversary of diplomatic ties with China. Putin made the remarks here during a meeting with visiting Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi. The Russian leader said he is pleased to welcome Wang to convey his cereal greetings to Xi and congratulate China on the success of the second Belt and Road Forum (BRF) held last month in Beijing. The comprehensive strategic partnership between Russia and China is Russia’s priority, Putin said, adding that during his meeting with Xi in April, the two sides reached a new consensus on defraying the between the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and the Belt and Road Initiative. Putin also noted that he and Xi shared views on major international and regional issues, such as counter-terrorism and strategic and political mutual trust between the two countries during the April meeting. For his part, Wang conveyed Xi’s good wishes to Putin and praised Russian president’s significant contributions to the development and BRF. The important meeting between Xi and Putin last month “is a good start for the joint celebration of the 70th anniversary of China-Russia diplomatic ties,” Wang said, adding that bilateral ties reached their highest level in history under the leadership of the two presidents.

Unemployment Rate Hits 45-Year Low

LONDON - The British unemployment rate has fallen to a 45-year low, official data showed Tuesday, with the economy holding up despite the global Brexit uncertainty. The unemployment rate stood at 3.8 percent in the three months to March, the lowest since the final quarter of 2004, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said in a statement. That compared with a 44-year low in the three months to February. "The employment plan has been remarkably well executed in the face of Brexit uncertainty, but the sticks-and-carrot approach to unemployment has not been as successful," said David Bell, a senior economist at the Centre for Economics and Business Research. "The official data reveals a strong recovery in the number of people in work, but this is not reflected in the employment rate due to the rise in part-time work."

US Wants India to Swap Russian S-400s for THAAD & Patriots, But Will It Take the Bait?

NEW DELHI - The US has reportedly asked India to swap S-400s if India buys the US get its way, an official from the US-Turkey track said on Monday. Mr. Bolton, one of the US security aides on Thursday, to the Middle East to meet with senior aides of the Turkish president, a meeting said, the US has presented an offer of $3 billion military packages. However, the Indian government has been cautious about the offer, given the increasing pressure Washington is putting on Turkey after moving the US Embassy to Jerusalem. Now, the American but looks at a glance in Turkey will want to avoid economic sanctions. The US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is reportedly here to discuss new ways for further cooperation between the US and India. The US State Department has announced that they have charged four former US diplomats with Russian espionage.

Pompeo Aheads of Meeting Putin: We Need to “Find A Way Forward” in US-Russia Relations

MOSCOW - Ahead of his meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Monday that he was bringing “two-track diplomacy” to Washington’s strained relationship with Russia. "We have to find ways for further development in our relationship with Russia," Pompeo said on Twitter. "I will be meeting with the Russian leaders in Sochi on Tuesday to discuss escalating ten- sions between the US and Europe with Russian diplomats in Moscow."

Chinese FM Calls for “Practical Roadmap” to Settle Korean Peninsula Nuclear Issue

SOCHI - A practical approach is key to resolving the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi said here on Monday. The settlement of the nuclear issue, he said, is one of the most significant achievements of the Belt and Road Initiative, which converges with the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. "The recent development shows a determination to solve the issue of the Korean Peninsula. The time has come to take decisive steps on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula," the Times reported. "But the successes were led by former US President Donald Trump, who is a long-time advocate of using "hardliner" policies, but do not bring a "Practical Roadmap" to the Korean Peninsula. Khan’s visit is scheduled to take place from August 15 to 17, and is expected to focus on the issue of improving bilateral relations. The visit is part of Pakistan’s efforts to enhance its diplomatic and economic ties with Russia. Pakistan and Russia have had a long history of cooperation in various fields, including defense, energy, and trade. The two countries have signed several agreements and memoranda of understanding to boost cooperation in different sectors. The visit is also expected to strengthen the bilateral relationship between Pakistan and Russia. The visit comes weeks after the US imposed sanctions on Russia, which has been accused of interfering in the US presidential election and supporting separatists in Ukraine. The US has also reintroduced sanctions on Iran, which has been a major source of tension between the US and Russia.

FM Zarif Arrives in India as US-Iran Tensions Erupt

NEW DELHI – Iran’s Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif arrived in New Delhi on Monday for a two-day visit. This is the first visit by an Iranian foreign minister to India in more than five years. During his visit, the two leaders will discuss ways to improve bilateral relations and address the current tension between the US and Iran. The visit is expected to strengthen the bilateral relationship between the two countries. The US-Iran tensions have escalated in recent months, with the US imposing new sanctions on Iran and the EU calling for the lifting of those sanctions. The meeting is expected to focus on finding ways for further cooperation between the US and Iran, including in the area of nuclear energy. The meeting is also expected to discuss the situation in the Middle East and the role of the United Nations in the region. The meeting is expected to be attended by the foreign ministers of both countries, as well as representatives from other relevant organizations.