



**PRINCE CHARLES SAYS MORE PEOPLE TAKING UP YOGA WILL EASE PRESSURE ON UK'S HEALTHCARE RESOURCES**

**JAPAN PM SHINZO ABE STAYS MUM IN PARLIAMENT ON WHETHER HE NOMINATED TRUMP FOR PEACE NOBEL**



## Trump rails about coup and treason after his loyalty to US is questioned

Remarks Come After FBI Ex-Honcho Claims Prez Trusted Putin's Word On N Korea Over US Intel

Chidanand.Rajghatta  
@timesgroup.com

Washington: Charges and countercharges of treason and a constitutional coup flew across the American political landscape over the weekend as President Donald Trump lashed out at critics questioning his fealty to the United States. The latest spark to re-ignite the treason firestorm was a CBS 60-minutes interview of a former FBI deputy director in which he alleged Trump had told US intelligence officials that he believed Russia's President Vladimir Putin's word that North Korea did not possess missiles capable of hitting the US over their assessment that it did.



President Trump on Monday lashed out at 'Saturday Night Live' for an unflattering portrayal of him on the show. He called it a 'total Republican hit job' and called 'corrupt' media 'enemy of the people'. Alec Baldwin, who spoofs Trump in SNL skits, responded by questioning whether the president's words represented 'a threat to my safety and that of my family' that that was not consistent with any of the intelligence our government possesses," McCabe, who was subsequently fired himself, said. "To which the president replied, 'I don't care. I believe Putin.'"

It was this, among other remarks and behaviour by Trump, that apparently caused McCabe and other FBI and justice department officials to begin suspecting the president's loyalty to the US, launch investigations, and consider invoking the US Constitution's 25th Amendment (which allows a majority of the 15-member cabinet to remove the president from office). "It's just an astounding thing to say," McCabe told 60 Minutes. "To spend the time and effort and energy that we all do in the intelligence community to produce products that will help decision-makers and the ultimate decision maker — the president of the United States — make policy decisions. And to be confronted with an absolute disbelief in those efforts and an unwillingness to learn the true state of affairs

that he has to deal with every day was just shocking."

The explosive interview triggered a twitterstorm from Trump in which he accused McCabe and other justice department officials (whom Trump hired) of treasonous activity. "Wow, so many lies by now disgraced acting FBI Director Andrew McCabe. He was fired for lying, and now his story gets even more deranged. He and Rod Rosenstein, who was hired by Jeff Sessions (another beauty), look like they were planning a very illegal act, and got caught... There is a lot of explaining to do to the millions of people who had just elected a president who they really like and who has done a great job for them with the Military, Vets, Economy and so much more. This was the illegal and treasonous 'insurance policy' in full action!" the president railed in a two-part tweet. He also retweeted Fox News commentators who said what McCabe and others did (considering invoking the 25th amendment) amounted to an "illegal coup attempt" against the president.

Notably though, Trump did not specifically challenge the assertion that he believed Putin's word over his own in-

## 'Digital gangsters': UK wants tougher rules for Facebook

London: British lawmakers issued a scathing report on Monday that calls for tougher rules on Facebook to keep it from acting like "digital gangsters" and intentionally violating data privacy and competition laws. The report on fake news and disinformation on social media sites followed an 18-month investigation by Parliament's media committee. The committee recommended that social media sites should have to follow a mandatory code of ethics overseen by an independent regulator to better control harmful or illegal content.

The report called out Facebook in particular, saying that the site's structure seems to be designed to "conceal knowledge of and responsibility for specific decisions." "It is evident that Facebook intentionally and knowingly violated both data privacy and anti-competition laws," the report states. It also accuses CEO Mark Zuckerberg of showing contempt for the UK Parliament by declining numerous invitations to appear before the committee. "Companies like Facebook should not be allowed to behave like 'digital gangsters' in the online world, considering themselves to be ahead of and beyond the law," the report added.

The committee said it hopes its conclusions will be considered when the government reviews its competition powers in April. Facebook said it shared "the committee's concerns about false news and election integrity" and was open to "meaningful regulation". Facebook's UK public policy manager, Karim Palant said, "We have tripled the si-

### WHAT THE PANEL WANTS

- 1 Tech cos must have a code of ethics
- 2 Independent regulator should monitor them, launch legal proceedings if required
- 3 UK's electoral laws and rules on overseas involvement in elections need to be reformed
- 4 Social media platforms should be
- 5 Tech cos in UK should be taxed to help fund any new regulator set up to oversee them
- 6 UK antitrust regulators should carry out a 'comprehensive audit' of the advertising market on social media

UK parliamentary committee reports are intended to influence government policy, but are not binding

**FACEBOOK RESPONDS**

Social media company says it is open to 'meaningful regulation'

While we still have more to do, we are not the same company we were a year ago,"

**KARIM PALANT** | FACEBOOK UK'S PUBLIC POLICY MANAGER

## In Pakistan, Saudi minister calls Iran 'world's chief sponsor of terrorism'

Omer Farooq Khan | TNN

Islamabad: Saudi minister of state for foreign affairs Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir lashed out at Iran on Monday, calling it the "world's chief sponsor of terrorism" and accusing it of sponsoring terrorism for decades while blaming others for terrorist activities on its soil.

