

Senior Chinese Diplomat Says China, U.S. must Avoid Cold War Mentality

BEIJING - China and the United States can compete but should not view each other with a Cold War mentality and should avoid thinking it is a zero-sum game, the Chinese government's top diplomat said, amid deteriorating ties between the superpowers. Beijing and Washington are locked in an increasingly bitter trade war and are increasingly at odds over other issues, such as U.S. support for self-ruled Taiwan which China claims, and U.S. sanctions on China's military for buying Russian weapons. At a meeting with former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger on Tuesday in New York on the sidelines of a United Nations meeting, Chinese State Councillor Wang Yi said that



the two countries would only lose if they confronted each other. "China and the United States can have com-

petition, but should not use a Cold War mentality to view each other, and nor should they slip into the trap of a zero-sum game,"

a Foreign Ministry statement on Wednesday quoted Wang as saying.

"Recently, certain U.S. forces domestically have been continually blackening China's name, creating antagonistic feeling, which has caused serious harm to the atmosphere of Sino-U.S. ties," Wang added, without naming names. If that continues, it will lead relations down the wrong path, which is not in the interest of either country or the international community, he said. China hopes the United States meets it halfway so they can have a "correct perception" of each other, and prevent this negative momentum from spreading to ensure relations don't stray from the correct track, Wang added. (Reuters)

Neighbor News

Pakistan Jails Software Firm Chief in \$140 Million Diploma Scam

KARACHI, Pakistan - The head of a Pakistani company convicted of bilking customers worldwide out of \$140 million in online sales of bogus university degrees has been arrested weeks after being sentenced to jail, media reported on Wednesday. Shoaib Shaikh, chief of software firm Axact, was sentenced to 20 years in prison by an Islamabad court in July but then escaped, Dawn newspaper reported. "The Axact chief had not surrendered to the court following his conviction and managed to escape," the paper said. The Federal Investigation Agency, which investigated the scam, could not immediately be reached for comment. The case was brought to light by the New York Times in 2015 that said Axact had run a global network of fake online universities that manipulated customers and generated tens of millions of dollars in estimated revenue annually by selling bogus diplomas. "Sometimes they cater to customers who clearly understand that they are buying a shady instant degree for money. But often the agents manipulate those seeking a real education," the newspaper said at the time. In December 2016, another executive of Axact was charged in a U.S. federal court for his part in the "fake-diploma mill" scheme. Umair Hamid, 30, was sentenced to 21 months in prison, media said. (Reuters)

Uzbekistan, Tajikistan Ready to Repulse Enemy at Any Time - Defense Minister

TASHKENT - On Sept. 18-22, the military training ground "Chorukhdayron" in the Sughd region of Tajikistan hosted the Tajikistan-Uzbekistan joint anti-terrorist drills with the participation of servicemen of the two countries, Uzbek media reported. More than 600 servicemen and about 100 units of combat, special equipment and helicopters were involved in the exercises which were held for the first time in the history of the two states. Following the exercises, Uzbek Defense Minister Abdusalom Azizov said that the joint exercises of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan showed the readiness of the two neighboring states to repulse enemy at any time. He noted that the exercises are of truly historical significance and are the first ones in the history of friendly relations between the armies of the two countries. Tajik Defense Minister Sherali Mirzo said that the situation in the northern provinces of Afghanistan is of particular concern. He also noted that Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are an outpost of Central Asia, and the heads of the two states are doing everything possible to ensure peace and stability in Afghanistan. (Trend)

Turkmenistan to Set Utility Fees at Preferential Prices

ASHGABAT - Starting from January 1, 2019, the population of Turkmenistan will be provided with electricity, gas, drinking water and table salt at preferential prices, according to the decree of Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov. The document was adopted in order to achieve sustainable and systematic development of the state in all areas, rational use of basic resources, as well as further improvement of social benefits. The Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan has been instructed to prepare the relevant regulatory and legal acts. (Trend)

