

Trump confident of US-N Korea deal

Suggests China might be interfering on Pyongyang's denuclearization effort

AFP, Washington

US President Donald Trump said yesterday he has "confidence" that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un will honor the denuclearization "contract" they signed, but that China may be seeking to undermine a deal.

The US president and North Korean strongman met in Singapore almost a month ago for an unprecedented summit between sitting leaders of the two countries, which resulted in a general joint declaration that did not include a timetable or concrete commitments from North Korea on denuclearization.

"I have confidence that Kim Jong Un will honor the contract we signed & even more importantly, our handshake," Trump tweeted, emphasizing the importance he places on personal relationships.

"We agreed to the denuclearization of North Korea," he wrote, despite the fact that the declaration signed by the two leaders refers to the denuclearization of the "Korean peninsula" -- a vaguer formula that leaves room for various interpretations.

Trump also expressed doubts about Beijing's attitude toward the negotiations between Washington and Pyongyang, suggesting that China could play a counterproductive role due to the trade war that has seen the world's two largest economies slap tariffs on each other's goods.

"China, on the other hand, may be exerting negative pressure on a deal because of our posture on Chinese Trade-



A board showing "Welcome home, boys", is seen after rescue effort has begun for the 12 schoolboys and their soccer coach trapped in Tham Luang cave, in Chiang Rai, Thailand yesterday. Inset, children pray for the Thai schoolboys at a school in Ahmedabad, India.

PHOTO: REUTERS

THAI CAVE RESCUE

SEVEN BRITISH DIVING HEROES LED THE MISSION

MAIL ONLINE

Under thundery skies on Sunday day, 13 international cave divers and five Thai navy SEALs locked arms and vowed: "We'll bring the Wild Boar team home." The most experienced cave rescue team ever assembled then filed into the black mouth of the cave.

Thousands of people including soldiers, navy and police have been mobilised for the operation to save 12 young footballers and their coach from the Moo Pa team -- or "wild boar" in Thai. Ninety divers took part in the rescue. But spearheading the mission yesterday were seven British diving heroes. The British group took less than four hours to arrive at 2:00pm in the cavern where the boys have spent 15 days almost three miles from the entrance.

PSYCHIATRIST SUGGESTS PATH TO RECOVERY

THE NATION ONLINE

The Royal College of Psychiatrists of Thailand has offered guidelines for treating the 13 footballers after they're all rescued from the Chiang Rai cave.

In an article published for the college, psychiatrist Ananya Sinrachatanant pointed out that the footballers were victims of an unexpected natural disaster over which they had no control. Professionals with the community's help should provide the necessary physical and mental rehabilitation, she wrote. There were lessons to be learned from the near disaster in the interest of preventing any recurrence, she said, but attributing blame and open criticism would only cause social disunity. Ananya suggested the news media adhere to factual reporting and avoid interpretations or speculation based on personal viewpoints.

MUSK PROPOSED MINI-SUBMARINE TO SAVE BOYS

AFP, BANGKOK

American tech entrepreneur Elon Musk has proposed a mini-submarine to save the boys trapped inside a flooded Thai cave, floating the idea on social media while linking it to his space exploration business.

After garnering headlines with initial ideas of installing a giant air tube inside the cave complex and using his firm's penetrating radar to dig holes to reach the boys, Musk's latest concept is the pod.

"Primary path is basically a tiny, kid-size submarine using the liquid oxygen transfer tube of Falcon rocket as hull," Musk said in a tweet.

Weakest extracted from the cave first

Healthy and hungry

First four boys rescued from Thai cave asking for basil stir-fried rice in hospital

MAIL ONLINE

An Australian doctor convinced Thai officials to change their rescue plans and first get some of the weakest boys out of the cave where they were trapped, it can be revealed.

Cave diver and anaesthetist Dr Richard Harris, from Adelaide, dived with the rescue team on Sunday afternoon to check on the 12 boys and their coach.

The initial strategy was to extract the strongest boys first because they would have more chance of making it to safety while the others could stay back and build up strength.