The minister, who was part of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's visiting delegation, delivered an angry diatribe against Iran, his country's historical religious rival state in the region, in Islamabad while addressing a joint press conference with Pakistan foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi. "It is strange for the foreign minister of the world's chief sponsor of terrorism (a reference to Iran) to accuse others of engaging in terrorist activities," the Saudi minister said. He was respon-



Pakistan President Arif Alvi (L) conferred the country's highest civilian award on Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on Monday

ding to Iran's recent allegations that held Pakistan responsible for an attack that killed 27 members of Iran's Revolutionary Guards. Accusing Tehran of sponsoring terrorism since the Iranian Revolution of 1979, Al-Jubeir said that Iran had established terrorist groups such as Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen. "Iran had been im-

### MbS meets Pak army chief

Omer Farooq Khan | TNN

Islamabad: Pakistan conferred its highest civilian honour — the Nishan-e-Pakistan — on Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on Monday, a day after his country signed \$20 billion in investment deals with Islamabad. Earlier in the day, Pakistan's foreign and information ministers announced that the crown prince had ordered the "immediate release" of 2,107 Pakistani prisoners from Saudi jails. The issue had been raised by PM Imran Khan on Sunday.

MbS also met Pakistan army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa. According to sources, the talks focused on regional security, including initiatives on the peace talks between the US and the Taliban.

## EU vows 'swift' riposte to threatened US auto tariffs

Brussels: The EU promised a quick and effective response if the United States imposes import duties on European autos, a spokesman for the European Commission said on Monday. Brussels issued the threat after the US Commerce Department filed a report that empowers President Donald Trump to apply car duties within the next 90 days.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel has labelled as "frightening" the prospect that this report could label European car imports as a national security threat to the United States, enabling the tariffs. The White House has already used the national security argument, saying that undermining the American manufacturing base impairs military readiness, among other claims, to impose steep tariffs on steel and aluminium imports. "Were this report translated into action detrimental to European exports, the European Commission would react in a swift and adequate manner," EU spokesman Margaritis Schinas told a news briefing in Brussels.

The protectionist Trump has threatened 25% duties on European autos, especially targeting Germany, which he says has harmed the American car industry. European officials have said that Brussels has drawn up a list of 20 billion euros (\$22.6 billion) of potential countermeasures, without providing further details.

In 2017 just under half of the 17 million cars sold in the US were imported, most of them produced in Canada and Mexico which are expected to be exempt from any new automobile duties. German automobile groups last year exported 470,000 cars from Germany to the US, according to the VDA manufacturers' federation. EU trade ministers will discuss the talks, as well as the possible countermeasures against the US, at talks in Bucharest on Thursday. AFP

## 7 MPs quit Labour Party citing Brexit 'betrayal', anti-Semitism

London: Seven Labour lawmakers quit on Monday over leader Jeremy Corbyn's approach to Brexit and a row over anti-Semitism, saying Britain's main opposition party had been "hijacked by the machine politics of the hard left". In a direct challenge to Corbyn, the seven centrist MPs said they were courting others from across parliament to join their group, saying "enough is enough" in keeping silent over their doubts about the Labour leader's fitness for office.



Jeremy Corbyn

United by a desire for a second referendum on Britain's decision to leave the European Union, they acknowledged

that their resignations would not change the arithmetic in parliament, where there is as yet no majority for such a vote. But their move underlines the increasing frustration within Labour over Corbyn's reluctance to change his Brexit strategy — the leftist leader and long-time critic of the EU has stuck to his preference for a new election or his plan to leave the bloc. "The Labour party we joined that we campaigned for and believed in is no longer today's Labour Party... it has now been hijacked by the machine politics of the hard left," lawmaker Chris Leslie said. "Evidence of La-

bour's betrayal on Europe is now visible for all to see." The seven lawmakers are Leslie, Luciana Berger, Angela Smith, Gavin Shuker, Chuka Umunna, Mike Gapes and Ann Coffey. They will continue to sit as MPs under the banner "The Independent Group".

Corbyn expressed his disappointment that the group had left, referring in a statement to "Labour policies that inspired millions at the last election" when the opposition party saw its biggest increase in vote share since 1945 to win 262 seats. Some accused Corbyn of failing to tackle anti-Semitism in the party. Corbyn denied the charge, saying he is stamping anti-Semitism out. REUTERS

## 'Unicorn?': Word that stumped a prez candidate

Jakarta: Indonesia's presidential candidates debated some of the most pressing issues facing the world's third-largest democracy: dilapidated infrastructure, struggling farmers, forest fires — and unicorns.

When President Joko Widodo, who is seeking a second term, asked challenger Prabowo Subianto about his policies for supporting unicorns — tech start-up companies worth at least \$1 billion — a look of bafflement passed across the ex-general's face. Wandering aloud, he replied: "What are unicorns? You mean those online things?"

