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China hopes for further pragmatic cooperation and the uninterrupted development of ties between the two militaries

CHINA'S DEFENSE MINISTER CHANG WANQUAN ON CHINA AND IRAN'S DEFENCE TIES

THUMBNAILS



French President Francois Hollande waits to greet EU Social Democrat leaders before a meeting at the Elysee Palace in Paris on Thursday. AFP

**Torture:** Many Asian and African women working as domestic workers in the United Arab Emirates are being beaten, punched and slapped then, a rights group said on Thursday. AFP

**North Korean warning:** North Korea has issued a fresh warning that planned high-level talks with the South might have to be scrapped because of what it called Seoul's arrogant and provocative behaviour. AFP

**Blast:** A bomb blast at a bus station in a north Nigeria area previously targeted by Boko Haram killed five people, police said on Thursday. The blast shook buildings and sent locals rushing for shelter. AFP

**Mission launch?:** China plans to launch a new lunar mission in the next few days to test technology that is likely to be used in Chang'e-5, a future lunar probe with the ability to return to Earth. PFI

**Meeting:** China's defense minister met on Thursday with Iran's navy commander in the latest sign of warming ties between their two militaries following their first joint naval drills in the Persian Gulf last month. AFP



Queen Elizabeth II bids farewell to Singapore's President Tony Tan Keng Yam and his wife Mary (not pictured) at Buckingham Palace in London at the end of a State Visit on Thursday. AFP

# CPC GUARANTEES HONG KONG'S AUTONOMY

THE PLENUM ALSO PROMISED TO EXPAND THE SCOPE OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF JUDICIARY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Beijing, 23 October

China's ruling Communist Party today vowed autonomy for Hong Kong where pro-democracy protesters have locked horns with the city administration for over a month on the election of next Chief Executive and stop interfering in the judicial process to make it more independent.

The plenum of the Communist Party of China (CPC) comprising of 363 members promised to "guarantee the practise of 'one country, two systems'" in Hong Kong, state-run Xinhua news agency quoted a statement issued at the end of the four day meeting chaired by CPC General Secretary Xi Jinping.

This is the first time that plenum, the highest policy body of the party was held after Xi took over power last year emerging as the most powerful Chinese leader in recent times heading the Party, Presidency and the Army.

The reference to 'one country two systems' in the official statement is as an assurance to the thousands



A woman shouts at pro-democracy protesters (not in picture) as they stand their ground on a barricaded road in the Mongkok district of Hong Kong on 23 October, 2014. AFP

of protesters in Hong Kong that China would keep up with its commitments to ensure the autonomy of the former British Colony which joined the mainland China in 1997.

Thousands of protesters blocked key roads in Hong Kong for over four weeks demanding China to revoke a law to vet candidates to take part in the 2017 polls for its Chief Executive.

The first direct election for the city's Chief Executive is due to be held in 2017.

While promising to implement rule of law stopping

the interference of party functionaries and officials in the functioning of judiciary, the plenum also expelled six senior officials including a top PLA general Yang Jinshan for corruption but remained silent on probe relating to retired party leader, Zhou Youngkang, who is being probed for graft.

It promised to expand the scope of the independence of the judiciary to protect individual rights but only under the Party's leadership.

A communique released after the four-day party

plenum said the legitimate rights of the people should be protected, but added that the rule of law could only be achieved under the party leadership.

Zhou a member of the nine member powerful Standing Committee headed by former President Hu Jintao is the first such high level official to be probed.

He was being probed under the campaign against corruption launched by Xi, who succeeded Hu last year to restore the credibility of the CPC, stating that it was riddled with corruption.

Under the well followed

convention, no investigations would be instituted against top retired officials of the CPC.

But Xi for the first time broke the tradition and ordered a probe against Zhou.

The anti-graft campaign which netted dozens of high level officials also built pressures and resentment with in the CPC.

The omission of Zhou's name is seen as significant in this regard.

Official analysts said that the emphasis on rule of law was to liberate the judicial system from the administrative and party functionaries at provincial and local levels and ensure judges become more independent.

The plenum also called on National People's Congress (NPC), China's Parliament to set up system to examine the legitimacy of major decision-making with a life-long liability for major decisions and a mechanism to backtrack liabilities.

This is the first time a plenary session of the CPC Central Committee has taken rule of law as its central theme, the Xinhua report said.

# New Japan minister hit by S&M bar scandal

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE Tokyo, 23 October



Japan was stung today by its third political scandal in a week after the country's new industry minister whose predecessor resigned in disgrace over mispending - admitted that his underlings had spent office cash at a sex bar.

The new revelations could deal another serious blow to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, whose administration is already facing a public backlash over its bid to turn Japan's shuttered nuclear reactors back on while his plan to revive the economy stalls.

Today, newly appointed industry minister Yoichi Miyazawa, a Harvard graduate and former senior bureaucrat in the finance ministry, distanced himself from the affair, saying he wasn't present at the sex club in the city of Hiroshima.

But he acknowledged that some staff at his political office had billed 18,230 yen (\$170) as entertainment expenses during a visit in September 2010, Jiji Press news agency said.

"I came to know of that through a media report, and it was true," Miyazawa told reporters in Tokyo.

"It is also true that I myself was not there," he added. The venue's shows include women being tied up with ropes and male patrons whipping them, according to blog posts written by club visitors.

It was not immediately clear if Miyazawa - a nephew of late prime minister Kiichi Miyazawa and a cousin of Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida - would step down.

