

China must prepare for difficult times, says Xi

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REUTERS
BEIJING/WASHINGTON

China must prepare for difficult times as the international situation is increasingly complex, President Xi Jinping said in comments carried by state media on Wednesday, as the U.S.-China trade war took a mounting toll on tech giant Huawei.

The world's two largest economies have escalated tariff increases on each other's imports after talks broke down to resolve their dispute, and the acrimony has intensified since Washington last week blacklisted Chinese telecom equipment company Huawei Technologies.

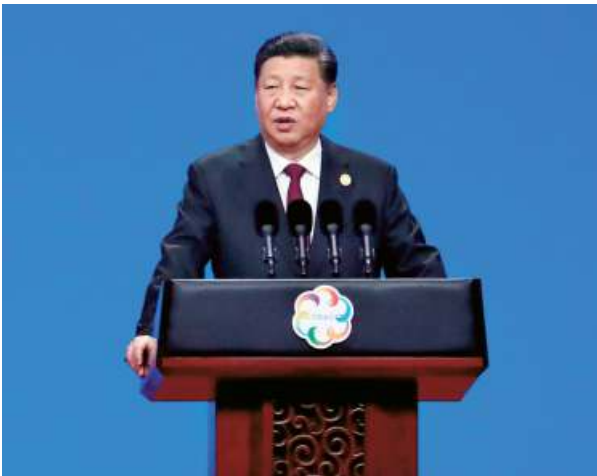
The listing, which curbs Huawei's access to U.S.-made components, is a potentially devastating blow for the company that has rattled technology supply chains

and investors, and saw several mobile carriers on Wednesday delay the launch of new Huawei smartphone handsets.

During a three-day trip this week to the southern province of Jiangxi, a cradle of China's Communist revolution, Mr. Xi urged people to learn the lessons of the hardships of the past.

“Today, on the new Long March, we must overcome various major risks and challenges from home and abroad,” state news agency Xinhua paraphrased Mr. Xi as saying, referring to the 1934-36 trek of Communist Party members fleeing a civil war to a remote rural base, from where they re-grouped and eventually took power in 1949.

“Our country is still in a period of important strategic



Battle-ready: Chinese President Xi Jinping speaking at a conference in Beijing earlier this month. •AP

opportunities for development, but the international situation is increasingly complicated,” he said.

“We must be conscious of the long-term and complex

nature of various unfavourable factors at home and abroad, and appropriately prepare for various difficult situations.”

The report did not elaborate on those difficulties, and did not directly mention the trade war or of the U.S.

No further trade talks between top Chinese and U.S. negotiators have been scheduled since the last round ended on May 10, the same day President Donald Trump increased tariffs on \$200 billion worth of Chinese goods and took steps to levy duties on all remaining Chinese imports.

However, Chinese Ambassador to the U.S. Cui Tiankai, speaking to the Fox News

Channel, said on Tuesday that Beijing was still open for talks.

While China has not said whether or how it may retaliate to the measures against Huawei, state media have taken an increasingly strident and nationalistic tone.

U.S. firms said in a survey released on Wednesday they were facing retaliation in China over the trade war. The American Chamber of Commerce of China and its sister body in Shanghai, said members reported that they faced increased obstacles such as government inspections, slower customs clearances and slower approval for licensing and other applications. It also said that 40.7% of respondents were considering or had relocated manufacturing facilities outside China.

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Accuses them of ‘phony investigations’

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

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The presidential meltdown doomed what had been flagged as a hopeful moment of cross-party cooperation on fixing the country's creaking public infrastructure. The two sides gave completely different versions of what happened.

According to Mr. Trump, he blew up the meeting because Ms. Pelosi had just beforehand accused him of mounting a cover-up of the probe led by special counsel Robert Mueller. Suggesting that Mr. Trump had manufactured the row to avoid having to commit to details on what would be an enormously expensive infrastructure bill, Ms. Pelosi said: “He just took a pass and it just makes me wonder why he did that.”

6 dead after poll riots in Jakarta

Opposition challenges President Joko Widodo's re-election

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
JAKARTA

At least six people were killed as Indonesia's capital erupted in violence on Wednesday when police clashed with protesters opposed to the re-election of President Joko Widodo.

Dozens were arrested and parts of Jakarta were littered with debris and burned-out cars, as the violence triggered security advisories from the U.S. and Australian Embassies.

Authorities also restricted access to some social media in a bid to stop rumours and fake news from spreading online. National police chief Tito Karnavian said six people had died, but denied authorities had fired live rounds on protesters, and



Protesters clashing with police in Jakarta on Wednesday. •AP

called for calm. “Some had gunshot wounds, some had blunt force wounds but we still need to clarify this,” he told reporters. Jakarta's Governor Anies Baswedan said earlier that about 200 had been injured. The violence came after Indonesia's election commission on Tuesday confirmed Mr. Widodo had beaten retired military general Prabowo Subianto for the presidency in a poll held on April 17. Mr. Subianto had said he would challenge the results in court – as he did, unsuccessfully, against Mr. Widodo in 2014 – but also warned his claims of widespread cheating could spark street protests.

