

Headlines:

- **UK General Election 2019: Conservative Party Launches Campaign**
- **Saudi Oil Giant Aramco Gets Go-Ahead for \$1.5tn Stock Listing**
- **Pakistan Failed to Stop Terror Groups from Recruiting & Raising Funds, US Report Claims**

Details:

UK General Election 2019: Conservative Party Launches Campaign

Boris Johnson has launched the Conservative Party's election campaign, saying his Brexit deal "delivers everything I campaigned for". Surrounded by supporters holding signs with messages including "Get Brexit Done", he told activists he had "no choice" but to hold an election. Parliament is "paralysed" and "blocked", he said in Birmingham. He said once Brexit was done, a Tory government could get on with "better education" and "better infrastructure". Earlier, the prime minister met the Queen at Buckingham Palace, marking the official start of the election period in the run-up to the 12 December poll. But Mr Johnson's plans to grab the headlines for his party's campaign launch were blown off course by the resignation of a cabinet minister - an unusual event during an election campaign. Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns has quit the cabinet after claims he knew about a former aide's role in the "sabotage" of a rape trial. It comes after two Conservative candidates were forced to apologise for comments about victims of the Grenfell tragedy. Opening the party's campaign launch, the Mayor of the West Midlands, Andy Street said the party's success in the area showed "when Conservatives work together at all levels we can do tremendous things". Home Secretary Priti Patel followed, telling a crowd of supporters: "This election is a choice between real change or simply more uncertainty, more dither and more delay." And Conservative Party chairman James Cleverly said: "We need to break the Brexit deadlock and get on with delivering on voters priorities - something the last Parliament proved incapable of doing." Turning his fire on his election opponents, Mr Johnson accused the Labour Party of "always running out of other people's money" and despite making a raft of his own spending promises, the party leader said Labour "know themselves that their policies for the economy are ruinous". Instead, he says voters should "come with us" and support Tory measures on education, the police and immigration. [Source: BBC]

After a general election and several attempts to get the British parliament to approve a Brexit deal –very similar to May’s deal—Johnson is hoping that the upcoming general election will give him the badly needed majority to pass the deal.

Saudi Oil Giant Aramco Gets Go-Ahead for \$1.5tn Stock Listing

Saudi Arabia has given the go-ahead to the long-delayed sale of its state-owned oil company Aramco, in what will be the biggest stock market flotation in history. The milestone market debut could value Saudi Aramco at \$1.5tn, significantly below initial expectations of up to \$2tn, as it courts international investors for the first time. Despite the lower valuation, Aramco's initial public offering will be the biggest in history, raising \$40bn-\$45bn, surpassing the record \$25bn raised by China's tech firm Alibaba in 2015.

But in further signs of behind-the-scenes wrangling, the precise details of the offer price and amount of shares available are not expected to be released until 9 November, with full trading slated to begin around 12 December. It is understood that only a small portion of shares will be released on to the Riyadh market, likely to be in the range of 1% to 3% of the total stock. The size and scale of Saudi Aramco – even at the lower range of valuation estimates, it will be 50% bigger than the next largest stock market-traded firm in the world – are likely to require the financial liquidity only available on the globe’s biggest exchanges, such as Wall Street or London. The company supplies 13% of the world’s oil, and this year it revealed half-year profits of \$46.9bn – more than the next six biggest oil companies combined. Yasir al-Rumayyan, the chairman of Saudi Aramco, said: “Today marks a significant milestone in the history of the company and important progress towards delivering Saudi Vision 2030, the kingdom’s blueprint for sustained economic diversification and growth.” Saudi Arabia is expected to use the listing to leverage its vast fossil fuel reserves to help modernise its economy and gain international acceptance despite its troubling human rights record. The flotation is hugely controversial among environmentalists and campaigners pushing to keep fossil fuels from being burned. [Source: The Guardian]

Saudi Arabia has finally decided to part with its silverware and will use the proceeds to fund the rapid westernization of the country.

Pakistan Failed to Stop Terror Groups from Recruiting & Raising Funds, US Report Claims

Pakistan has failed to prevent terrorist groups from raising money, recruiting, and training on its territory, according to a recent terrorism report published by the US Department of State. The report blames the Pakistani government for not taking sufficient action to limit Lashkar eTayyiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), the organisation responsible for the 2008 Mumbai attacks, from training, recruiting, raising funds, and bypassing UN sanctions. It also says that candidates overtly affiliated with LeT were allowed to take part in July’s general election. The dangers of that “inefficiency” go beyond the country’s borders. Even though groups such as the Afghan Taliban, Haqqani Network, LeT, and JeM are located in Pakistan, they are focused on conducting attacks elsewhere, according to the report. The document cites LeT and JeM as among the groups that remained a threat in 2018 and says they “maintained the capability and intent to attack Indian and Afghan targets.” It mentions the February attack by a JeM operative on an Indian Army camp, at Sunjuwan in Jammu and Kashmir, in which nine Indian officers were killed. The paper also slams Pakistan for not restricting the Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani Network from operating in Pakistan-based safe havens and threatening US and Afghan forces in Afghanistan, despite Islamabad voicing support for political reconciliation between the Afghan government and the Taliban. Pakistan’s Foreign Office expressed disappointment with the report, claiming it lacks an objective evaluation of country’s efforts in the fight against terrorism. India has repeatedly accused Pakistan of sponsoring terrorism and cross-border attacks in Kashmir. Tensions between the nuclear-armed rivals have flared since August, when New Delhi revoked Kashmir’s special status, insisting it would help curb terrorism. [Source: RT]

The US will use the report to pressurise Pakistan into recognising the LoC as a permanent border, and despite this Khan’s government continues to implore Trump to solve Kashmir!