



MOSCOW (RT) – Russia's opponents in the West are pushing everyone towards World War III, ignoring signals from Moscow, Russian Security Council Deputy Chairman Dmitry Medvedev said. "Frankly speaking, it would have definitely been better if they had heard them [the signals]. In any case, the world would not have to face the threat of World War III," Medvedev said in an interview with TASS and RT. "In fact, this is where our opponents are actively pushing everyone," he said, commenting on the idea that Russia's tough response to Georgia's 2008 aggression should have served as a strong signal to the U.S. and its NATO allies of the need to listen to Moscow's concerns.

KHARTOUM (Dispatches) – Sudanese news sources reported an explosion of the fuel tanks of aircraft at Khartoum Airport amid the tensions in the African country. A source in the Sudanese army has announced that the explosion occurred when the weapons warehouse of the rapid reaction forces was targeted by an air strike. The cities of Khartoum and Omdurman in recent days have witnessed a fierce conflict between the army forces and the Sudanese rapid reaction forces. It is said that seven civilians were killed in today's clashes. Since the beginning of the war between the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) on April 15, thousands of people have been killed, and more than 4 million have been displaced, especially in Khartoum and Darfur state.

BAMAKO (AP) – Daesh terrorists have almost doubled the territory they control in Mali in less than a year, and their Al-Qaeda-linked rivals are capitalizing on the deadlock and perceived weakness of armed groups that signed a 2015 peace agreement, United Nations experts said in a new report. The stalled implementation of the peace deal and sustained attacks on communities have offered the Daesh group and Al-Qaeda affiliates a chance "to re-enact the 2012 scenario," they said. "That's when a military coup took place in Mali and terrorists in the north formed Daesh two months later. The extremist terrorists were forced from power in the north with the help of a military operation, but they moved from the arid north to more populated central Mali in 2015 and remain active. The panel of experts said in the report that the impasse in implementing the agreement — especially the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants into society — is empowering an Al-Qaeda-linked group known as JNIM to vie for leadership in northern Mali.

MOSCOW (Reuters) – President Vladimir Putin has ordered Wagner fighters to sign an oath of allegiance to the Russian state after a deadly plane crash believed to have killed Yevgeny Prigozhin, the volatile chief of the mercenary group. Putin signed the decree bringing in the change with immediate effect on Friday after the Kremlin said that Western suggestions that Prigozhin had been killed on his orders were an "absolute lie". The Kremlin declined to definitively confirm his death, citing the need to wait for test results. Russia's aviation authority has said that Prigozhin was on board a private jet which crashed on Wednesday evening northwest of Moscow with no survivors exactly two months after he led a failed military against army chiefs. President Putin sent his condolences to the families of those killed in the crash on Thursday and spoke of Prigozhin in the past tense.

NEW DELHI (AFP) – At least nine people were killed Saturday after a train coach parked in southern India caught fire when a passenger tried to make tea, officials said. The coach, which had been detached from a train, was stationed at the Madurai railway yard in the southern state of Tamil Nadu when the fire broke out before dawn. "It was a single, stationary coach booked by a private tourist operator. Somebody tried to make tea and it caused the fire," Madurai district spokesman Sali Thalapati said. "Nine people have died, three of them are women. Nine others are injured but their injuries are not life-threatening." None of the bodies had been identified so far, he added. Footage showed huge flames leaping out of the windows of the train carriage. Some passengers managed to escape the inferno in time. Local media reports said the passengers had illegally smuggled aboard a gas cylinder which exploded when they tried to use it.

NEW YORK (AFP) – Four astronauts from four countries rocketed toward the International Space Station on Saturday. They are scheduled to reach the orbiting lab in their SpaceX capsule Sunday, replacing four astronauts living up there since March. A NASA astronaut was joined on the pre-dawn liftoff from Kennedy Space Center by fliers from Denmark, Japan and Russia. They clasped one another's gloved hands upon reaching orbit. It was the first U.S. launch where every spacecraft was used by a different country — until now, NASA had always included two or three of its own on its SpaceX taxi flights. A fluke in timing led to the assignments, officials said. "We're a united team with a common mission," NASA's Jasmin Moghbeli radioed from orbit. Moghbeli, a Marine pilot serving as commander, said her crew's makeup demonstrates "what we can do when we work together in harmony." With her on the six-month mission are the European Space Agency's Andreas Mogensen, Japan's Satoshi Furukawa and Russia's Konstantin Borisov.

Seafood Ban Hits Japanese Firms Thousands Rally in Seoul Against Japan's Nuke Wastewater Dumping



Protesters gather in the capital of South Korea to demand that the government take steps to avoid what they fear is a looming disaster from Japan's release of treated radioactive water from the Fukushima nuclear power plant.

SEOUL (Xinhua/Reuters) – Thousands of South Korean fishermen, activists and politicians held a protest rally in central Seoul on Saturday, condemning Japan's dumping of nuclear-contaminated wastewater into the ocean.

