

Trump blacklists 28 Chinese entities over Xinjiang abuses

● The 28 entities blacklisted include 18 public security bureaus in Xinjiang, one police college and eight businesses

AFP | Washington

The US is to blacklist 28 Chinese entities that it says are implicated in rights violations and abuses targeting Uighurs and other mostly Muslim minorities in the Xinjiang region, the commerce department announced.

The United States "cannot and will not tolerate the brutal suppression of ethnic minorities within China," Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross said, announcing the move, which bars the named entities from purchasing US products.

The blacklisted firms included video surveillance company Hikvision, as well as artificial intelligence companies Megvii Technology and SenseTime, according to an update to the US Federal Register set to be published Wednesday.

The ban comes amid heightened tensions between the US and China, particularly over trade policy and Beijing's actions in the western Xinjiang region.

On Monday, the White House announced that talks between the two countries were set to resume on Thursday, with Beijing's top trade envoy Liu He due to meet US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin.

The US has meanwhile stepped up its rhetoric against Beijing over its policies in the western Xinjiang region.

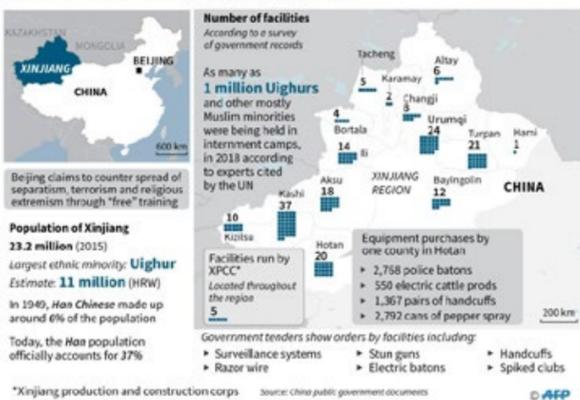
Rights groups say China has detained around one million Uighurs and other Muslims in re-education camps in the region -- actions that Washington has said are reminiscent of Nazi Germany.



Right groups say China has detained around one million Uighurs and other Muslims in re-education camps in western Xinjiang region

Xinjiang and its 'training centres'

"Vocational education and training centres" in China's northwest region have come under international scrutiny, with rights activists describing them as political re-education camps



Graphic on "educational facilities" in China's Xinjiang region that rights activists describe as political internment camps



China had until recently denied the existence of re-education camps, but now claims they are "vocational training schools" necessary to control terrorism

During last month's United Nations General Assembly, the event to highlight the plight of the Uighurs, with the US's second-highest diplomat John Sul-

livan decrying "China's horrific campaign of repression."

China had until recently denied the existence of re-education camps, but now claims they are "vocational training schools" necessary to control terrorism, while decrying interference in its "internal affairs."

Huawei targeted

The 28 entities blacklisted include 18 public security bureaus in Xinjiang, one police college and eight businesses.

"These entities have been implicated in human rights violations and abuses in the implementation of China's campaign of repression, mass arbitrary detention, and high-technology surveillance against Uighurs, Kazakhs and other members of Muslim minority groups," the Federal Register update said.

Megvii, which is backed by e-commerce giant Alibaba, said in a statement that it "strongly" protests against the decision, which it insisted was "without any factual basis."

Hikvision was also included in that ban, which will preclude any US federal agency from purchasing telecom or technology equipment from the firms and comes amid concern that Huawei is linked to Chinese intelligence. The US fears that systems built by Huawei could be used by Beijing for espionage via secret "backdoors" built into telecom networking equipment.

China urges US to remove sanctions

Reuters | Hong Kong

China strongly urges the US to remove sanctions on Chinese firms and will take any necessary measures to firmly protect its own interests, China's commerce ministry said in a statement late yesterday. The ministry also said it strongly urges the US to stop making irresponsible remarks on the Xinjiang issue and to stop interfering in China's internal affairs.

EU tells UK's Johnson to stop playing 'stupid' blame game



Boris Johnson, British PM and Angela Merkel, German Chancellor (file)

Reuters | London/Brussels

The European Union accused Britain of playing a "stupid blame game" over Brexit on Tuesday after a Downing Street source said a deal was essentially impossible because German Chancellor Angela Merkel had made unacceptable demands.

