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Trump seeks \$18 billion to extend border wall over 10 years

SAN DIEGO, JAN 6/-/The Trump administration has proposed spending USD 18 billion over 10 years to significantly extend the border wall with Mexico, providing one of its most detailed blueprints of how the president hopes to carry out a signature campaign pledge.

The proposal by Customs and Border Protection calls for 316 miles (505 kilometres) of additional barrier by September 2027, bringing total coverage to 970 miles (1,552 kilometres), or nearly

half the border, according to a U.S. official with direct knowledge of the matter. It also calls for 407 miles (651 kilometres) of replacement or secondary fencing, said the official, who spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because the plan has not been made public.

Trump has promised "a big, beautiful wall" with Mexico as a centerpiece of his presidency but offered few details of where it would be built, when and at what cost. His administration asked for USD 1.6 billion this

year to build or replace 74 miles (119 kilometres) of fencing in Texas and California, and officials have said they also will seek USD 1.6 billion next year. The 10-year plan, first reported by The Wall Street Journal, resulted from discussions with senators who asked the agency what it would take to secure the border, the official said. It comes as the administration intensifies negotiations in Congress on a package that may include granting legal status to about 800,000 people who were temporarily shielded from deportation under an Obama-era program, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. Trump said last year that he was ending DACA but gave Congress until March to deliver a legislative fix.

The plan on border security came in response to a request by US Sen Jeff Flake, said Jason Samuels, a spokesman for the Arizona Republican. An administration official confirmed the document was prepared at the request of congressional negotiators and said funding for the wall and other security measures must be part of any legislative package on immigration. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the plan has not been made public. Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen told The Associated Press on Tuesday that the wall would be "first and foremost" in any package that includes new protections for DACA recipients.

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'The world will be watching what you do', US warns Iran at UN

UNITED NATIONS, JAN 6/-/ "The world will be watching what you do," US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley has warned Iran during an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council to discuss the situation in the Islamic nation which has faced a series of nationwide anti-government protests.

During the meeting, three members France, Russia and China of the permanent five, joined Iran in asserting that this 15-member body has no authority to deny their people human rights and fundamental freedoms, Haley said. She called on all her other colleagues in the Security Council to join her in amplifying the message of the Iranian people. Briefing the Security Council, Tayeb Brook Zerihoun, Assistant UN Secretary-General for Political Affairs, said the

current situation in Iran. The meeting of the UN Security Council was convened at the request of the US to discuss the current situation in Iran, where some 21 people have lost their lives in more than week-long anti-government protests across the country. US President Donald Trump has come out in support of the protesters.

Every UN member state is sovereign, but member states cannot use sovereignty as a shield when they categorically deny their people human rights and fundamental freedoms, Haley said. She called on all her other colleagues in the Security Council to join her in amplifying the message of the Iranian people. Briefing the Security Council, Tayeb Brook Zerihoun, Assistant UN Secretary-General for Political Affairs, said the

demonstrations taking place in Iran were a fundamental expression of human rights, and a powerful exhibition of brave people who were so fed up with their oppressive regime that they were willing to risk their lives in protest. The Iranian regime's contempt of the rights of its people had been widely documented, she said. Addressing the Security Council, the Iranian Ambassador to the UN, Gholamali Khosroo slammed the 15-member body to have allowed itself to be abused by the Trump Administration in holding a meeting that falls outside the scope of its mandate. There is a long history of US bullying at the UN, and the case of the Iranian protest was a preposterous example of interference in the purely internal affairs of a nation. Khosroo alleged

that the US has a long history of intervening in the internal affairs of Iran, including a continuous pattern of disruption in the democratisation process in Iran. British Ambassador to the UN, Matthew Rycroft, refuted the Iranian allegations and said that no one is forcing Iran onto their agenda. However, the Russian representative Vasily A Nebenzia agreed with Iran and said US is abusing the platform of the Security Council. Iran should be allowed to deal with its own problems, he said asserting that the Council should not be involved in destabilising Iran. Observing that the Council's primary responsibility is maintaining international peace and security, Wu Haito of China said that it should not be the venue for discussing the human rights

situation of any country. (Source: Iran, Russia and China, the French Representative to the UN, Francois Delattre it is up to the Iranians alone to pursue the path of peace. Change in Iran would not come from the Iranian people themselves," he added. Among the non-permanent members, representatives from Bolivia, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia said with the Iranian argument that the Council was not the forum to discuss the current situation in Iran.

The meeting was chaired by Kairat Umarov, the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to the UN. Speaking in his national capacity, he said his country considered the developments in Iran to be a domestic issue that did not fall under the mandate of the Security Council. (PTT)

Pro-regime rallies in Tehran as US imposes sanctions

TEHRAN, JAN 6/-/ Pro-regime rallies were held around Tehran today with authorities seeking to put the recent violent unrest to bed, as Washington slapped fresh sanctions on Iran and called for an emergency UN Security Council meeting.

Iranian officials blamed a plot by the CIA, Israel and Saudi Arabia for the unrest that convulsed much of the country for five days - part of the increasing tensions playing out between Iran and its neighbours since President Donald Trump came to power. For a third straight day, there were large pro-government rallies, this time in 40 locations around Tehran province and several cities including Tabriz and Kerman after Friday prayers, as authorities declared the unrest over.

"We are here to show that we can solve our problems ourselves, and will never allow Saudi Arabia, the USA and Israel to intervene... and we are

behind the revolution until our last drop of blood," Mohsen, an IT engineer in the crowd, told AFP.

The US imposed sanctions against five Iranian firms alleged to have been working on an illegal ballistic missile programme, linking the move to the protests. On the streets of Tehran, a heavy police presence lingered though there were no reports of fresh protests overnight. There were some reports of small anti-government demonstrations in provincial towns, but these could not be verified.