That was borne out early Wednesday as protesters set market stalls and cars on fire while hurling fireworks and rocks at security personnel clad in riot gear and holding shields, an AFP reporter on the scene said.

Carriers in U.K., Japan begin to turn away from Huawei

EE, Vodafone to stop offering Huawei phones to 5G customers; chipmaker ARM to cut ties with firm

AMIE TSANG
LONDON

Google's decision to cut off support to Huawei, the Chinese telecommunications giant, is rippling across the globe as companies suspend ties to the handset-maker.

In Britain, where Huawei is one of the most popular cellphone brands, two of country's biggest mobile networks, EE and Vodafone, announced they would stop offering Huawei phones to 5G customers as a result of Google's decision.

In Japan, the three largest cellphone companies also said they were reconsidering plans to sell a new series of Huawei smartphones.

And ARM, a chipmaker

based in Britain, was reportedly suspending its business with Huawei because some of its designs contained technology from the U.S., according to documents seen by the BBC. ARM said on Wednesday that it was “complying with all of the latest regulations set forth by the U.S. government” and declined to comment any further.

The moves follow Google's announcement on Monday that it would cut off support to Huawei for its Android hardware and software services. Google's announcement was a result of a Trump administration order last week that effectively barred American firms from selling components and software to Huawei, ramping up



Just over half of Huawei's revenue comes from China, while 28.4% comes from Europe, West Asia and Africa. •REUTERS

a cold war between the two countries over technology and trade.

EE and Vodafone in Britain both said that they would hold off selling Huawei phones to customers who wanted 5G services un-

til there was more certainty about the situation. EE, a unit of British Telecom and Britain's largest cellphone carrier, will open its 5G network next week, and had planned to offer Huawei phones along with Samsung and

OnePlus handsets for the service.

Huawei responded to actions by EE and Vodafone by saying: “We value our close relationships with our partners, but recognise the pressure some of them are under, as a result of politically motivated decisions.”

The decisions by the British networks indicate that Huawei could feel the effects of the battle with the U.S. in the region that brings it the most revenue outside China. Just over half of Huawei's revenue comes from China, while 28.4% comes from Europe, West Asia and Africa.

Huawei is a small player in Japan, which is dominated by Apple's iPhone and Japanese manufacturers like Sony and Sharp. NY TIMES

ELSEWHERE



Rampahosa re-elected South African President

CAPE TOWN

South African lawmakers on Wednesday re-elected Cyril Ramaphosa as the nation's President, two weeks after the ruling ANC party returned to power in legislative elections. Mr. Ramaphosa was “duly elected President of the Republic of South Africa,” Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng told Parliament after Mr. Ramaphosa was the only name nominated by lawmakers in Cape Town. AFP

UN asks Britain to cede Chagos to Mauritius

UNITED NATIONS

In a stinging defeat for Britain, the UN General Assembly demanded on Wednesday that London cede to Mauritius the Chagos Islands. A total of 116 countries voted in favour of a non-binding resolution that urged Britain to “withdraw its colonial administration” within six months. AFP

Sirisena pardons firebrand Buddhist monk

COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's President Maithripala Sirisena granted an amnesty to a firebrand Buddhist monk on Wednesday, four days after holding talks with him at the country's main prison, officials said. He pardoned Galagodaatte Gnanasara days after releasing 762 other convicts to mark Vesak which commemorates the birth, enlightenment and passing away of the Buddha. AFP

Hong Kong activists get refugee status

HONG KONG

Two former Hong Kong independence activists have been granted refugee status in Germany in what is one of the first cases of dissenters from the semi-autonomous Chinese city receiving such protection. Ray Wong and Alan Li were due to stand trial on riot charges but fled Hong Kong in November 2017. AFP

May urges Parliament to back her reworked deal

But resistance among MPs persists

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

Prime Minister Theresa May on Wednesday implored British MPs to back her reworked EU divorce deal but saw pro-Brexit Conservatives and Opposition parties savage her bid for a compromise to end months of political crisis.

Ms. May urged lawmakers, who have repeatedly rejected her plan, to vote for it in early June so that the country can finally leave the bloc later in the summer. “The opportunity of Brexit is too large and the consequences of failure too grave to risk further delay,” the Prime Minister, who has vowed to stand down following the crunch parliamentary vote, told the House of Commons. “Reject it and all we have before us is division and deadlock.”

