

Kremlin: EU Trying to Derail Putin-Trump Summit



President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin

MOSCOW (Dispatches) - **The EU is doing everything in its power to undermine the upcoming summit between Russian President Vladimir Putin and his U.S. counterpart, Donald Trump, the Russian Foreign Ministry has said.**

Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on Monday that the bloc is carrying out “active subversive actions” ahead of the planned meeting in the Hungarian capital, Budapest.

Her comments followed a report by Spanish outlet El Pais, which said Brussels viewed the talks as “a political nightmare.” Citing diplomatic sources, the newspaper reported that the summit put the EU “in an awkward and unpleasant position” because Putin and Trump would discuss

a potential settlement to the Ukraine conflict in an EU country without the bloc’s participation.

Zakharova said the “aggressive Western European community” wants to “derail any peaceful aspirations” related to the conflict. “We are seeing statements, threats being made,” she added.

The Western Europeans are “obviously, doing everything to escalate the conflict” between Moscow and Kiev, the spokeswoman stressed. They have been acting this way since 2022 when they “thwarted” the peace talks between the sides in Istanbul, she added.

According to former Ukrainian head negotiator David Arakhamia, Ukraine withdrew from dialogue with Russia after then-British prime minister Bo-

ris Johnson arrived in Kyiv and urged Vladimir Zelensky to keep fighting. The former UK prime minister has denied the claims.

Zakharova said sporadic statements about the need for peace coming from EU capitals and London are just “camouflage.”

“In reality, they are doing everything they can to achieve escalation. It is difficult to say if they actually understand what they are doing, given how many non-professionals there are at the helms of all these Western European countries,” she noted.

The announcement that Putin and Trump plan to meet in Budapest was made after the two leaders spoke by phone for nearly two and a half hours on Thursday.

According to Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov, the venue was proposed by Trump, with Putin “instantly supporting” the idea. The summit could take place within the next two weeks or slightly later, Peskov said.

Meanwhile, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky stated that he would be ready to join Russian President Vladimir Putin and his U.S. counterpart Donald Trump at their coming summit in Hungary if he is invited.

“If I am invited to Budapest, if it is an invitation in a format where we meet as three, or as it’s called, shuttle diplomacy, President Trump meets with Putin and President Trump meets with me, then in one format or another, we will agree,” Zelensky told reporters in remarks released Monday.

European Union to Phase Out Russian Gas Imports by End of 2027



BRUSSELS (AFP) - **EU countries on Monday agreed to phase out their remaining gas imports from Russia by the end of 2027, breaking a dependency the bloc has struggled to end despite Moscow’s war on Ukraine.**

Energy ministers meeting in Luxembourg approved a plan by the European Commission to phase out both pipeline gas and liquefied natural gas (LNG) imports from Russia, subject to approval by the bloc’s parliament.

Lars Aagaard, energy minister of Denmark, which holds the European Union’s rotating presidency, called it a “crucial” step to make Europe energy independent.

plan is part of a broader EU strategy to wean the bloc off Russian energy supplies.

“Although we have worked hard and pushed to get Russian gas and oil out of Europe in recent years, we are not there yet,” Aagaard said.

The commission is in parallel pushing for LNG imports to be phased out one year earlier, by January 2027, as part of a new package of sanctions aimed at sapping Moscow’s war chest.

But sanctions need unanimous approval from the EU’s 27 nations, which has at times been hard to reach.

Trade restrictions like those approved Monday instead require the backing of a weighted majority of 15 countries.

All but Hungary and Slovakia, which are diplomatically closer to the Kremlin and still import Russian gas via pipeline, supported the latest move, according to diplomats.

“The real impact of this regulation is that our safe supply of energy in Hungary is going to be killed,” Budapest’s top diplomat, Peter Szijarto, told reporters.

His government says the landlocked country needs to import gas from Russia due to geographical constraints.

Under the proposal approved Monday, which is expected to win the support of the European Parliament, Russian gas imports under new contracts will be banned as of January 1, 2026.

Existing contracts will benefit from a transition period, with inflows under short-term contracts allowed until June 17 next year and those under long-term contracts until January 1, 2028.

Although gas imports from Russia via pipeline have fallen sharply, several European countries have increased their purchases of Russian (LNG) transported by sea.

Russian gas still accounts for an estimated 13 percent of EU imports in 2025, worth over 15 billion euros annually, according to Brussels

A Ukrainian drone attack on Russia’s Orenburg gas plant has forced neighboring Kazakhstan to reduce production at its Karachaganak oil and gas condensate field by 25% to 30%, two industry sources told Reuters on Monday.

One of the world’s largest gas processing plants, Orenburg was forced to suspend its intake of gas from Kazakhstan after the attack, Kazakhstan’s energy ministry said on Sunday.

