

China, India may seek to meddle in polls: Canada

REUTERS, Ottawa

China and India are likely to try to interfere in the Canadian general election on April 28, while Russia and Pakistan have the potential to do so, the country's spy service said on Monday.

The Canadian Security Intelligence Service made its comments at a time when Ottawa's relations with both India and China are chilly.

Beijing and New Delhi have denied previous allegations of interference.

Canada was slow in responding to efforts by China and India to interfere in the 2019 and 2021 elections but their outcomes were unaffected by the meddling, an official probe concluded in a final report released in January.



An elderly woman reacts as Palestinians flee their homes after the Israeli army issued evacuation orders, in Jabalia, in the northern Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Trump backs national security adviser

White House promises to probe, criticises journo

REUTERS, Washington

President Donald Trump yesterday expressed support for his national security adviser, Michael Waltz, after a magazine journalist said on Monday that Waltz had accidentally included him in a discussion of highly sensitive war plans on the messaging app Signal.

"Michael Waltz has learned a lesson, and he's a good man," Trump told NBC News in a phone interview.

US senators were set to grill Trump's top intelligence officials on Tuesday about the apparent breach, which triggered outrage and disbelief among Democrats and national security experts.

Jeffrey Goldberg, editor-in-chief of The Atlantic, said in a report on Monday that Waltz unexpectedly added him on March 13 to an encrypted chat group on the Signal messaging app coordinating US action against the Yemen rebel group over its attacks on Red Sea shipping.

National Security Council spokesperson Brian Hughes said the chat group appeared to be authentic. The White House said it was looking into how Goldberg's number was added

to the thread.

Democrats - and some Republicans - called for an investigation of what appeared to be a major security breach. Classified and sensitive information is not supposed to be shared on commercial mobile phone apps, and unknown numbers should not be included.

Members of the Senate Intelligence Committee were to question two of the administration officials on the chat - Director of National Intelligence Tulsil Gabbard and CIA Director John Ratcliffe on Tuesday during the panel's annual hearing.

In his opening statement, Senator Mark Warner, the Democratic vice chairman of the intelligence committee, said a military or intelligence officer who took similar action would be fired.

"Yesterday, we stunningly learned that senior members of this administration, and according to reports, two of our witnesses here today, were members of a group chat that discussed highly sensitive and likely classified information that supposedly even included weapons packages, targets and timing and included the name of an active CIA agent," he said.

CIVIL WAR ABUSES UK sanctions ex-Sri Lankan commanders

REUTERS, London

Britain on Monday imposed sanctions on three former senior Sri Lankan military commanders and one former Tamil Tiger rebel commander over human rights violations during a civil war that ended in 2009.

The measures, which include bans on travelling to Britain and asset freezes, target the former chief of staff of the Sri Lankan Armed Forces, Shavendra Silva, former commander of the Navy Wasantha Karannagoda and former commander of the Army Jagath Jayasuriya.

Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan, known as Karuna Amman, a former commander in the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, was also sanctioned. Amman split from the LTTE before the war ended and later led a paramilitary group working for the Sri Lankan Army.

Turkish court jails 7 journos after anti-Erdogan protests

AFP, Istanbul

A Turkish court yesterday remanded in custody seven journalists for covering the mass protests that erupted following the arrest of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's main political rival, in a crackdown that has now seen more than 1,400 people arrested.

Among the journalists placed under arrest by the Istanbul court was AFP photographer Yasin Akgul, who was seen being escorted away to jail.

Press freedom group Reporters Without Borders (RSF) denounced the move as "scandalous".

Vast crowds have hit the streets daily since the March 19 move against Istanbul's popular opposition mayor, Ekrem Imamoglu, prompting nightly clashes with riot police that have spread across the country.



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