

Trump Defends Call with Ukrainian President

WASHINGTON - President Donald Trump on Sunday said he did not say anything wrong during a telephone call with his Ukrainian counterpart in which, according to reports, he pressed for an investigation of former U.S. Vice President Joe Biden and his son.

Trump told reporters he had a great call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on July 25 and that he would have no problem with his personal lawyer, Rudolph Giuliani, testifying before Congress.

Biden, a Democratic candidate for president, "made the mistake of saying he never spoke to his son", Trump said. "He did speak to his son, he lied again," he



said. "I'm not looking to hurt Biden, but he did a very dishonest thing," Trump said. (Reuters)

Hong Kong Police Fire Tear Gas after Storming Shopping Mall

HONG KONG - Hong Kong police fired tear gas on Sunday to break up pro-democracy protesters who trashed fittings at a station and shopping mall, the latest in more than three months of often violent unrest.

Hundreds of protesters, young and old, had gathered in the New Town Plaza in the New Territories town of Sha Tin, chanting: "Fight for freedom" and "Liberate Hong Kong."

Protesters called for a boycott of businesses

in the Chinese-ruled city seen as pro-Beijing and made a paper chain of receipts from those stores, which were then hung across the mall. Activists rounded on a man believed to have opposed them when they had damaged the Chinese flag. Shouting, they pushed him into a corner beside the station and cheered as crowds punched and kicked him.

After 20 minutes, he managed to walk away, dazed and bleeding. ...*(More on P4)...(13)*

The United Nations Is Trying to Pressure the World into Faster Action on Climate Change

In the run up to the United Nations Climate Action Summit this Monday, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has repeatedly warned countries that they need more than empty promises to fight climate change. "Don't come to the summit with beautiful speeches," Guterres said at a press conference last month. "Come with concrete plans ... and strategies for carbon neutrality by 2050."

Guterres has convened the gathering of world

leaders ahead of the United Nations General Assembly, which begins Tuesday, to secure more ambitious commitments to curb greenhouse gas emissions than those made in 2015 during the signing of the Paris climate agreement. Already, several countries have said they will increase those commitments, known as Nationally Determined Contributions, according to the 2020 NDC Tracker, just released by the World Resources Institute, an environmen-



tal think tank in Washington, DC. Paris signatories knew that their NDCs would not be sufficient to meet the agreement's goal: limiting temperature rise to "well below" 2 degrees Celsius and not be sufficient to meet ...*(More on P4)...(9)*

EU Is "In No Way Responsible" for Brexit Consequences, Juncker Says



LONDON - The European Union (EU) is "in no way responsible" for the consequences of Brexit, and the bloc should not be held accountable for

what is a "British decision," European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said on Sunday. "The European Union is

not leaving the United Kingdom, the United Kingdom is leaving the European Union," Juncker said in an interview with Sky News, which was broadcast on Sunday. "The EU is in no way responsible for any kind of consequences entailed by the Brexit," he said. "That's a British decision, a sovereign decision that we are respecting but don't try to charge the European Union with the responsibility," he said. The statement came as

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is leaving for New York on Sunday to attend the annual high-level debate of the UN General Assembly, and he is expected to use the visit for an informal Brexit summit. Johnson is expected to hold discussions with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Emmanuel Macron, Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar and European Council President Donald Tusk on the sidelines of ...*(More on P4)...(10)*

British Tanker could be Released by Iran on Sunday, Says Owner

LONDON - A British-flagged tanker detained by Tehran in July could be released on Sunday, its owner said. Confirmation came from the chief executive of the Swedish firm that owns the vessel. "We have received information now this morning that it seems like they will release the ship Stena Impero within a few hours," Erik Hanell, chief executive of Stena Bulk told Swedish public broadcaster SVT. "So we understand that

the political decision to release the ship has been taken."

Iran detained the Stena Impero tanker in the Strait of Hormuz on July 19, two weeks after the Gibraltar government detained the Iranian Grace 1 tanker on suspicion of violating EU sanctions by transporting oil to Syria.