Uzbek President to Attend CIS Meeting in Dushanbe

TASHKENT - Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev will take part in the regular meeting of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Council of Heads of State in Dushanbe city Sept. 27-28, Uzbek media reported. The agenda of the Summit includes a wide range of issues related to the current state and prospects for the further development of multilateral cooperation in various fields. Also, the heads of state will consider the issues of chairmanship in the CIS in 2019, Agreement on cooperation in combating crimes in the IT sphere. The program of the Uzbek president's visit also includes holding a number of bilateral meetings in Dushanbe. (Trend)

Swiss-EU Ties at Crossroads over Stalled Treaty Talks

ZURICH - Switzerland and the European Union have been negotiating the terms of a treaty that would cement ties between the neutral country and its biggest trading partner. The European Commission has been pushing for a decade for a treaty that would sit atop an existing patchwork of 120 sectoral accords and have the Swiss routinely adopt changes to rules governing the single market of 500 million people. It would also provide a

more effective platform to resolve disputes, providing more legal certainty and strengthening commercial ties. Negotiations have dragged on for five years as the sides wrangle over just how to settle disputes, state aid rules and Swiss regulations for EU workers on temporary cross-border assignments. The last point could be a dealbreaker - Swiss labor unions and small business refuse to budge on rules designed to protect high Swiss wages from foreign competition. (Reuters)

Yemen War Crimes Probe must continue: UN Investigators

GENEVA - War crimes investigators called Wednesday for the UN's top rights body to let them continue probing the "extremely alarming" situation in Yemen, amid resistance from Saudi Arabia and others. The investigators, appointed by the UN Human Rights Council a year ago, presented a report to the body that concluded all sides in Yemen's conflict may have committed "war crimes". The resolution that first set up the inquiry last year after a long diplo-

matic fight gave investigators a year to conduct their probe. But Kamel Jendoubi, who heads the so-called Group of Independent Eminent International and Regional Experts, insisted that "in light of the gravity of the situation and the limited time given to the mandate, additional investigations are needed." "The situation in Yemen continues to be extremely alarming," he told the council. "We call upon you to keep the situation in Yemen at the top of the pri-



orities of the council," he said, urging diplomats to "unanimously" adopt a resolution led by a group of European countries and Canada calling for a

one-year extension. This, he said, was necessary "to ensure that truth is revealed and accountability is attained." (AFP)

Iran Says Trump should Stop Interfering in Middle East If He Wants Cheap Oil



GENEVA - U.S. President Donald Trump should stop interfering in the Middle East if he wants the price of oil to stop rising, Iranian Oil

Minister Bijan Zanganeh was quoted as saying on Wednesday. "Mr Trump is trying to seriously reduce exports of Iran's oil and also en-

sure the price of oil does not go up, but these two cannot happen together," Zanganeh said, according to the Iranian Students' News Agency. "If he wants the price of oil not to go up and the market not to get destabilized, he should stop unwarranted and disruptive interference in the Middle East and not be an obstacle to the production and export of Iran's oil."

Trump, not the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, is behind the recent rise in prices, Zanganeh said. "Trump blames OPEC for what he has created and caused: the rise of the price of oil and disturbance in the market." OPEC members do not have the capacity to increase production, Zanganeh said. In a speech at the United Nations on Tuesday, Trump reiterated calls on OPEC to pump more oil and stop raising prices. He also accused Iran of sowing chaos and promised further sanctions on the country. (Reuters)

Far-Right German Party's Plans for Jewish Section Criticized

BERLIN - The far-right Alternative for Germany party has announced it will create a Jewish section within the party, drawing widespread criticism by Jewish groups across the country. One prominent Jewish student group accused the anti-migrant party on Wednesday as being "one of the biggest threats to Jewish ... life in Germany." "The AfD is not getting a kosher certificate from us," the leader of the Jewish Students Union of Germany said, referring to the nationalist party by its acronym. Dalia Grinfeld said her group is urging all Jews in Germany to join a protest rally next month in the central German city of Offenbach, where the party plans to launch its new "Jews in the AfD" section. Despite repeatedly downplaying the horrors of the Holocaust, the far-right party has acquired some Jewish members who are drawn to its rhetoric against Muslim immigrants. (AP)

