

► 'Meeting to ensure ties steer clear of Middle East conflicts'

China, Saudi Arabia, Iran meet to reaffirm Beijing Agreement

By Zhao Yusha

Saudi Arabia and Iran reaffirmed their commitment to all provisions of the Beijing Agreement, and their continued efforts to consolidate good-neighborly and friendly relations between the two countries. They welcomed the continued positive role of China and held that China's support and follow-up to the implementation of the Beijing Agreement is of great importance, according to a press release issued by the Chinese Foreign Ministry after the second meeting of the China-Saudi Arabia-Iran Trilateral Joint Committee held on Tuesday in Riyadh.

The meeting marks China's efforts to maintain dialogue between the two nations to ensure the peace process steers clear of conflicts in the Middle East, Chinese experts said, noting that it also highlights China's role of being a reliable peacemaker

amid wariness in the region over uncertainties coupled with the change in the US government.

Saudi Arabia and Iran reaffirmed their commitment to all provisions of the Beijing Agreement, and their continued efforts to consolidate good-neighborly and friendly relations between the two countries by adhering to the United Nations Charter, the Charter of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and international law, including respecting national sovereignty, independence and security.

China stressed its readiness to continue to support and encourage the steps taken by Saudi Arabia and Iran toward developing their relations in various fields.

Since the thawing of relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran that began in March last year, significant changes, such as the Palestine-Israel conflict, have occurred in the situation, Wang Jin, an associate profes-

or at the Institute of Middle Eastern Studies at Northwest University in Xi'an, told the Global Times.

The meeting not only seeks to solidify the progress made in improving relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia, but also aims to ensure that the peace process between the two nations can steer clear of conflicts in the Middle East, Wang said.

China is, to some extent, an important promoter of peace in the Middle East, while the US has played the role of a conflict instigator in the region, Liu Zhongmin, a professor from the Middle East Studies Institute at Shanghai International Studies University, told the Global Times.

Liu said that in the face of uncontrollable regional conflicts, the US and some Western countries have failed to fulfill their responsibilities as major world powers to promote peace. Therefore, China's cooperation with regional countries could help promote the easing of conflicts.

Japan hosts Five Eyes intel meeting for 1st time; experts warn of Tokyo's eagerness to become the 'sixth eye'

By Fan Anqi

The Five Eyes alliance hosted an intelligence group meeting in Japan on Wednesday, the first time that such a meeting has been held in a non-member country, a reflection of Tokyo's "critical position for gathering information on nearby China," Nikkei Asia reported.

Chinese experts warned of Japan's eagerness to join the alliance, but suggested that as the Five Eyes countries are all of Anglo-Saxon origin, Japan will seem "an outsider." The group is only using Japan's zeal to serve their own hegemonic purposes, analysts said.

The decision to hold the meeting in Japan reflects its "growing importance as an intelligence-collecting base in the Indo-Pacific region," Nikkei Asia reported.

The meeting with members from the grouping – comprising the US, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand – took place as part of a broader conference held in Tokyo among senior enlisted personnel from across Japan's Self-Defense Forces, the Japan Times reported on Wednesday.

Japan has long sought to enhance its status by pursuing membership in the Five Eyes grouping. And to gain this position, Japan is striving to align itself more closely with the Five Eyes in various fields, including military, security, politics and culture, Zhou Yongsheng, a deputy director of the Japanese Studies Center at the China Foreign Affairs University, told the Global Times.

While the possibility of Japan becoming the "sixth eye" is increasing, potential membership will depend on negotiations among member states, as the Five Eyes is not merely an intelligence sharing group, it is rooted in shared ethnic heritage and cultural ties, as all members are of Anglo-Saxon origin, Zhou said. In contrast, Japan does not share the same ethnic and cultural background with these countries, which will make it "an outsider" in this context, Zhou said.

By offering incentives to "award" Japan – in this case, choosing Tokyo to host the meeting – the Five Eyes alliance is creating a perception that Japan is "highly valued." In reality, the partnership serves the Five Eyes' hegemonic purposes by forming camp confrontation, Lü Chao, a research fellow on Northeast Asia studies at the Liaoning Academy of Social Sciences, told the Global Times.

Since the US implemented its so-called Indo-Pacific strategy, the Five Eyes alliance has strengthened intelligence and military interactions in the region, which have brought about great uncertainty. In this context, the latest move will cause further unrest among regional countries, Lü said.

► Jakarta waterlogged



A child pushes his bicycle through high tide flood water on a street in Jakarta, Indonesia, on November 20, 2024. Indonesia's Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysical Agency has released an early warning for possible high tide floods in Jakarta's coastal area on November 14 to 21. Photo: IC

China, Singapore launch joint army drill on urban anti-terrorism

By Liu Xuanzun

China and Singapore are holding a joint army exercise with the theme of urban anti-terrorism, a move Chinese military expert Fu Qianshao said on Wednesday displays a high level of mutual trust and military cooperation between the two countries.

The China-Singapore Exercise Cooperation-2024 joint army exercise kicked off with an opening ceremony on Tues-

day at a training base in Central China's Henan Province, the official newspaper of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA), the PLA Daily, reported on Wednesday.

Under the theme of conducting a joint urban anti-terrorism operation, the drill aims to train in tactics for joint anti-terrorism operations under complex environments and enhance the two militaries' capabilities in joint command, collaborative coordination and unified opera-

tion, the report said.

The commander on the Chinese side said that the joint exercise is expected to boost combat capability, enhance exchanges, boost traditional friendship and play a positive role in promoting the development of bilateral relations, while the Singaporean commander said that the Singaporean side is willing to work with the Chinese side in carrying forward traditional friendship, elevating the quality and effect

of the joint drill, deepening military mutual trust and promoting the healthy and stable development of the military ties, according to the PLA Daily.

Singapore is a city state, so its military's main mission is defense of the city, with anti-terrorism being a main topic. Against this background, the joint exercise with China will help the two sides to boost exchanges, trust and capabilities in urban anti-terrorism operations, Fu told the Global Times

on Wednesday.

This is the sixth edition of the Cooperation series exercise between the two countries' armies, the report said.

Fu said that the consecutive joint exercises on the ground and at sea is a manifestation of the two countries' high level of mutual trust and military cooperation.