The UK government has insisted the two situations are not linked, saying that the detention of the Grace 1 was in ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

Pompeo Accuses Former U.S. Vice President Biden of Corruption over Ukraine Dust-Up

WASHINGTON - U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Sunday accused President Donald Trump's Democratic political rival Joe Biden of improperly intervening to protect his son from an investigation in Ukraine.

Former Vice President Joe Biden "behaved inappropriately," Pompeo said on ABC's "This Week," adding that he intervened "in a way that was corrupt" and that Biden's actions should be investigated. (Reuters)

U.K. Government Suggests Thomas Cook Won't be Rescued

LONDON - The U.K. government signaled it won't bail out struggling Thomas Cook Group Plc, complicating last-minute talks to avoid a collapse of the struggling tour company that risks stranding tens of thousands of travelers across Europe.

"We don't systematically step in with the taxpayer's money when businesses are going under unless there is a good strategic national interest for doing so," Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said on BBC TV's "Andrew Marr" Show on Sunday.

Raab made the comments while executives from the company hunkered down with creditors in London, as it tries to forge support for a rescue plan. Its shares tumbled 23% on Friday after the tour operator said it would require 200 million pounds (\$250 million) on top of 900 million pounds already agreed in a the bailout ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

'Don't Send Warplanes & Bombs': Rouhani to Present Persian Gulf 'Peace Plan' at UN

TEHRAN - Iranian President Hassan Rouhani warned against flooding the Persian Gulf region with weapons and promised to unveil a plan to secure shipping through the Strait of Hormuz.

Rouhani warned against throwing the Middle East into "an arms race," as he addressed the crowd at a military parade on Sunday. "Don't send warplanes, bombs and other dangerous weapons to the region," he said, while warning that the Islamic Republic "will not allow anyone to violate" its borders.



Officials in Tehran have accused the US of fueling tensions by deploying warships near Iranian waters and sending more troops to Iraq. Earlier, the Pentagon greenlit the deployment of additional forces to strengthen the air defense of its allies, Saudi Arabia and the

UAE, after Washington blamed Iran for last week's drone strikes on Saudi oil refineries. Yemeni Houthi rebels claimed responsibility for the attack, while Tehran denied any involvement. Rouhani promised to unveil a security plan ...*(More on P4)...(11)*

Spain's Socialist Party Would Maintain Lead, Polls Show

MADRID - Spain's Socialist party would win a November election and gain more seats, two polls showed on Sunday, but it would fall short of a majority and would still need support from other parties to form a government.

The Socialists finished first in an inconclusive national election in April but acting Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez has failed to form a government with other parties, meaning the country is headed to its fourth elec-

tion in as many years on Nov. 10.

The two main traditional parties that have dominated the political landscape since Spain's entry into democracy in the 1970s - the Socialist PSOE and the conservative People's Party (PP) - would both gain seats in an election, the polls showed.

This is at the expense of the new parties that emerged following the financial crisis at the beginning of the decade such as far left Unidas Podemos ...*(More on P4)...(12)*

Two Flights Diverted from Dubai Airport over Suspected Drone Activity

DUBAI - The development comes amid a spike in tensions in the Middle East that followed the suspected drone attacks on Saudi Arabia's oil plants that halved the kingdom's oil production. The incident was claimed by the Yemen-based Houthi rebels, but western states and the US have largely blamed Iran for the attack.

A Dubai Airports spokesperson said Sunday that flight arrivals at the airport were disrupted at around afternoon because of "suspected drone activity resulting in the diversion of two flights."

According to reports, two Emirates flights that were expected to land at the airport had to be diverted.

"Emirates can confirm that today, Sunday, September 22, 2019, Dubai International Airport was closed from 12.36pm to 12.51pm local time due to suspected drone activity in the surrounding airspace. As a result flight EK433 from Brisbane and Singapore to Dubai International Airport (DXB) was diverted to Dubai World Central (DWC) and flight EK511 from Delhi to Dubai International Airport was diverted to Sharjah International Airport (SHJ)," Emirates spokesperson said as quoted by the Khaleej Times.