But that was revised after Dr Harris' health assessment found some of the weaker boys may not survive if they were left behind, according to Thai media.

Four of the 12 trapped boys were brought to safety on Sunday evening. Operations to bring out the other eight and their coach started yesterday afternoon as divers placed fresh oxygen tanks along the exit route.

Dr Harris, who was requested by British divers leading the operation, is working alongside the Thai Navy and 18 other Australians in the rescue efforts.

The 53-year-old has 30 years of diving experience and has worked on retrieving bodies from caves.

He famously found the body of stunt diver Agnes Milowka who ran out of air in the Tank Cave near Tantanoola in the south east of South Australia in 2011, The Advertiser reported.

REUTERS, Chiang Rai

The first four boys rescued from a flooded cave in northern Thailand were in good health and demanding fried rice in hospital yesterday, the head of the rescue team said, as divers resumed operations to bring out the remaining members of the group.

The bid to rescue the boys - aged between 11 and 16 - and their 25-year-old soccer coach got going again after a break late on Sunday to replenish the team's oxygen supplies and make other preparations deep inside the cave.

The four boys, rescued on Sunday, were flown by helicopter from the Tham Luang cave to the Chiang Rai Prachanukroh hospital, located at the heart of Chiang Rai province, about 70 km (40 miles) away.

A eighth boy was rescued yesterday after-

noon, a Royal Thai Navy official said. No other details on him were immediately available.

"The four children are fine. The children complained that they were hungry and wanted holy basil stir-fried rice," Narongsak Osottanakom, the head of the rescue operation, told reporters yesterday, referring to a popular Thai dish.

Interior Minister Anupong Paochinda also said the boys were in good health. He did not give further details.

Officials have yet to confirm the identities of the four boys freed. Narongsak yesterday said their identities were being protected out of respect for the families of those still trapped inside the cave.

Officials last week said they would bring the fittest people in the group out first, but Narongsak later said that whoever was ready first would be escorted out.



Security guards stand at the Chiang Rai Prachanukroh Hospital, where rescued boys are being treated.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Two Reuters reporters to face Myanmar trial

AFP, Yangon

Two Reuters reporters accused of breaking Myanmar's draconian secrecy law during their reporting of a Rohingya massacre must face trial, a judge said yesterday, in a ruling swiftly decided as a "black day" for press freedom in the country.

Myanmar nationals Wa Lone, 32, and Kyaw Soe Oo, 28, were arrested in December and accused of possessing leaked sensitive material linked to security operations in crisis-hit Rakhine state.

The pair, who have been held in custody for nearly seven months of pre-trial hearings, were both "charged under the state secrets act", Judge Ye Lwin told the court in Yangon, setting a first court date for July 16.

If convicted the two could face up to 14 years in prison under the colonial-era law. Reuters says the pair are innocent and were

simply doing their job by reporting on a massacre of Rohingya Muslims in September, and has urged the court to dismiss the case.

But Judge Ye Lwin decided the prosecution had shown enough proof that the men were "collecting evidence" from state officials to allow the case to proceed to trial.

The legal action against them has been lambasted by rights groups and foreign observers as an assault on media freedom and an effort to stifle reporting on the Rohingya crisis.

Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and free speech group Article 19 lambasted yesterday's ruling.

"This is a black day for press freedom in Myanmar," said Tirana Hassan, Amnesty International's director of crisis response, labelling the court decision "farfetched" and "politically motivated".

'BREACH' OF SECRECY LAW



A helicopter flies over the site where a train derailed at Corlu district in Tekirdag, northwest Turkey yesterday. Twenty-four people were killed and hundreds injured when the train packed with weekend passengers derailed in northwest Turkey due to ground erosion after heavy rains, officials said.

PHOTO: AFP

Ethiopia, Eritrea no longer at war

AFP, Addis Ababa

Ethiopia and Eritrea are no longer at war, the neighbours said in a joint statement yesterday, a day after their leaders held a historic meeting in Asmara.

Quoting from a "Joint Declaration of Peace and Friendship," Eritrean Information Minister Yemane Gebremeskel said on Twitter the "state of war that existed between the two countries has come to an end. A new era of peace and friendship has been ushered (in)."

