



PROPHETIC TIMES

January 1998

The Weekly Reader of World News

June 8, 2024

European Parliament elections 2024: How far right will the E.U. shift?

June 6, 2024 msn.com reported: “The European Union is shifting to the political right. The question this week is how far — and what that will mean for Europe and the world.

From Thursday to Sunday, roughly 350 million E.U. citizens are eligible to vote in European Parliament elections. Polls suggest that various far-right parties could win the largest share of seats they’ve ever held in the E.U.’s legislative body, potentially surpassing the traditional center-right group in numbers.

The outcome of these once-every-five-years elections will influence European policymaking in the years ahead. And although protests votes always feature prominently in these elections, party gains and losses may offer a glimpse of Western voter sentiment ahead of national elections, including in the United States in November. From Thursday through Sunday, the 27 countries of the E.U. will participate in the world’s largest election outside India and choose the 720 members of the European Parliament — the only E.U. institution directly elected by citizens.

The Parliament has less power than other E.U. branches. It cannot directly initiate laws, but it can veto and shape them and is responsible for approving the E.U. budget, giving it some agenda-setting authority. Members of the Parliament played a key role in negotiating the E.U.’s landmark artificial intelligence regulations this past year. The Parliament also has the last word on the selection of the European Commission president — arguably the union’s most powerful job...”

Putin says Russia could use nuclear weapons if it is threatened

June 6, 2024 voanews.com reported: “Russian President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday that Russia could use nuclear weapons if its sovereignty is threatened.

‘If somebody’s actions threaten our sovereignty and territorial integrity, we consider it possible to use all means at our disposal,’ Putin said, citing what he said is his country’s security policy.

‘For some reason, they believe in the West that Russia will never use it,’ Putin told a group of international journalists, adding that Russia’s nuclear arsenal is much more powerful than what the U.S. used in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan during World War II. The Russian leader spoke face-to-face at some length on the sidelines of the annual St. Petersburg International Economic Forum...”

Iran’s Guard head vows revenge for Syria strike: Israel will ‘pay for the bloodshed’

June 5, 2024 timesofisrael.com reported: “The commander of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps Hossein Salami on Wednesday threatened retaliation after an alleged Israeli strike killed an Iranian adviser in Aleppo, Syria, earlier this week.

In comments made the day after IRGC adviser Saeed Abyar was buried in Tehran, Salami was quoted by Iranian outlets warning that Israel would ‘pay for the bloodshed.’

According to *The New York Times*, Abyar was in the IRGC’s expeditionary Quds Force and had been stationed in Syria since 2012. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said that 16 other members of pro-Iran groups were killed in the strike, which the war monitor attributed to Israel, ‘including Syrian and foreign fighters.’

‘Israel must wait for a response to the killing of Iranian military adviser Saeed Aviar in Syria,’ Salami was quoted as saying by Iran’s semi-official *Mehr* news agency...”

US: Roadblock to Gaza ceasefire is Hamas, not Israel

June 4, 2024 jpost.com reported: “Hamas is blocking a Gaza ceasefire and hostage deal, US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said as the death of four captives was announced and Israeli politicians Monday sharply debated the next steps in the war.



‘To be clear, the roadblock right now to a ceasefire is not Israel: The roadblock to a ceasefire is Hamas,’ Miller stated.

He lashed out at the terror group as Washington and Jerusalem waited for it to respond to a three-phase Israeli proposal, which US President Joe Biden unveiled publicly on Friday.

‘The world should know, the Palestinian people should know, that the only thing standing in the way of an immediate ceasefire today is Hamas,’ Miller said. The proposal on the table is nearly identical to what Hamas said it would accept just a few weeks ago, Miller said, adding that it is now time for it to act...”

China defence chief says Beijing ready to ‘forcefully’ stop Taiwan independence

June 3, 2024 breitbart.com reported: “Chinese Defence Minister Dong Jun warned Sunday his military is ready to ‘forcefully’ stop Taiwan independence but called for greater exchanges with the United States. The remarks at an annual security forum in Singapore followed the first substantive face-to-face talks in 18 months between the two countries’ defence chiefs.



China Defence Minister Dong Jun

‘We have always been open to exchanges and cooperation, but this requires both sides to meet each other halfway,’ Dong told the Shangri-La Dialogue where he met with US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Friday. ‘We believe that we need more exchanges precisely because there are differences between our two militaries.’...”

Israeli official tells Hamas no cease-fire will happen before hostage deal

May 31, 2024 ynetnews.com reported: “A senior member of the Israeli negotiating team working to reignite talks for a hostage release deal commented Friday on Hamas’s statement released Thursday saying the terror group would agree to continue negotiations only if a permanent cease-fire is reached. ‘There will be no cease-fire or pause in fighting that isn’t part of a deal to release the hostages,’ the senior official told *Ynet*.

The Gaza-based terrorist organization acknowledged the new Israeli deal proposal on Thursday, saying that it would not take part in talks while fighting in Gaza continued. ‘Today we informed the mediators of our clear position that if the occupation stops its war and aggression against our people in Gaza, we would be willing to reach a comprehensive exchange deal,’ Hamas said in a statement.

‘We’ve demonstrated flexibility and have been positive during all the rounds of the indirect negotiations and on May 6, we accepted the proposal of a mediator,’ Hamas said. ‘The occupation used the negotiations as a cover for continued aggression and massacre against the Palestinian people and responded to our agreement [to the terms,] by invading Rafah and occupying the Rafah border crossing.’

The senior Israeli official said in response, ‘If they think they will receive a cease-fire before the implementation of a deal or a part of it, they’re mistaken. It won’t happen. Israel is fighting in Gaza and continues to do so, and if they want a cease-fire for the sake of Gaza residents, it must happen only as part of the negotiation of a hostage release deal.’...”

Analysts see signs of strain in North Korea-China ties

May 31, 2024 voanews.com reported: “Tensions between North Korea and China surfaced publicly this week for the first time in years, after Pyongyang lashed out at a joint statement signed by Beijing mentioning the possibility of denuclearization. The apparent rift between the two allies emerged as North Korea’s latest attempt to launch a military spy satellite interrupted a major diplomatic initiative by China.

North Korea announced that it would conduct the launch as China’s premier, Li Qiang, was in Seoul preparing to meet the top leaders of Japan and South Korea as part of a trilateral dialogue that had not occurred in almost five years. The launch, which ended in a fiery explosion just after liftoff, occurred several hours after the trilateral dialogue wrapped up late Monday.

Although not unprecedented, it was a rare North Korean disruption of a major political event involving China, which has long been the main ally and economic lifeline for the isolated North...”

Compiled by L. Jim Tuck

Minister

<jim_tuck@ucg.org>