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World powers 'seriously concerned' over Iranian violations of nuclear deal

February 27, 2020 Arutz Sheva 7 reported: "The world powers that remain party to the nuclear deal with Iran on Wednesday expressed 'serious concerns' Wednesday about Tehran's violations of the pact, while acknowledging that time was running out to find a way to salvage it, *The Associated Press* reported.

Wang Qun, Chinese ambassador to the United Nations in Vienna, told reporters after talks in Vienna between the parties to the deal, including Iran, that they are 'racing against time to work out a specific solution so as to safeguard' the 2015 agreement. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, as the deal is known, promises Iran economic incentives in return for curbs on its nuclear program, with the goal of preventing Iran from developing a bomb.

However, Iran has gradually scaled back its compliance with the 2015 deal in response to US President Donald Trump's withdrawal from the agreement in May of 2018. In one of the moves, the Islamic Republic restarted uranium enrichment at the underground Fordow facility in violation of the deal.

Britain, France and Germany have attempted to save the agreement, but recently triggered the dispute mechanism in the nuclear deal that could eventually lead to reimposing UN sanctions on Iran..."

Coronavirus May Explode in U.S. Overnight Just Like in Italy

February 27, 2020 thedailybeast.com reported: "Sooner or later, it's virtually bound to happen. Though novel 2019 coronavirus cases in the United States have so far ticked up in fits and starts, experts on deadly diseases say Americans should be prepared to see an overnight boom in cases that mirror the skyrocketing outbreaks in Italy and South Korea.

At last count from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there were 60 confirmed novel 2019 coronavirus cases in the U.S. One of those cases—in northern California—marked the first case of unknown origin, as *The Washington Post* first reported Wednesday. Fourteen patients came through the American health system after traveling to China or having close contact with someone who had. The rest were either repatriated individuals who fled the vicinity of the virus's origin in China on State Department-chartered planes or else were rescued from the disastrous Diamond Princess cruise ship outbreak.

Nancy Messonnier, director of the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases at the CDC, acknowledged Tuesday that community spread—when cases are detected in an area but the source of the infection is not known—was very likely to cause more infections in the United States...

In Italy, officials have not been able to trace the origin of infections, which skyrocketed from just four on Friday to more than 528 by Thursday, killing at least 14 people. While each country faces its own health and containment challenges, experts say, there is little reason to believe the United States won't soon face a similar coronavirus surge, even as President Trump on Wednesday urged calm and put Vice President Mike Pence in charge of the disease's containment..."

'If rockets do not stop we will launch major campaign'

February 26, 2020 Arutz Sheva 7 reported: "Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu held a security consultation Monday afternoon with the heads of the Shin Bet and the National Security Council at a secure facility in central Israel in response to the continuing rocket fire from Gaza.

Defense Minister Naftali Bennett and IDF Chief of Staff Aviv Kochavi also participated in the meeting through a conference call from the Kirya in Tel Aviv. During the meeting, the prime minister directed that the military response to the rocket fire in Gaza continue. Several red alert sirens have been activated in southern Israel over the last hour, including near Ashkelon. No casualties have been reported so far.

Earlier, Netanyahu toured the city of Ariel, saying: 'We attacked both Gaza and Syria last night. I do not intend to let go of this. If they do not stop the fire completely, and I do not mean a day, two days, but at all, if there is no complete break – we will have to initiate the broad and powerful campaign we have prepared.'

'These are not mere words. There are new, surprising things about them that were neither in Cast Lead, nor in the Pillar of Defense nor in Protective Edge, and everyone in the Cabinet knows exactly what we are talking about. The campaign, which could become a war, is a last resort..."

Xi says China facing 'big test' with virus, global impact spreads

February 26, 2020 SinoDaily.com reported: "China's leader said Sunday the new coronavirus epidemic is the communist country's largest-ever public health emergency, but other nations were also increasingly under pressure from the deadly outbreak's relentless global march.

Italy and Iran began introducing the sort of containment measures previously seen only in China, which has put tens of millions of people under lockdown in Hubei province, the outbreak's epicentre.