"Both countries will work to promote close cooperation in political, economic, social, cultural and security areas," Yemane added.

He said the agreement was signed by Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki yesterday morning at state house in Asmara.

Images of the ceremony showed the two men sharing a wooden desk, backed by their nations' flags, as they simultaneously signed the document.

The declaration echoed comments made by Abiy at a dinner hosted by Isaias late Sunday, where he said diplomatic, trade, transport and communications ties would be re-established and borders re-opened.

"We agreed that the airlines will start operating, the ports will be accessible, people can move between the two countries and the embassies will be opened," Abiy said.

'Road to Naya Pakistan'

Imran Khan unveils his party's manifesto ahead of July 25 general election

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DAWN ONLINE

Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan yesterday unveiled his party's much-awaited manifesto for general elections 2018, announcing that he would turn Pakistan into a welfare state if voted into power.

Titled "Road to Naya Pakistan", the manifesto is composed of seven chapters and explains in detail the PTI's agenda for the next government.

One of the primary points of the manifesto, Khan said, is to turn Pakistan into an Islamic welfare state -- a model the principles of which he said are also followed in Scandinavian countries.

"We will make the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) autonomous and pursue all cases of corruption," Khan said. "We will empower the people and devolve the power to the village level. "We will introduce a non-political model

of policing like the one in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to the rest of the provinces as well. And to ensure that Pakistanis get instant and quality justice, we will introduce comprehensive judicial reforms."

Khan outlined the major issues of all the regions and vowed to resolve them. "We will bring prominent changes to the administrative structure in Karachi; ensure successful completion of Fata's merger with KP and will allocate specific funds for it; promote politics of understanding in Balochistan; raise the movement of south Punjab province, and empower Gilgit Baltistan."

The PTI chief further said that his party would boost the economy by creating 10 millions jobs and promoting small-to-mid-level industries. "We will make Pakistan business-friendly and turn the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) into a game-changer by enhancing bilateral relations."



JAPAN FLOODS

Death toll rises to 100, 61 missing

REUTERS, Kurashiki

Rescuers in Japan dug through mud and rubble yesterday, racing to find survivors after torrential rain unleashed floods and landslides that killed at least 114 people, with 61 missing.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe cancelled an overseas trip to deal with Japan's worst flood disaster since 1983, with several million people forced from their homes. Officials said the overall economic impact was not clear.

Rain tapered off across the western region yesterday to reveal blue skies and a scorching sun that pushed temperatures well above 30 Celsius (86 Fahrenheit), fuelling fears of heat-stroke in areas cut off from power or water.

"We cannot take baths, the toilet doesn't work and our food stockpile is running low," said Yumeko Matsui, whose home in the city of Mihara, in Hiroshima prefecture, has been without water since Saturday.

"Bottled water and bottled tea are all gone from convenience stores and other shops," the 23-year-old nursery school worker said at an emergency water supply station.

Some 11,200 households had no electricity, power companies said yesterday, while hundreds of thousands had no water. The death toll reached at least 114, NHK public television said, with 61 people missing.

NEWSIN brief

India death sentences upheld over 2012 rape

AFP, New Delhi

India's top court yesterday upheld death sentences for three men convicted over the notorious 2012 gang-rape and murder of a woman that sparked national protests and soul-searching. Jyoti Singh, a physiotherapy student, was raped and left for dead by a gang of five men and a teenager on a bus in the Indian capital New Delhi in December 2012.

Fraud trial of Israel PM's wife postponed: court

AFP, Jerusalem

The trial of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's wife Sara, charged with fraud and breach of trust, has been postponed for three months, the court administration said yesterday. Sara Netanyahu's trial, which was set to open at the Jerusalem magistrates court on July 19, will instead start at the same court on October 7, it said.

Erdogan assumes new presidential powers

AFP, Ankara

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was sworn in for his second term as head of state yesterday, taking on greater powers than any Turkish leader for decades under a new system condemned by opponents as a one-man regime. Erdogan took his oath in parliament for a five-year term after his June election victory.