The participants shouted "Immediately stop dumping radioactive wastewater into the ocean" and "Japan must store nuclear-contaminated wastewater on its soil," urging the South Korean government to file a lawsuit with the International Tribunal against the Japanese government. The rally came after Japan started discharging the first batch of radioactive wastewater from the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant on Thursday. "Even if fishermen catch blue crabs, merchants do not take them even after their price plunged by more than half. Wholesale marine products markets (in Seoul, Busan and other cities) are seeing business slack," Kim Young-bok, a 63-year-old fisherman from the southwest coastal county of Yeonggwang, said during the rally.

Kim said Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, who was committing crimes against humanity, should immediately stop the wastewater discharge that would bring catastrophe to all humankind around the world. Standing beside his mother, an eight-year-old boy said he could not understand why Japan dumped the wastewater into the ocean shared by other countries, while a 10-year-old girl said she could not go for a swim in the sea due to the marine dumping. "I feel very sorry for South Korean people because Japan, where I was born, dumped radioactive wastewater into the ocean," said Yuji Hosaka, a professor at Sejong University in Seoul. Hosaka urged Tokyo to opt for other approaches, such as storing the wastewater in large water tanks for more than 100 years, which was proposed in 2017 but ignored by the Japanese government.

Russia, China Block U.S. Motion North Korea Defends Satellite Launch as 'Right to Self-Defense'

NEW YORK (Dispatches) – North Korea is exercising its right to self-defense with its latest satellite launch attempt earlier this week, North Korean Ambassador to the United Nations Kim Song has said. During a UN Security Council meeting on Pyongyang's latest satellite launch attempt on Friday Kim said, "Our launch of the reconnaissance satellite is an exercise of the right to self-defense," Sputnik reported. North Korea's goal is to build its self-defense capability, he said, adding that the satellite launch did not cause any harm to the security of its neighboring country.

On Thursday, North Korea's National Aerospace Development Administration (NADA) conducted the second launch of reconnaissance satellite Mallyong-1 aboard the new-type carrier rocket Chollima-1. The attempt, made at the Sohae Satellite Launching Ground in Cholsan County of North Pyongan Province, failed after the rocket booster experienced a problem during its third stage. Pyongyang vowed to try for the third time in October. Meanwhile, the United States ambassador to the United Nations accused China and Russia of blocking

a unified UN Security Council response to North Korea's missile tests. Linda Thomas-Greenfield made the remarks during an emergency Security Council meeting on Friday, after Russia and China blocked a U.S. motion to condemn Pyongyang's attempt to put a military reconnaissance satellite into orbit a day earlier. In May last year, China and Russia vetoed a resolution imposing new sanctions on Pyongyang. The last unified Security Council action on North Korea took place in 2017. Chinese and Russian representatives blamed Washington for North Korea's tests, pointing to ongoing U.S. military drills with South Korea. North Korea, which is under harsh sanctions by the United Nations and the United States for its nuclear and ballistic missile programs, has been seeking to put what would be its first military reconnaissance satellite into orbit, saying it plans a fleet of satellites to monitor moves by American and South Korean troops. North Korea says its objective is to defend the nation against U.S. aggression exemplified in its continuous military drills and deployment of nuclear weapons to the Korean Peninsula.

Sixty Years After King's 'Dream' Speech, Thousands Gather in Washington for Same Cause



People begin gathering at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. for the 60th anniversary of the March on Washington

WASHINGTON (Reuters) – Thousands of Americans on Saturday commemorated the 60th anniversary of the March on Washington, a pivotal event in the 1960s U.S. civil rights movement at which Martin Luther King Jr gave his galvanizing "I have a dream" speech.

The 1963 march brought more than 250,000 people to the nation's capital to push for an end to discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin. Many credit the show of strength with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

This year's rally took place at the Lincoln Memorial, the backdrop to King's

impassioned call for equality, as many speakers warned that much work was yet to be done.

Margaret Huang, the president and CEO of the Southern Poverty Law Center nonprofit civil rights advocacy group, told the crowd that the march 60 years ago opened doors and spurred new tools to fight discrimination.

But new laws throughout the country that "claw away at the right to vote" threaten to erase some of those gains, Huang said. "These campaigns against our ballots, our bodies, our school books, they are all connected. When our right to vote falls, all other civil and human rights can fall too, but we're here

today to say 'not on our watch.'" Speakers decried gun violence against Black people as the crowd chanted "No Justice, No peace."

Ashley Sharpton, an activist with National Action Network and daughter of the Reverend Al Sharpton, said in a speech that Americans need to "turn demonstration into legislation" and cannot allow the sacrifices of ancestors in the fight for equality to have been in vain.

Kimberle Crenshaw, executive director of the African American Policy Forum, said the anniversary occurs at a troubling moment.

"The very history that the march is commemorating is being not only challenged but distorted," Crenshaw said, referring to bans in several states on books and classroom instruction based on so-called critical race theory, which views a legacy of racism as shaping American history.