Indonesian Students Stage Protest as Prabowo Marks a Year in Office

JAKARTA (Reuters) - **Indonesian students protested in Jakarta on Monday as President Prabowo Subianto completed a year in office, two months after violent demonstrations nationwide, with one expert faulting the government on grounds of openness and public participation.**

About 300 students clad in yellow and blue jackets gathered near the presidential palace while Prabowo’s cabinet met, far fewer than the numbers in August’s student-led protests against government policies and lawmaker perks that spread country-wide.

“Free meals program equals poison,” read a banner carried by students demanding an end to Prabowo’s flagship school meals campaign for millions of students and pregnant women, but which instead gave thousands of students food poisoning.

“There are still problems that have

not been tackled, although the process has started,” said Maulana Sai, a 25-year-old student of Jayabaya University, who called for reforms to government policies, including the meals program.

The August protests snowballed after a police vehicle hit and killed a delivery driver, driving up the death toll to present Prabowo with his biggest challenge since his landslide election last year.

A coalition of student groups popularly called BEM SI published a poster of Monday’s protest on Instagram, accompanied by hashtags #1YearIsEnough and #1YearOfContinuosProblems.

Prabowo’s first year was marred by a lack of public participation in his policies, said Wasisto Raharjo Jati, a politics researcher at Indonesia’s National Research and Innovation Agency.

“Generally, Prabowo’s government

experienced some turbulence in the first year, especially with regards to a lack of openness and participation,” he said, citing the meals program.

In a wide-ranging speech to his cabinet, Prabowo defended the free meals program on Monday, while pledging better education and medical care.

To fund his programs, which also include free health check-ups and schools for poorer Indonesians, Prabowo has cut government spending or diverted money from other areas, such as education.

The former special forces commander has expanded the role of the military, putting soldiers to work on the meals program and agriculture projects.

Prabowo has promised to lift economic growth to 8% during a five-year term that runs until 2029. He has launched multiple stimulus packages to spark activity.

Louvre Robbery ‘Humiliation’ for France – Politician



People stand near the glass Pyramid of the Louvre Museum as remains closed in Paris, France, October 20, 2025.

PARIS (Dispatches) - **The robbery that took place at the iconic Louvre Museum on Sunday is an “intolerable humiliation” for France, president of the right-wing National Rally party Jordan Bardella has said.**

The heist took place at around 9:30 a.m. local time, when a group of masked intruders used a truck-mounted basket lift to reach a window on a facade of the museum, officials said. The gang entered the Apollon Gallery and escaped on motorbikes within four to seven minutes, leaving one item – reportedly the crown of Empress Eugenie – damaged and found outside.

“The Louvre is a global symbol of our culture. This heist, which allowed thieves to steal the Crown Jewels of France, is an intolerable humiliation for our country,” Bardella, who’s also a member of the European Parliament, wrote on X. “How far will the decay of the state go?” he added.

Veteran right-wing politician Marine Le Pen, who leads the National Rally’s parliamentary group in the French National Assembly, described in a post on X the theft as yet another “ordeal” for France and a wound to the nation’s “soul,” while wishing the security forces courage in recovering the jewels.

Earlier on Sunday, Interior Minister Laurent Nuñez described the robbery as a “very professional” operation,

emphasizing that the stolen items have “inestimable heritage value.” Culture Minister Rachida Dati said no injuries were reported and that investigators are reviewing CCTV footage, the equipment used for the break-in, and interviewing staff.

The Apollon Gallery has housed what remains of the French Crown Jewels since the late 19th century, including items formerly belonging to Napoleon’s family and Empress Eugenie.

On Monday, France will review the protection of cultural sites across the country and beef up security if needed.

The break-in raised awkward questions about security at the museum, which is home to art works such as the Mona Lisa and which welcomed 8.7 million visitors in 2024.

Justice Minister Gerard Darmanin said the theft had cast France in a “deplorable” light. Opposition politicians criticized the government for what they branded a national humiliation at a time when the country is already hit by a deep political crisis.

The probe has been entrusted to a specialist police unit that has a high success rate in cracking high-profile robberies, Interior Minister Laurent Nunez said on Sunday.

Meanwhile the museum, which had been expected to reopen on Monday, remained closed.

South Korea Seeks to Become 4th-Largest Global Defense Power, President Lee Says



South Korean Air Force’s Black Eagles demonstration team performs during the Seoul International Aerospace & Defense Exhibition (ADEX) 2025 at the Seoul airport in Seongnam, South Korea, on Oct. 17, 2025. (AP)

SEOUL (Reuters) - South Korean President Lee Jae Myung said on Monday the country will devote a “larger-than-expected budget” in defense and aerospace research until 2030 as it seeks to build the world’s fourth-largest defense industry.

Lee was speaking at South Korea’s largest-ever arms fair, the Seoul International Aerospace & Defense Exhibition (ADEX) 2025, where firms showed off new unmanned and artificial intelligence-enhanced weapons from howitzers to suicide drones in pursuit of more global defense sales.

South Korea ranked 10th in arms sales as of 2023, according to data from Stockholm International Peace Research Institute’s (SIPRI) top 100 arms companies database.

