

Headlines:

- **European Powers under American Pressure to Sanction Iran**
- **America still demanding more of Pakistan**
- **Xi continues to Strengthen his Leadership of China**

Details:

European Powers under American Pressure to Sanction Iran

Europe continues to come under pressure from America over sanctions on Iran. According to Reuters:

Britain, France and Germany have proposed fresh EU sanctions on Iran over its ballistic missiles and its role in Syria's war, according to a confidential document, in a bid to persuade Washington to preserve the 2015 nuclear deal with Tehran.

The joint paper, seen by Reuters, was sent to European Union capitals on Friday, said two people familiar with the matter, to sound out support for such sanctions as they would need the support of all 28 EU member governments.

The proposal is part of an EU strategy to save the accord signed by world powers that curbs Tehran's ability to develop nuclear weapons, namely by showing U.S. President Donald Trump that there are other ways to counter Iranian power abroad.

Trump delivered an ultimatum to the European signatories on Jan. 12. It said they must agree to "fix the terrible flaws of the Iran nuclear deal" - which was sealed under his predecessor Barack Obama - or he would refuse to extend U.S. sanctions relief on Iran. U.S. sanctions will resume unless Trump issues fresh "waivers" to suspend them on May 12.

"We will therefore be circulating in the coming days a list of persons and entities that we believe should be targeted in view of their publicly demonstrated roles," the document said, referring to Iranian ballistic missile tests and Tehran's role in backing Syria's government in the seven-year-old civil war.

These events are a good lesson for all present Muslim rulers, who rush to seek favour with America and Western powers. It was America that had led efforts to bring a degree of normalisation to relationships with Iran, simply because America needed Iranian participation in Iraq and Syria. However, now that Iran's role is coming to an end there, America has switched its attentions to the Saudi regime and is pushing back against Iran's growing regional role. There is nothing to gain from cooperation with Western regimes against the interests of Muslims. They have no loyalty to anything but their own interests. And Muslim leaders courting them are also courting disaster in both this world as well as the hereafter.

Europe's present predicament is also evidence of European weakness, particularly because of its dependence on energy sources outside its region. The European powers rushed to join America in negotiating with Iran because of Iran's vast oil potential. True economic strength comes not simply from economic output but from access to and control over economic inputs, most significant of which is natural resources. Allah has blessed Muslims with abundant natural resources and energy supplies, so why then do our leaders seek the patronage of the Western foreign disbeliever?

America still demanding more of Pakistan

Despite Pakistan's extensive cooperation with America in its invasion and occupation of Afghanistan, Pakistan is still being asked to do much more. According to a Reuters report:

The United States has not yet seen Pakistan take significant steps to clamp down on the Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani network militant groups, a senior U.S. administration official said on Friday.

The administration suspended about \$2 billion in security assistance to Pakistan in January but Islamabad has failed to take "the kind of decisive and irreversible action" Washington has asked for to help with the war in Afghanistan, the official told reporters.

The administration has been frustrated by what it sees as Pakistan's reluctance to act against the Afghan Taliban and the affiliated Haqqani network. Washington believes the groups use Pakistan as a safe haven for launching attacks on neighboring Afghanistan. Pakistan denies helping the militants.

The United States has been at war in Afghanistan since 2001, making it America's longest military conflict. President Donald Trump agreed in August to a stepped-up military campaign against the Taliban, and has since increased pressure on Pakistan to help.

U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis on Tuesday said he has seen some positive signs from Islamabad, including Pakistani military operations along the border - and the senior administration official agreed.

"I think the Pakistanis have wanted to appear responsive to our requests," the senior administration official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"What I would say is, they have done the bare minimum to appear responsive to our requests," the official said, saying more proactive steps were needed.

The Pakistani leadership knows full well that fulfilling America's demands is a suicidal prospect that will result in lasting damage to not only Afghanistan but also Pakistan, deeply compromising Pakistan's security in the face of ongoing challenges from the Indian military and intelligence establishment. But Pakistan is deeply mistaken in thinking that it can somehow continue to service its relationship with America while also preserving its own interests. America is struggling to maintain its fragile hold on Afghanistan and its desperation and arrogance are resulting in its continued lashing out at Pakistan; America cannot be pacified any longer with minimal steps from Pakistan.

It is necessary that the Pakistani ruling class make a clear decision as to whether they wish to continue with their subservience to America or whether they are ready to stand for their own real interests and those of the people of Pakistan. And it is necessary that the Muslim Ummah takes responsibility for its own affairs and ejects leaders that betray it and its noble Deen.

Xi continues to Strengthen his Leadership of China

According to the *New York Times*:

Xi Jinping started his second term as China's president on Saturday, flanked by a new vice president, Wang Qishan, who even without any other titles to his name is shaping up as a potent deputy to Mr. Xi, with a potentially powerful say in grappling with the Trump administration over trade disputes.

The article further explains:

"Wang Qishan is one of the most important figures in Xi's inner circle, and this position allows him to retain a formal position," said Wu Qiang, a former lecturer in political science at Tsinghua University in Beijing who now works as an independent researcher.

"Even in the United States, the vice president is usually ceremonial, there just as backup," Mr. Wu said. "But Wang Qishan will add substance to the role of vice president. The amendment of the Constitution has raised the status of the presidency, and the vice presidency will also benefit from that."

Despite Western media reports, the strengthening of Xi has been collectively decided by the Chinese ruling elite and is not simply a personal coup by Xi Jinping. This strengthening was necessary because of numerous internal and external problems faced by China in recent years, not least the formidable challenge presented by America.

In fact, strong individual rule is not only essential to developing cohesive policies and ensuring speedy implementation, it is also the most transparent method of running government because the actions of the individual are on continuous public display for everyone to witness. The Islamic ruling system, by entrusting the Khalifah (Caliph) alone with the entire mandatory powers of the state, achieves the most transparent form of government possible, making the Khalifah personally accountable to the state citizenship for any and every failing of the state. This is in contrast to the Communist's conception of 'collective leadership' and the West's theory of 'separation of powers' and their portrayal of one-man rule as being 'dictatorial', despite knowing that one who is bound by a strong legal framework can never be dictatorial.

With Allah's permission, the Islamic ruling system will soon be re-established in the form of the righteous Islamic Khilafah (Caliphate) State on the method of the Prophet (saw) that will implement Islam, sincerely care for the affairs of Muslims as well as the non-Muslim citizens it is entrusted with, and carry the light of Islam to the entire world.