Compromise measures

Ms. May outlined a package of “compromise measures” aimed at securing the support of MPs from the main Opposition Labour Party,

which included giving Parliament a vote on holding a referendum on her deal. But Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, who last week pulled out of weeks of cross-party Brexit talks citing the government's unwillingness to compromise, said it was “little more than a repackaged version of her three-times rejected deal”. “The rhetoric may have changed but the deal has not,” he added.

Amid strong opposition from Ms. May's Conservative colleagues to the new move, Ian Blackford, leader of the Scottish National Party in Westminster, said the embattled Prime Minister was “fooling no one but herself”. “Her own party doesn't want her deal... Her time is up.” In a sign of the scale of the apparent internal backlash, Environment Secretary and Brexiteer Michael Gove hinted that the vote in the week of June 3 may not even go ahead. “We will reflect over the course of the next few days on how people look at the proposition,” he told BBC radio.

EU goes to polls

In the European Parliament polls, a total of 427 million European Union (EU) citizens will be eligible to vote between May 23 and May 26 in 28 countries in the world's second largest democratic exercise after India's elections

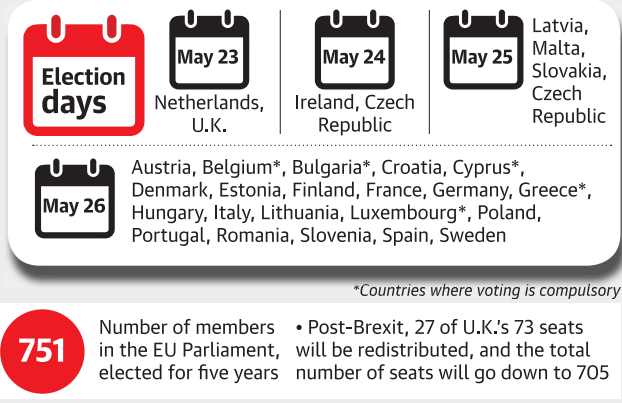
▪ The European Parliament is located in three places – Brussels (Belgium), Luxembourg City (Luxembourg) and Strasbourg (France)

▪ It is the only institution in the EU directly elected by citizens over 18 years of age

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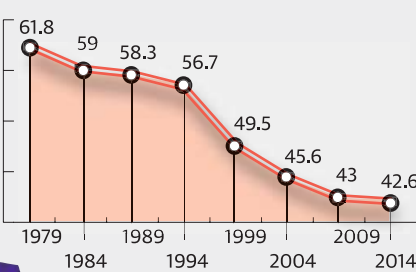
Legislative acts adopted in the 2014-19 Parliament

Source: Europarl.europa.eu



Fall in turnout

Since 1979, when the first such polls were held, there has been a steady reduction in turnout in the elections to the EU Parliament



In a first, Arabic novel wins international Booker

Omani writer Jokha Alharthi shares award with translator Marilyn Booth

ALEX MARSHALL
LONDON

Celestial Bodies, a family saga set against Oman's transition from slave trading centre to oil producer, became on Tuesday the first novel originally written in Arabic to win the Man Booker International Prize.

The book's author, Jokha Alharthi of Oman, shares the award of £50,000 pounds (about \$63,000) with its translator, Marilyn Booth. The prize, given each year to the best book translated into English and published in Britain, is widely seen as the world's most significant award for translated fiction. It is distinct from the



Arabic author Jokha Alharthi and translator Marilyn Booth, who won the Man Booker International Prize, in London. •AFP

more well-known Booker Prize, for fiction originally published in English.

Bettany Hughes, chairwo-

man of the judging panel, called *Celestial Bodies* “a book to win over the head and the heart in equal mea-

sure.” Ms. Alharthi's novel, first published in 2010 as *Ladies of the Moon*, follows an Omani family over three generations, from the 1880s to today. Ms. Alharthi said in an interview published on the Man Booker International Prize's website that Omani authors want foreign readers to look at the country “with an open mind and heart.” “No matter where you are, love, loss, friendship, pain and hope are the same feelings,” she said, “and humanity still has a lot of work to do to believe in this truth.”

Five of the six authors, and all the translators, on this year's shortlist were women. NY TIMES

Biden is a ‘fool of low IQ’, says North Korea

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SEOUL

North Korean state media on Wednesday slammed former U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden as an “imbecile” and a “fool of low IQ” after he criticised leader Kim Jong-un.

It accused Mr. Biden of “slandering the supreme leadership” of North Korea – a term usually referring to Mr. Kim – and said the former Senator had become “reckless and senseless, seized by ambition for power”. “What he uttered is just sophism of an imbecile bereft of elementary quality as a human being, let alone a politician.”

KCNA did not give any further details, but at a rally in Philadelphia on Saturday, Mr. Biden had criticised Donald Trump's approach to the leaders of North Korea and Russia, accusing the President of embracing “tyrants like (Vladimir) Putin and Kim Jong-un”. “He is not worth pinning hope on,” KCNA said, adding that he was “a fool of low IQ”.