She called that and other moves such as the removal of an African American Studies course from public schools in Florida and Arkansas a "concerted effort to silence conversation about that history."

Opponents of CRT say it distorts history and is needlessly divisive and upsetting for students.

Speakers at the march include civil rights leaders such as King's son Martin Luther King III, his granddaughter Yolanda Renee King and House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries.

Three Ukrainian Pilots Die in Mid-Air Collision, Russian Base Reportedly Hit

KYIV (Dispatches) – Three Ukrainian pilots have died after two L-39 trainer aircraft collided in mid-air in central Ukraine, the country's air force said in a statement on Saturday.

The loss of three pilots will be a blow to Ukraine, which is about to undertake a huge effort to quickly train up its air crews on Western-donated F-16 fighter jets, up to 61 of which have been pledged to Kyiv.

The crash occurred on Friday over Zhytomyr region, which lies west of Ukraine's capital Kyiv. The air force said one of the pilots killed, using the callsign "Juice", had become well known after giving numerous interviews to international media.

Meanwhile, Ukraine's GUR military intelligence agency said on Friday a Ukrainian drone attack had hit a Russian military base deep inside annexed Crimea, while residents reported casualties, explosions and a road closure.

Early on Friday, Russia reported one of the biggest coordinated Ukrainian airstrikes yet over Russian-controlled territory but said air defense systems had downed all 42 drones hitting their targets.

Ukrainian intelligence officials

said the attack struck Russia's 126th Coastal Defense Brigade based in Pe-revalnoye, a town more than 200 km (120 miles) from Ukraine-controlled territory.

"We confirm that there was a hit," said GUR spokesman Andriy Yusov, according to Ukrainian media outlet Liga.Net.

Moscow annexed Ukraine's Crimea in 2014, declaring it Russian territory. Furthermore, Russian air defence it has repelled a new drone attack on Moscow, the city's mayor said, the latest of several attempts to attack the Russian capital with unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) this week.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said early on Saturday that a drone was destroyed by air defence systems over the Istra district west of Moscow.

Emergency services were at the scene and there have been no initial reports of damage or casualties, Sobyanin said on the Telegram messaging app.

The early morning drone raid on Saturday forced authorities to temporarily shut down all three main airports serving the capital.

"U.S. to Reduce Military Aid"
The U.S. is unlikely to give Ukraine

"anywhere near the same level" of military aid in 2024 compared to this year, the Wall Street Journal has reported, citing officials in Washington. Meanwhile, President Joe Biden and his administration insist that they will continue to back Kiev to the hilt.

The U.S. has supplied more than \$43 billion worth of arms to Ukraine since Russia's military operation began last year, while leaked Pentagon documents indicate that NATO countries trained and equipped nine Ukrainian brigades to take part in the ongoing war against Russian forces.

With the Ukrainian military failing to penetrate Russia's defensive lines after nearly three months of fighting, American military planners are advising their Ukrainian counterparts to stick to their NATO training and use what they've been given more effectively, the Wall Street Journal reported.

Washington's continued bankrolling of the Ukrainian military is a matter of political contention in the U.S. While almost all Democratic members of Congress back Biden's policy of arming Kiev "for as long as it takes", a group of more than two dozen Republicans are vehemently opposed.

Multiple Wildfires Continue to Burn Across Greece, Canada

ATHENS (AP/Reuters) – Fire department officials in Greece arrested two men Saturday for allegedly starting wildfires on purpose, while hundreds of firefighters battled blazes that have killed at least 21 people in the past week.

One man was arrested on the Greek island of Evia for allegedly setting fire to dried grass in the Karystos area. The fire department said the man confessed to having set four other fires in the area in July and August.

A second man arrested in the Larissa area of central Greece also was accused of intentionally setting fire to dried vegetation.

Officials have said blamed arson for several fires in Greece over the past week, although it was unclear what sparked the country's largest blazes, including one in the northeastern region of Evros, where nearly all the fire-attributed deaths occurred, and another on the fringes of Athens.

"Some ... arsonists are setting fires, endangering lives, property and above all human lives," Climate Crisis and Civil Protection Minister Vassilis Kikilias said Thursday. "What is happening is not just unacceptable, but despicable and criminal."

The minister said nine fires were set in the space of four hours Thursday morning



A Greek firefighter battles a forest fire spreading in Dikella near Alexandroupoli, northern Greece.

in the Avlona area in the northern foothills of Mount Parnitha, a mountain on the northwestern fringes of Athens that is one of the country's largest green areas.

A major fire was already burning on the southern side of the mountain at the time, and it continued to burn Saturday.

"You are committing a crime against the country," Kikilias said. "We will find you. You will be held accountable to justice."

Wildfires in Canada's Northwest Territories on Friday forced the evacuation of the entire town of Hay River, a community of about 4,000 people on the Great Slave Lake, authorities said.

The government of the Northwest Territories ordered everyone in town, including essential workers, to go to the Hay River Merlyn Carter Airport and await further instructions.