

world

Australia, Japan to deepen defence ties after historic Darwin visit
Darwin, Australia

Australia hailed a “deeply symbolic” visit to Darwin by the Japanese Prime Minister on Friday, more than 75 years after the northern city was bombed in World War II, as the two countries vowed to deepen defence ties in the face of an emergent China.

Trade and strategic relations took centre-stage at a meeting between Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Shinzo Abe during his two-day visit, before both travel to Papua New Guinea for the weekend’s APEC summit.

In a communique, they expressed hope an agreement on enhanced defence cooperation that includes joint military exercises and which the two countries have been discussing for several years would be concluded by early next year.

“Prime Minister Morrison and I confirmed our commitment to further deepen this special strategic partnership between Japan and Australia,” Abe told reporters in Darwin via a translator.

“Our common vision is of a free and open Indo Pacific, in the area of security we agreed to deepen our security and defence cooperation.” Abe said they discussed regional strategic issues including maritime security in Southeast Asia and the Pacific island nations, and the denuclearisation of North Korea.

Five missing after two US jets crash

An F-18 jet with 2 crew and a KC-130 tanker with 5 crew -- crashed into the sea

● One crew member has already been rescued

● The marines were conducting “regularly scheduled training”

AFP | Tokyo, Japan

Rescue operations were underway yesterday for five US marines missing after two American military aircraft crashed during a refuelling operation off the coast of Japan, the Japanese defence minister said.

One crew member has already been rescued and is



The US military has about 50,000 troops stationed in Japan and accidents are not uncommon.



A US Navy F-18 Super Hornet from Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia Beach



A KC-130 Hercules takes off during a training exercise at Yokota Air Base, Japan

thought to be in a stable condition, Takeshi Iwaya told reporters. A spokesman for the Japanese Self-Defense (SDF) said another crew member had been found but there were no immediate details of the marine’s condition.

“US military and the Japanese Self-Defense planes and vessels are searching for those still missing... I hope all the members will be rescued safely as soon as possible,” Iwaya added.

The marines were conducting “regularly scheduled training” when the crash occurred around 2am local time, the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force said in a statement.

The F/A-18 fighter jet with two crew onboard and a KC-130 refuelling tanker with five crew -- crashed into the sea around

100 kilometres (55 nautical miles) off the cape of Muroto in south-western Japan, Iwaya said. The crew member rescued had been in the fighter jet, the minister confirmed.

Japan’s SDF had deployed nine aircraft and three vessels for the search, he said.

“We are thankful for the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force’s efforts as they immediately responded in the search and rescue operation,” the Marines said.

A spokesman for the Japanese coastguard said six vessels and an aircraft had been dispatched separately to assist in the rescue efforts.

During a normal KC-130 refuelling operation, the tanker aircraft trails a hose from the back of the plane with a so-called

“drogue”, shaped a bit like a windsock, at the end.

The fighter jet then inserts a probe inside the drogue to receive fuel, which it can do at a rate of up to 3,000 pounds per minute.

‘Appropriate measures’

In November, a US navy fighter jet crashed into the sea off Japan’s southern island of Okinawa and its two crew members were rescued alive.

And in November 2017, a C-2A “Greyhound” aircraft with 11 people on board went down in the Philippine Sea -- eight were rescued and the search was called off for the remaining three after a two-day search.

The US military has also experienced difficulties with its Osprey helicopters.

Satellite images show activity at N. Korean missile base: CNN



North Korea test launches an intercontinental ballistic missile Hwasong-14 in 2017.

Washington, United States

North Korea has expanded a key long-range missile base in the months since a summit between the country’s leader Kim Jong Un and US President Donald Trump, according to satellite images published by CNN on Wednesday.

The two men met in Singapore in June and signed a vaguely worded document that pledged to “work toward” the complete denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, though it did not detail specifics on how this would come about.

According to CNN, Pyongyang has upgraded the Yeongjeo-dong missile base in North Korea’s mountainous interior and has built up another facility that had not previously been publicly identified.

Experts told the US news network that the site’s location made it suitable to host North Korea’s newest long-range missiles, including ones that could carry nuclear warheads.

Zuckerberg defends Facebook in new data breach controversy

London, United Kingdom

Facebook chief Mark Zuckerberg pushed back Wednesday against emails showing the social media giant offering Netflix and other popular apps preferential access to people’s data even after it had tightened its privacy rules.

A British parliamentary committee investigating whether the social media behemoth was being used to manipulate the results of elections published 250 pages of internal Facebook documents earlier Wednesday.

They show executives holding discussions about big companies such as Netflix being granted preferential access to user data even after Facebook had tightened its privacy rules in 2014-15.

Zuckerberg featured in one email exchange from 2012 in which he mulled selling the information to developers.

The emails feature in a lawsuit filed against Facebook in a California court by the now-defunct US app developer Six4Three.

They were sealed by the presiding judge but seized by the British committee under a never-before used parliamentary enforcement procedure last month.



Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg arrives to testify before a joint hearing of the US Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee and Senate Judiciary Committee on Capitol Hill, April 10, 2018 in Washington, DC.

Zuckerberg said he was writing because he did not want the emails to “misrepresent our actions or motives”.

“Like any organization, we had a lot of internal discussion and people raised different ideas,” Zuckerberg said in a message posted on Facebook.

He did not directly address Facebook’s apparent decision

to give some of the world’s most popular apps special access to friends lists and other personal information that many people want to keep private.

“Ultimately, we decided on a model where we continued to provide the developer platform for free and developers could choose to buy ads if they wanted,” Zuckerberg wrote.

But he added: “To be clear, that’s different from selling people’s data. We’ve never sold anyone’s data.”

‘Public interest’

The UK parliamentary committee headed by Damian Collins -- a member of Prime Minister Theresa May’s Conservative Party -- calls the policy of giv-

ing apps privileged information about users “whitelisting”.

“Facebook have clearly entered into whitelisting agreements with certain companies, which meant that after the platform changes in 2014/15 they maintained full access to friends data,” Collins wrote in a note accompanying the emails.

“The idea of linking access

to friends data to the financial value of the developers relationship with Facebook is a recurring feature of the documents.”

The emails show Facebook holding “whitelisting” discussions with the Russian-founded dating service Wadoo and US giants such as Netflix and the cab hailing service Lyft.

Most of the emails released by Collins were from years before Facebook had tightened its privacy policy rules.

Collins said his decision to ignore the US court gagging order and release the exchanges was based on “considerable public interest” in their content.

“We need a more public debate about the rights of social media users and the smaller businesses who are required to work with the tech giants,” he wrote in a Twitter post.

Zuckerberg did not condemn the emails’ publication or threaten any reciprocal measures against Collins.

“I understand there is a lot of scrutiny on how we run our systems,” Zuckerberg wrote.

“That’s healthy given the vast number of people who use our services around the world.”