Indonesia has several unicorns and they are transforming areas of the national economy. Social media were awash with memes after the debate. AP

## Maldives' ex-prez arrested in money laundering case

Male: A Maldives court ordered the arrest and detention of former Maldives President Yameen Abdul Gayoom on Monday on charges of money laundering. The criminal court in Male ordered that Yameen be kept in custody after prosecutors argued at a hearing that he could attempt to influence witnesses if he were free.



A criminal court in Male ordered that Yameen be kept in custody after prosecutors said at a hearing that he could attempt to influence witnesses if he were free

Yameen was charged with money laundering for alleged involvement in the embezzlement of Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corp. funds. Police say investigators found \$1 million in Yameen's bank account allegedly linked to a deal to lease public islands for tourism development in the Maldives, an Indian Ocean archipelago famous for its luxury resorts.

President Mohamed Solih also suspended two cabinet ministers — Ahmed Maaloo and Akram Kamaludeen — over \$33,000 allegedly

found in each of their accounts from the same resort development deal. State lawyer Aishath Mohamed said documents showed that Yameen had attempted to influence witnesses and had offered them money to change their statements.

Referring to the statement, Chief Judge Ahmed Hailam ordered Yameen to be kept in detention until the end of the trial. Yameen told the court that he didn't know the people who had testified against him and never gave anyone bribes. He also said he didn't know that \$1 million had been transferred in to his account, and that after he found out he contacted the Anti-Corruption Commission. AP

## China's leaders want more kids, but local officials resist

Beijing: Facing a future demographic crisis and aging society, China's leaders are desperately seeking to persuade couples to have more children. But bureaucrats don't seem to have gotten the message, fining a couple in a recent widely publicised case for having a third child against the strict letter of the law.



AT ODDS: Last month, a couple's bank savings of \$3400 were frozen by population control officials after they failed, after many deadlines, to pay fine — know as 'social maintenance fee' — for the birth of their third child

The move has sparked public outrage as people vent their anger at population control officials who are hungry for revenue and have long persecuted couples for violating the now-scrapped "one-child policy".

"The country is doing all it can to encourage childbirth but the local governments need money, so we end with this sort of madness," a columnist and political commentator who writes under the name Lianpeng said on China's Weibo microblogging service. "The low birthrate has everyone on edge, yet the local governments care only about collecting fees," journalist Jin Wei wrote on her verified Weibo account.

The Wangs, the couple at the heart of the recent controversy, were ordered by local

authorities in Shandong province to pay a fine known as a "social maintenance fee" of 64,626 yuan (\$9,500) immediately after the birth of their third child in January 2017. After various deadlines came and went, the family's entire bank savings of 22,957 yuan (\$3,400) were frozen last month, with the balance still due. "I just don't know what I'm going to do," the husband, Wang Baohua, said. Local bureaucrats in the Wang case said they were just following the law, citing the exact articles and passages. AP

### AROUND THE WORLD

#### Sailor in V-J Day kiss photo dies

The ecstatic sailor shown kissing a woman in Times Square celebrating the end of World War II has died. George Mendonsa was 95. His daughter, Sharon Moller, told The Providence Journal Mendonsa fell and had a seizure on Sunday at the assisted living facility in Middletown, Rhode Island, where he lived with his wife of 70 years. Mendonsa was shown kissing Greta Zimmer Friedman, a dental assistant in a nurse's uniform, on August 14, 1945. Known as V-J Day, it was the day Japan surrendered to the US. The photo by Alfred Eisenstaedt became one of the most famous photographs of the 20th century. It was years before Mendonsa and Friedman were confirmed to be the couple. Friedman died in 2016 at the age of 92.



#### Disneyland kicks out man over pro-Trump banner

A man has been kicked out of California's Disneyland for revealing a Donald Trump 2020 flag, a violation of the park's rules. Dion Cini, a 49-year-old resident of New York, displayed the flag, which read "Re-elect Trump 2020" and "Keep America Great", on Disneyland's Mark Twain Riverboat ride. Cini has become notorious for displaying pro-Trump flags and banners in public locations in a bid to "go viral" and draw attention to President Trump's campaign.

According to its website, Disneyland prohibits "the usage of any flag, banner or sign for commercial purposes, or to incite a crowd." Cini has been permanently banned from all Walt Disney World sites.

#### Body of woman missing for 18 years found in freezer

A body found in a freezer in a Croatian village is apparently that of a woman who went missing more than 18 years ago, Croatian police said on Monday. Police said they have detained the older sister of

Jasmina Dominic, who was reported missing in 2005 but was last seen in 2000 when she was 23 years old. The body was found Saturday in a freezer in the hallway of the Dominic family home in the village of Pavlovec, northeast of Zagreb, a police statement said. Smiljana Srncic, 45, was detained in the case and an autopsy is being conducted, police said. The case has shocked Croatia, with many wondering how it was possible that the family had lived for so long with a body hidden in the house.