“Being one of the top four powerhouses in the defense industry is by no means an impossible dream,” Lee said.

“We will establish technological sovereignty by focusing investment on the development of technologies, parts, and materials that must be secured independently, such as special semiconductors in the defense sec-

tor.”

To its overseas defense partners, South Korea pledges to share not only its weapons systems but also “the technology and experience of building an industrial foundation,” Lee added.

Arms have become one of South Korea’s fastest-growing exports, especially since Russia-Ukraine war, inking multibillion-dollar deals selling everything from howitzers and ammunition to missiles and warships around the world.

Government and military officials from countries and organizations such as Romania, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, NATO, the U.S., Canada and Australia are visiting on the occasion of the arms fair, South Korea’s defense ministry said in a briefing on Monday.

South Korea’s Presidential Chief of Staff Kang Hoon-sik is visiting Europe this week as a special envoy to bolster defense industry cooperation, but the presidential office has declined to give the list of countries. However, on Monday it said Kang is not visiting Ukraine.

News in Brief

HONG KONG (Reuters) - A cargo aircraft skidded off a Hong Kong runway and collided with a security patrol car before both fell into the sea early Monday, killing the two people in the car, authorities said. The plane’s four crew members were unhurt. The Boeing 747, flown by Turkey-based ACT Airlines, was landing at Hong Kong International Airport around 3:50 a.m. on arrival from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The aircraft was being operated under lease by Emirates, a long-haul carrier based in Dubai. The captains did not seek help before landing and had taxied about halfway down the runway before skidding off it to the left, Steven Yiu, the airport authority’s executive director in airport operations, said during a press conference.

SYDNEY (Reuters) - Australia on Monday rebuked Beijing for “unsafe” military conduct, accusing a Chinese warplane of dropping flares near an Australian surveillance plane over the South China Sea. The Australian Poseidon was flying a surveillance patrol over the South China Sea on Sunday when it was approached by a Chinese fighter jet, Australia’s defense department said. The Chinese jet released flares in “close proximity” to the Australian aircraft, the defense department added, endangering the crew onboard. It was the latest in a string of episodes between China and Australia in the increasingly contested airspace and shipping lanes of Asia.

NEW DELHI (AFP) - India’s capital New Delhi was shrouded in a thick, toxic haze on Monday as air pollution levels soared to more than 16 times the World Health Organization’s recommended daily maximum. New Delhi and its sprawling metropolitan region — home to more than 30 million people — are regularly ranked among the world’s most polluted capitals, with acrid smog blanketing the skyline each winter. Cooler air traps pollutants close to the ground, creating a deadly mix of emissions from crop burning, factories and heavy traffic. But pollution has also spiked due to days of fireworks set off to mark Diwali, the major Hindu festival of lights, which culminates on Monday night.

ABUJA (Reuters) - The Nigerian police have fired tear gas to disperse protesters who had gathered in the capital, Abuja, over the continued detention of separatist leader Nnamdi Kanu. The protesters, led by activist and publisher of the Sahara Reporters news site, Omoeye Sowore, want the immediate release of Kanu, who is on trial on terrorism charges and heads the outlawed Indigenous People of Biafra (Ipob). Kanu, who has been in detention since 2021, has denied the charges. He also holds British nationality. Ipob is seeking independence for what they call the Biafran nation in south-eastern Nigeria. Eyewitnesses said police officers fired multiple rounds of tear gas at people who had begun to gather as early as 07:00. The police also blocked major roads in the capital, causing heavy gridlock and confusion across several parts of the city.

BERLIN (Reuters) - German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius intends to order an additional 15 F-35 fighter jets from U.S. manufacturer Lockheed Martin, a parliamentary source told Reuters on Monday, confirming a report by Spiegel magazine. Planners expect the aircraft to cost about 2.5 billion euros (\$2.9 billion), according to confidential documents prepared for parliament’s budget committee, the source said. Make sense of the latest ESG trends affecting companies and governments with the Another source familiar with the matter confirmed the discussions to buy additional aircraft, without citing a number. The defense ministry in Berlin declined to comment. Germany has already ordered 35 of the U.S.-made jets to replace its fleet of 85 ageing Tornado fighter jets, which are set to be decommissioned.

LA PAZ, Bolivia (AP) — Rodrigo Paz, a centrist senator, will be Bolivia’s next president, preliminary results showed on Monday, paving the way for a major political transformation after almost 20 years of rule by the Movement Toward Socialism party and during the nation’s worst economic crisis in decades. “The trend is irreversible,” Oscar Hassenteufel, the president of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, said of Paz’s lead over his rival, former right-wing President Jorge “Tuto” Quiroga. Paz won 54.5% of the votes, early results showed, versus Quiroga’s 45.5%. Paz and his popular running mate, ex-police Capt. Edman Lara, galvanized working-class and rural voters outraged over record inflation and an acute dollar shortage that has sapped food and fuel supplies.