The spokesperson added that operations have returned to normal. Two drones attacked Saudi Aramco oil facilities on 14 September, causing a major fire and partially disrupting oil ...*(More on P4)...(16)*

Neighbor News

Imran Stresses Need to Expose Modi's Agenda

NEW YORK - Founder of Kashmir Study Group Farooq Kathwari on Saturday called on Prime Minister Imran Khan in New York to discuss the prevailing situation in Indian occupied Kashmir.

During the meeting, the prime minister urged Kathwari, a Srinagar-born Kashmiri-American, to further highlight the grave situation resulting from India's illegal occupation of occupied Kashmir and its blatant human rights violations.

He said there was a need to expose the "real face" of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government to

the world.

Kathwari, on the occasion, highlighted the Kashmir Study Group's earlier engagement on the dispute and efforts for conflict resolution. Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Advisor to the Prime Minister on Commerce Abdul Razak Dawood, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Naeem-ul-Haq, Pakistan's Ambassador to the United Nations Maleeha Lodhi, Ambassador to the United States Asad Majeed Khan and other senior officials were present in the meeting. Earlier, Foreign Minister ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

Unlike Israel, Iran Is Friend of Regional Nations: Larijani

TEHRAN - Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani says Iran is a friend of regional nations while Israel is the main enemy of Muslim countries.

Speaker Larijani made the remark during a speech in the southern port city of Bandar Abbas before a military parade began on Sunday. "The Iranian nation and its self-sacrificing Armed Forces view all Muslim nations as their brother and consider those countries' might the might of Islam, and regard the usurping Zionist regime (Israel) as a cancerous tumor in the region," the top Iranian parliamentarian said. "The main reason behind insecurity in the region and the main en-

emy of Muslims is this very regime (Israel)."

Security in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz is only achievable by regional countries, he emphasized, warning, "The presence of foreigners will inflict irreparable damage on the security structure of this international pathway."

Larijani denounced the United States-led naval mission to allegedly provide security in the Strait of Hormuz as "a new tool to plunder the region," and said regional countries themselves were capable of ensuring that security. The US has been trying to persuade its allies to join the maritime coalition ever since it ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

Law Ministry Decides to Amend Production Orders' Rule of Procedure in NA

ISLAMABAD - The Ministry of Law and Justice has decided to amend the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in National Assembly (NA) regarding the issuance of the production orders of members of the NA.

According to sources, amendments will be made in the Rule 108 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the NA, 2007, and Section 84 of the Rules of Procedure of the Senate.

Moreover, the amendment draft will be prepared in the next few weeks. The changes in the rules will restrict parliamentarians, in-

olved in corruption cases, from getting production orders.

On July 2, Prime Minister Imran Khan had recommended the amendments following the meeting of the federal cabinet in Islamabad. All cabinet members had unanimously agreed to the premier's recommendation that there shouldn't be any production orders of members who are involved in corruption cases.

The premier had stated that the members have been wrongly using the production orders. Furthermore, the PM Khan had stated that those ...*(More on P4)...(19)*

Iran's Rial Resisting Losses Despite New American Sanctions

TEHRAN - Iran's national currency the rial has resisted losses over the past days despite a new wave of American sanctions targeting the country's central bank and its sovereign wealth fund.

Rial was holding ground on Saturday, trading at year-long highs of above 115,000 per US dollar, according to currency rate websites and reports from Tehran's unofficial exchange market.

That came despite an announcement by the US government on Friday which toughened American sanctions on the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), while imposing sanctions on the country's sovereign wealth fund (NDFI) and a

company advancing payments for the government agencies.

The sanctions came after attacks on Saudi Arabia's oil installation on September 14 which cut the kingdom's production in half and sent shockwaves across the global markets. Washington has blamed Iran for the attacks, accusations roundly rejected by Iranian authorities.

The rial's strength comes as the currency suffered massively last summer when the US began to impose its sanctions on Iran. It traded at historic lows of 190,000 against the dollar in September 2018 before it regained some of its value and rose against foreign ...*(More on P4)...(20)*