With just 23 days before the United Kingdom is due to leave the bloc, the future of Brexit remains deeply uncertain and both London and Brussels are positioning themselves to avoid blame for a delay or a disorderly no-deal Brexit.

In a sign that Johnson's last-ditch proposals to bridge the impasse have failed, a Downing Street source said Merkel and Johnson spoke on Tuesday morning and she made clear that a deal was "overwhelmingly unlikely".

The Downing Street source said that if Merkel's position on Northern Ireland remaining in the EU's customs union was the bloc's position, then a deal was impossible.

The EU was scathing

"Boris Johnson, what's at stake is not winning some stupid blame game," European Council President Tusk said on Twitter. "At stake is the future of Europe and the UK as well as the security and interests of our people. You don't want a deal, you don't want an extension, you don't want to revoke, quo vadis?"

A disorderly Brexit could rip apart the United Kingdom, hurt global growth and shape

the future of the European Union which was built on the World War Two ruins of Europe.

Brexit Blame Game

Merkel said that for a deal, Northern Ireland would have to stay in the EU's customs union and full alignment with the EU forever, the Downing Street source said.

The leader of the small Northern Irish party that supports Johnson's government accused the EU and Ireland of trying to trap the British territory in a permanent customs union.

The opposition said Johnson was trying to apportion blame for the failure of the negotiating process.

A separate Downing Street source told Reuters that unless the European Union compromises and does a Brexit deal shortly, then the United Kingdom will leave without a deal.

"If the EU doesn't do a deal shortly, then we leave without a deal," the source said. "We are leaving the European Union."

Johnson has consistently said the United Kingdom will leave the EU on Oct. 31 with or without a deal, though a law passed by parliament demands he write a letter to the EU asking for a delay if he cannot strike an exit deal by Oct. 19.

Samsung Electronics flags 56pc fall in Q3 operating profit

● Fourth consecutive quarter in which the South Korean tech company has recorded a profit drop

Seoul

Samsung Electronics said yesterday it expected operating profits to drop more than 50 per cent in the third quarter as it struggles with a long-running slump in the global chip market.

Operating profit for July to September was forecast to reach 7.7 trillion won (\$6.4 billion), down 56.2pc from a year earlier, the world's largest maker of smartphones and memory chips said in a statement.

It marks the fourth consecutive quarter in which the South Korean tech company has recorded a profit drop in the face



South Korean tech titan Samsung leads the global smartphone market with a 23-percent share of the sector

of falling semiconductor prices and weakened demand for its mobile devices.

Sales for the third quarter were expected to reach around 62 trillion won, down 5.3pc from

the same period last year.

Samsung withholds net profit and sector-by-sector business performance until it releases its final earnings report, which is expected later this month.

The firm is the flagship subsidiary of the giant Samsung Group, by far the biggest of the family-controlled conglomerates that dominate business in the world's 11th-largest economy, and crucial to South Korea's economic health.

'Competitor in crisis'

The estimates for the third quarter showed a slight rise from the April to June period, which analysts attributed mainly to improvements in the mobile business.

The firm rolled out its flagship Note 10 devices that connect to superfast 5G network in August that analysts say have sold far better than its previous models to give Samsung a much-needed boost.

"The Note device is usually released in August or September and sells well until December, so I expect the demand to continue until the fourth quarter," said



The South Korean tech titan leads the global smartphone market with a 23-per cent share of the sector, trailed by Chinese competitors Huawei and Oppo, with Apple in fourth place, according to sales tracker IHS Markit

Tom Kang, research director at Counterpoint Research.

Samsung appealed to high-end users with the launch of

its first foldable smartphone last month after faulty screens forced an embarrassing delay in April.

The premium smartphone market has grown fiercely competitive and overall sales have cooled as a lack of major innovation has caused people to wait longer before upgrading to new models.

Samsung also took advantage of the US trade ban against Huawei, "replacing a strong competitor in crisis" with its mid-to-low tier Galaxy A handsets, said Sujeong Lim, an analyst at Counterpoint Research.

Increased demand for Samsung's OLED display panels used in handsets by competitors -- including Apple's new iPhone 11 -- is also expected to help improve the company's quarterly profit.

Samsung has been caught up in a trade war between Japan and South Korea stemming from World War II disputes.