Italy reported a third death while cases spiked and the country's Venice carnival closed early. Iran's confirmed death toll rose to eight, prompting travel bans from neighbouring countries. The virus has so far killed more than 2,400 people, with about 80,000 infected globally, though China remains by far the worst hit..."

Foreign minister condemns Sanders' 'shocking' comment on US embassy

February 26, 2020 timesofisrael.com reported: "Foreign Minister Israel Katz on Wednesday slammed US Democratic front-runner Bernie Sanders for his 'shocking' remark at Tuesday's party debate that, if elected president, he would consider moving the US embassy from Jerusalem back to Tel Aviv.

Moderator Major Garrett first asked Sanders about his recent criticism of pro-Israel lobbying group AIPAC. He asked, 'What would you say to American Jews who might be concerned you're not, from their perspective, supportive enough of Israel, and specifically, would you move the US embassy back to Tel Aviv?'

'The answer is it's something we would take into consideration,' Sanders said..."

Virus pushes beyond Asia, taking aim at Europe, Mideast

February 24, 2020 apnews.com reported: The new virus took aim at a broadening swath of the globe Monday, with officials in Europe and the Middle East scrambling to limit the spread of an outbreak that showed signs of stabilizing at its Chinese epicenter but posed new threats far beyond.

In Italy, authorities set up roadblocks, called off soccer matches and shuttered sites including the famed La Scala opera house. In Iran, the government said 12 people had died nationwide, while five neighboring countries — Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman and Afghanistan — reported their first cases of the virus, with all those infected having links to Iran.

Across the world, stock markets and futures dipped on fears of a global slowdown due to the virus spread, with the Dow down more than 900 points during midday trading. The number of people sickened by the coronavirus topped 79,000 globally, and wherever it sprung up, officials rushed to try to contain it.

"The past few weeks has demonstrated just how quickly a new virus can spread around the world and cause widespread fear and disruption," said the head of the World Health Organization, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. "... (New virus reaches 35 countries)

Netanyahu threatens war as sirens continue to wail in southern Israel

February 24, 2020 jpost.com reported: "The IDF struck multiple targets belonging to the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) on Monday after over 15 rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip towards southern Israel in second day of violence with the Iranian-backed terror group... While the military struck only PIJ targets, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu threatened to target Hamas if the ruling group couldn't stop the rocket fire.

'If you don't shoot them, we will shoot you. I'm talking about a war,' he said on *Army Radio*. 'I only go to war as a last option but we have prepared something you can't even imagine.'

His interview was interrupted by fresh sirens warning of incoming rockets.

Following the rockets Netanyahu spoke with Sderot Mayor Alon Davidi and Ashkelon Mayor Tomer Glam, updating them on the security situation. Netanyahu also held a telephone security consultation with the heads of the security establishment. The prime minister pointed to the attacks carried out by the IDF yesterday in Gaza and Syria, stressing that 'many terrorists' were killed and terrorist infrastructure was struck. 'We will act today as well,' said Netanyahu.

'Hamas and the PIJ need to understand, this will not continue as it is,' he stressed. 'If they don't stop the rocket fire completely, and I don't mean for a day or two days, but completely, if there isn't a complete end — we will be forced to activate the plan for a wide scale operation that we've prepared.'..."

Turkey says might receive US missiles over Syria threat

February 21, 2020 spacewar.com reported: "Turkey said Thursday it wanted no 'face-off' with Moscow over Syria's offensive near the two countries' border but said it might receive US defence missiles to protect Turkish forces.

Tensions have mounted in the last three months between rebel-backer Turkey and Syria ally Moscow over President Bashar al-Assad's offensive in northwest Idlib, the last-rebel held region.

Earlier this month, 14 Turks were killed in two separate incidents of regime shelling in Idlib. Two more were killed on Thursday.

'We have no intentions of a face-off with Russia,' Turkey's defence minister Hulusi Akar told *CNN Turk* broadcaster, adding talks would continue with Russian officials. One of the issues being discussed is the airspace above Idlib and Turkey's expectations for Russia not to get involved, Akar said..."



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