"(Miyazawa) will handle the case properly," said Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga, the government's top spokesman, in the only comment from Abe's ruling Liberal Democratic Party.

On Tuesday, Miyazawa was tapped to replace industry minister Yuko Obuchi, who stepped down over claims she misused political funds, while Justice Minister Midoori Matsushima also quit after days of allegations that she had misused money in what opponents insisted was an attempt to buy votes.



Japan's animation character Doraemon arrives with children on the red carpet for the 27th Tokyo International Film Festival opening ceremony in Tokyo on 23 October, 2014. AFP

# Bloody day in Pak's Quetta leaves 14 dead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Karachi, 23 October

A bloody day in Quetta today left at least 14 people dead and about 50 others injured in a series of attacks, including a suicide bombing targeting Pakistan's top religious leader Maulana Fazlur Rehman who survived the bid on his life.

Rehman was attacked by a suicide bomber outside a rally venue in Quetta, the capital of the restive Balochistan province, as at least two people were killed and 30 others injured.

The blast occurred when the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) chief was leaving after addressing the massive rally where over 20,000 of his supporters had gathered, officials said.

"I was the target of the attack but God saved me. My vehicle was bullet and bomb proof so I survived but the vehicle has been destroyed," Rehman said.

Termining the attack as a suicide bombing, Rehman said, "I don't know who wants to kill me. I am a religious man and chief of a religious party which wants peace in the country".

Banned militant group

Jundallah claimed responsibility for the attack.

Jundallah has in the past also carried out attacks on other politicians and government officials.

According to the bomb disposal squad, six to eight kilograms of explosives were used in the attack.

The injured were shifted to Civil Hospital, where six were said to be in a critical condition.

In a separate incident, at least three people were killed and 14 others injured in a roadside bombing on Qambri Road here, police said.

A vehicle of paramilitary Frontier Corps (FC) was targeted with a remote controlled bomb. Unidentified gunmen opened indiscriminate fire following the blast that hit the FC vehicle.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attack but Baloch nationalists often target security forces in the province.

Before this assault, unidentified gunmen today killed at least nine Shia Muslims, members of the ethnic Hazara community, here. The victims were travelling in a bus when gunmen attacked them in Hazar Ganji area of Quetta.

# TANZANIA TO VOTE ON NEW CONSTITUTION

**Dar Es Salaam, 23 October:** Tanzania will hold a referendum in April 2015 on a new constitution, the government has announced, a move rejected by the opposition, who said today that the constitution drafting process ignored it.

The opposition is angry because the draft constitution makes few major changes to the structure of government, claiming it has therefore rejected its calls for a strengthening of the federal system to limit presidential powers.

"I can confirm April 30 as the date for referendum," Attorney General Frederick Werema said.

Opposition lawmakers led by the Chadema party stormed out during debate on the draft, leaving discussion to the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) party, which has been in power since independence in 1961, and controls two-thirds of the assembly.

"There was no quorum during the drafting process, and we have reports of cheating," Chadema spokesman John Mnyika said. AFP

THE CONGRESS FOCUSED ON THE ROLE & NEED FOR SCIENTISTS TO COMMUNICATE WITH SOCIETY AND POLITICIANS

# Converging to save the planet

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE Copenhagen, 23 October

Government, civil society, business and science need to play by their own strengths, says Adil Najam, Pakistani economist and writer from Boston University, while speaking at the Congress on Sustainability science at Copenhagen on Thursday, the second day of the three-day conclave to decide urgent world reaction to environment degradation.

The Congress is organised by the International Alliance of Research Universities, a regrouping of fifty major universities worldwide and the opening session saw the prime minister of Denmark and the EU Commissioner for Climate Change speaking of the priorities that the EU was about to formalise at Brussels on the next day. The focus of the congress is on the role and need for scientists to communicate with society and politicians and for science, business, society and government



Starting from left Mr David Bakker, Connie Hedegaard, EU Commissioner for Climate Change and Prof. Catherin Richards.

to work together. Peter Bakker, President of World Business Council for Sustainable Development, a group of 204 thinking business conglomerates, said in the opening plenary session that responsible business interests were now acting to promote a economic market for sustainable,

and waste free products. Business is now aware that there could be no business success in a failed society, Bakker said.

WBSCD, under the programme of Action 2020, has set the agenda for business action till 2020 and beyond. Market forces become

effective if the carbon footprint of a product were marked on products, this would allow buyers to choose sustainable production methods - in the way that declaring calorie content has regulated foodstuffs, Bakker said. Businesses could otherwise market sustainable products and could

also use their command of advertising to rapidly change market preferences, Bakker said.

On 23 October, Adim Najam, Boston University economics thinker and writer from Pakistan said that if planet earth were considered as a country, using the standards used by lending agencies or

visa authorities, this would classify county earth as poor, divided, degraded, insecure and misgoverned.

The earth is thus a '3rd world planet' but the solutions to its problems are planned as if it were from the first world, he said.

The images used to speak of climate change



Adil Najam

matically covered the distance from New York to Florida and from Denmark to Spain.

It is not more science that we need, the problem is already well enough known, he said. What we need is to recognize specific impact on large numbers of people, he added.

The failure is one of policy, he said.

The government should not abdicate its role of regulation and business could stick to making profits, which is the heart of the market, he said.

But the world now has the scientific and economic ability to deal with the challenge and govt, business and society need to work as partners, he said.

Over 700 delegates from 56 countries are spending the three days to define priorities which may be used by nations while arriving at international agreements to combat or adapt to climate change, during 2015.