Police asked people to send photos and videos of "trouble-makers", local media reported, and to identify a number of suspects already caught on camera. It remains difficult to gauge who was involved in the unrest that began December 28, claiming 21 lives - mostly protesters - and leading to hundreds of arrests. President Hassan Rouhani's supporters

have blamed conservative rivals for stoking anger over economic issues, which quickly grew out of control and saw attacks on security forces, government buildings and symbols of the regime.

The conservatives deny the accusations and say Rouhani must do more to help the poor, with parliament already moving to repeal an unpopular fuel tax hike in his recent budget. The United Nations Security Council was set to hold an emergency meeting on the issue on Friday at the request of the United States. Chief prosecutor Mohammad Jafar Montazeri blamed the unrest on a plot dating back four years by the United States, Israel and Saudi Arabia. "The main architect of this plan is Mike D'Andrea," Montazeri said, referring to the head of the CIA's Iran desk.

"They launched (social media) campaigns with the theme of 'no to high prices', 'no

to paying bills," he said, adding that the plan was to start unrest in the provinces before moving on Tehran.

Mohsen also claimed there were efforts to infiltrate the Islamic State group into the country. "Eternal bedfellows" (USA, Saudi Arabia) and ISIS following Trump's lead - all endorse violence, death and destruction in Iran. Why are we not surprised," tweeted Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif. Many officials have nonetheless recognised the genuine economic grievances of many Iranians, particularly a jobless rate at close to 30 percent for young people.

Iran's economic growth rebounded to more than 12 percent last year after sanctions were lifted under a 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, but analysts say much of the windfall has come from renewed oil sales that generate few jobs. (AFP)

GOOD LUCK

GaneshaSpeaks.com Family matters might be the blinkers on your eyes today. Your temperament and maturity will help you deal with emotional issues. Your power and panache may partly yield unexpected results. There is a likelihood of some serious action in the bedroom tonight, mostly verbal though.

ARIES You will make material progress today, says Ganesha. Naturally, you want to share this abundance with your family. Ganesha suggests you give them more quality time. You may also want to take time out to pray and meditate and thank the almighty for favours received.

TAURUS You will begin a long-lasting romantic relationship today. Also, you will stay ecstatic and highly motivated throughout the day. In the afternoon, you will successfully avoid any confrontation with those who like you to end. That, says Ganesha, is the right way to cultivate patience.

CANCER Today, there is likely to be a twist in your tale. Something is going to happen that is likely to make your life turn corner. It may be a major breakthrough or a seemingly innocuous accident, but your life is likely to change significantly.

LEO Resist that urge to pop a pill and call in sick, because no matter how much you wish, escaping from reality is not the way to go, says Ganesha. Yes, there are chances that you shall remain in a pensive mood today with a multitude of thoughts lighting to occupy space inside your head. Work shall be a constant feel-good area as you share valuable moments with your peers, and progress as expected. Ganesha predicts a pleasant evening in the company of the opposite sex. So cheer up, there is lots to look forward to.

VIRGO Lady Luck is your date for the day today. Good tidings bear their way to you from distant lands, and may be across the seas too. Chances are you may take an initiative to let the cat love out of the bag. Your outlook will be free of confusion today, says Ganesha.

LIBRA You will spin out a plan on a daily basis and prefer to go with the flow, predicts Ganesha. The afternoon may see your peers giving you some bit of unnecessary tension due to approaching deadlines. In the evening, you may consider spending some time meditating to attain peace of mind.

SCORPIO You will bank upon instinct, and spur-of-the-moment decisions will rule all action today, feels Ganesha. You will find yourself lacking focus at work and this might cause problems in the days to come. When it comes to relationships, actions will speak louder than words. Evening promises to be more exciting as you find solace in the arms of a beloved.

SAGITTARIUS Ganesha suggests you get down to looking your dashing best. Fresh that plums and make heads turn. Your social standing, on the other hand, will add that extra jazz. Talking fast and smooth might just help you effect a robust consummation.

CAPRICORN When work starts to give nightmares, even meditation cannot restore the peace of mind. You are likely to have a similar kind of harrowing experience at work today, says Ganesha. But the day won't be completely dulling. It's an auspicious day if you have plans to buy a house or a car. You may also move to a new house some time soon.

AQUARIUS Today is just not your day. Accept that nothing will work perfectly, and get on with it.

PISCES The focus today is on your spouse. You may mutually give and receive pleasant surprises today. You are likely to take stock of your present and prepare for the future today, but be sure to do so in conjunction with your better half. Your business partners may bring you some good news, says Ganesha.

Any bickering at your workplace can be sorted out with tact. And patience will help you tide over difficult situations. Ganesha wishes you the best!

KIDS CORNER



WordWheel No.83

T	R	I	A
I	?	H	T

Insert the missing letter to complete an eight-letter word reading clockwise or anticlockwise. Solution No.82: PATRIOTS

5x5 No.83

Insert the missing letters to complete ten words - five across the grid and five down.

S	C	A	B	S
C	A	R	O	L
A	M	I	N	O
R	E	S	E	T
S	L	E	D	S

OUR SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No.82 (Other combinations may occasionally be possible.) Reference: C.O.D. 1995

WORD BUILDER 83

A	R	N
E	V	

How many words of three or more letters, including plurals, can you make from the five letters, using each letter only once? No foreign words or ones beginning with a capital are allowed. There's at least one five-letter word.

TODAY'S GOALS: Good - 8 Excellent - 10 Amazing - 13
SOLUTION 82: abort, art, bar, bat, boa, boar, board, boat, bora, bot, brat, bra, brat, orb, orb, rat, rob, rot, rota, tab, tabor, tar, taro, tor

Cornered

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He was too stern celly.