UK Labour Party's Corbyn to Say will Vote against PM May's Brexit Deal as It Stands

LIVERPOOL, England - Britain's opposition Labour Party will vote against a Brexit deal based on Prime Minister Theresa May's so-called Chequers proposals as it stands and opposes leaving the bloc without a deal, leader Jeremy Corbyn will say on Wednesday. "As it stands, Labour will vote against the Chequers plan or whatever is left of it and oppose leaving the EU with no deal," Corbyn will say, according to the text of his speech to his party's conference.

He will say to May: "If you deliver a deal that includes a customs union and no hard border in Ireland, if you protect jobs, people's rights at work and environmental standards, then we will support that sensible deal". (Reuters)

Nearly 400,000 'Excess Deaths' in South Sudan, Report Says

JUBA, South Sudan - South Sudan's civil war has caused nearly 400,000 "excess deaths" since fighting erupted in late 2013, a new report funded by the U.S. State Department said Wednesday after years of uncertainty.

The report by the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine estimates that "violent injuries" caused about half of those 382,900 deaths. Increased risk of disease and reduced access to health care contributed to others, it said. The civil war's death toll has long been unknown, with estimates in the tens of thousands. (AP)

Trump in Isolation in Front of World Leaders Calling for Multilateralism

BEIJING - This year's UN annual debate has seen a clear division of worldviews between multilateralists and a unilateralist. In front of world leaders who are strongly calling for multilateralism, U.S. President Donald Trump told the UN General Assembly that "we reject the ideology of globalism, and we embrace the doctrine of patriotism."

This is Trump's second speech at the UN General Assembly hall. Instead of trumpeting his "America First" policy, as what he did last year, Trump stated a similar point that "America will always choose independence



and cooperation over global governance, control and domination."

However, few in the hall agreed with Trump's unilateral rhetoric as most of world leaders have recognized that multilateralism is the only pos-

sible response to global challenges. "America is governed by Americans." When President Trump blurted out this statement, he was probably "unaware" that he was speaking at a multilateral platform to a global audience. (Xinhua)

Pompeo Says Trump-Kim Summit More Likely after October: CBS

WASHINGTON - Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Wednesday he was working to set up the next summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, but any meeting will likely be after October. "We're working diligently to make

sure we get the conditions right so that we can accomplish as much as possible during the summit. But we hope it will be soon," Pompeo said in an interview with "CBS This Morning." "It may happen in October, but more likely sometime after that." (Reuters)

Microsoft, AI Singapore, NUS Join Hands in Improving Singapore's AI Capabilities

SINGAPORE - Microsoft announced on Wednesday its collaborations with the AI Singapore and the National University of Singapore (NUS), to strengthen the efforts in artificial intelligence (AI) education, upskilling and retraining in Singapore as well as to accelerate NUS's AI capabilities, empower their researchers and encourage innovation respectively. According to a press release, they signed an Memoranda of Understanding during the Times Higher Education World Academic Summit 2018 held at NUS. NUS's President Tan Eng Chye said the NUS is thrilled to see how this cooperation can further improve its research productivity as well as boost its ability to develop and deliver better solutions to address the critical and complex issues that are relevant to Singapore, Asia and beyond.

AI Singapore is a national program launched by the National Research Foundation to catalyze, synergize and boost Singapore's AI capabilities to power Singapore's future, digital economy.

Besides, Microsoft released new findings at the event from its Unlocking the Economic Impact of Digital Transformation in Asia Pacific study, which is specific to the higher education sector in the region. (Xinhua)