



ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

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Talks continue on Strait of Hormuz

Trump calls on others to help protect trade route, lands no commitments

SAM METZ, SAMY MAGDY AND JULIA FRANKEL
Associated Press

CAIRO — U.S. President Donald Trump's appeal to China, France, Japan, South Korea, Britain and others to send warships to keep the Strait of Hormuz "open and safe" brought no commitments on Sunday as oil prices soar during the Iran war.

U.S. Energy Secretary Chris Wright told NBC he was "in dialogue" with some of the countries and expected China "will be a constructive partner" in reopening the strait through which one-fifth of global oil exports normally pass.

Iran's foreign minister, Abbas Araghchi, told CBS that Tehran was "approached by a number of countries" seeking safe passage for their vessels, "and this is up to

our military to decide." He said a group of vessels from "different countries" was allowed to pass, without providing details.

Iran said the strait is open to all except the United States and its allies.

"We don't see any reason why we should talk with Americans" about finding a way to end the war, Araghchi added, noting Israel and the U.S. started the fighting with coordinated attacks Feb. 28 during indirect U.S.-Iran talks. The talks focused on Iran's nuclear program, and Araghchi said Tehran had "no plan to recover" enriched uranium that is under rubble following U.S. and Israeli attacks last year.

"We are intensively looking with our allies at what can be done, because it's so important that we get the strait reopened," U.K. Energy Secretary Ed Miliband told Sky News, adding that ending the war is the "best and surest" way to do it.



VAHID SALEMI, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Volunteers clean debris Sunday from a residential building damaged when a nearby police station was hit two days earlier in a U.S.-Israeli strike in Tehran, Iran.

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ST. LOUIS COUNTY

SEMINARIES SET SIGHTS ON GROWTH



DAVID CARSON, POST-DISPATCH

Eden Theological Seminary professor Jeff Moore teaches a class on New Testaments and Global Racisms to students both on campus and participating remotely by video on Thursday, Feb. 26, in Webster Groves.

3 schools land 'unprecedented' \$10M grants at critical juncture

BY COLLEEN SCHRAPPEN
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

ST. LOUIS COUNTY — Three local seminaries are expanding their recruitment efforts and educational offerings with the aim of growing the number of future Christian leaders, all with the help of grants worth \$10 million each — an "unprecedented" gift, one administrator said.

"We couldn't believe it when we saw the amount," said Mary Schaller Blaufuss, a vice president at Eden Theological Seminary in Webster Groves.

Eden, Covenant Theological Seminary and Concordia Seminary received the awards late last year from the Lilly

Endowment, the philanthropic foundation associated with Indianapolis-based drugmaker Eli Lilly and Co. The endowment's Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative has distributed more than \$700 million to 163 theological schools across the United States and Canada.

The financial infusion comes at a critical time for American seminaries. Enrollment began to slump two decades ago, according to data from the Association of Theological Schools, a Pittsburgh-based network of 280 seminaries and graduate schools.

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Owners say energy rules are 'punitive'

New regulations target properties larger than 50,000 square feet

BY STEPH KUKULJAN
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

ST. LOUIS — Bianco Properties has invested heavily over the years to preserve the historic character of its 1920s-era apartment buildings in the Central West End.

The parquet floors, plaster walls and ornate wooden trim are common features across the 144 apartments on Lindell Boulevard. Bianco Properties spends 75%-80% of the rent it collects to maintain the properties while modernizing where it could, like installing new boilers, thousands of LED lights and thermal-paned windows to reduce utility costs, said President Daniel Wolk.

"These apartments are our pride and joy," Wolk said.

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Mo. legislators eye key issues in final weeks

What to watch for in session's second half

BY KURT ERICKSON
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

JEFFERSON CITY — Missouri lawmakers finished the first half of their annual legislative session last week amid a blizzard of bills sent from the House to the Senate, including a landmark proposal that could shift the state's tax base from income taxes to sales taxes.

Before leaving on a weeklong spring break, the Republican-led House sent 100 bills across the Capitol to the Senate, including Gov. Mike Kehoe's plan to phase out the state income tax, a tough-on-crime bill and a gambling expansion proposal that would legalize gas station gambling machines.

The 34-member Senate, which traditionally moves in a more deliberative manner, was far less productive as Democrats in the minority used the chamber's filibuster rules to slow down Republican initiatives.

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Weather

Plan your week: For a 5-day weather forecast for our region as well as the national outlook, please see **PAGE B12**

Power struggle



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