

## Headlines:

- **US says Zelenskiy Risks Allies' Ukraine Fatigue if he Rejects Russia Talks**
- **Imran Khan Speaks Publicly for First Time Since Surviving Shooting**
- **Chinese Chip Designers Slow Down Processors to Dodge US Sanctions**

## Details:

### **US says Zelenskiy Risks Allies' Ukraine Fatigue if he Rejects Russia Talks**

US officials have reportedly warned the Ukrainian government in private that it needs to signal an openness to negotiating with Russia. Officials in Washington have warned that "Ukraine fatigue" among allies could worsen if Kyiv continues to be closed to negotiations, the Washington Post reported. US officials told the paper that Ukraine's position on negotiations with Russia is wearing thin among allies who are worried about the economic effects of a protracted war. Ukraine's president, Zelenskiy has said Ukraine is only prepared to enter negotiations with Russia if its troops leave all parts of Ukraine, including Crimea and the eastern areas of the Donbas, de facto controlled by Russia since 2014, and if those Russians who have committed crimes in Ukraine face trial. Zelenskiy also made clear that he would not hold negotiations with the current Russian leadership. Last month, he signed a decree specifying that Ukraine would only negotiate with a Russian president who has succeeded Vladimir Putin. The US has so far given Ukraine \$18.9bn worth of aid and is ready to give more, saying it will support Ukraine for as long as it takes. However, allies in parts of Europe, Africa and Latin America, US officials told the Post, are concerned by the strain that the war is putting on energy and food prices as well as supply chains. "Ukraine fatigue is a real thing for some of our partners," one US official said. US officials have requested that Kyiv signal its openness to negotiate not to push Ukraine towards the negotiating table immediately, but to maintain the support of concerned allies, according to the Post. For Ukrainian officials, the US's request would mean reneging on several months of rhetoric about the need for a decisive military defeat against Russia in order to secure Ukraine's security in the long term – a message that strongly resonates with the Ukrainian population who fear Russia will only try again to capture the country in the future. [Source: The Guardian]

**It appears that the US has decided that Russia has been severely weakened and that negotiations will help preserve a new balance of power on the European continent as well as Eurasia.**

### **Imran Khan Speaks Publicly for First Time Since Surviving Shooting**

Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan has made his first public address since he was shot during a protest march in the eastern city of Wazirabad. Sitting in a wheelchair at a hospital in Lahore, Mr Khan said he wouldn't have survived the shooting if the two shooters he saw had "synchronised" their attack. "Because I fell, one of the shooters thought I had died, and left," he said. Last month, Pakistan's election commission disqualified Mr Khan from holding public office, in a case described by the former star cricketer as politically motivated. In a video confession released by police, one man accused of shooting him said the former cricketer was "misguiding" the people, and that he "wanted to kill him" for doing so. The conditions under which the confession was carried out are unclear. The attack on Mr Khan has electrified the country, which the cricketer-turned-politician led until April, when he was ousted by a parliamentary vote of no confidence. Schools were closed in the capital, Islamabad, after his party - the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) - called for nationwide protests following Friday prayers. President Arif Alvi - a founding member of the PTI - called

it a "heinous assassination attempt". Mr Khan's political opponents have also been quick to condemn the attack, with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif ordering an immediate investigation. Meanwhile, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken called for calm, saying: "Violence has no place in politics, and we call on all parties to refrain from violence, harassment and intimidation." Pakistan - which is reeling from an ongoing economic crisis and devastating floods - has a record of political violence, with former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto assassinated in 2007. Many evoked her killing in the wake of the attack on Mr Khan. [Source: BBC News]

**The failure of Khan's assassination will spur momentum for a general election amongst Khan's floundering support base. It is also likely to give fresh impetus to the silent majority to support Khan. However, a lot depends on the top army brass if it is willing to still entertain Khan or is keen to eliminate Khan from the political scene. The presence of tanks on the roads is a clear sign that the top army brass intends to dig in for a fight.**

### **Chinese Chip Designers Slow Down Processors to Dodge US Sanctions**

Alibaba and start-up Biren Technology are tweaking their most advanced chip designs to reduce processing speeds and avoid US-imposed sanctions aimed at suppressing Chinese computing power. Alibaba, Biren and other Chinese design houses have spent years and millions of dollars creating the blueprints for advanced processors to power the country's next generation of supercomputers, artificial intelligence algorithms and data centres. These are produced offshore by the world's biggest contract chipmaker Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing. But sanctions announced by Washington last month that cap the processing power of any semiconductor shipped into China without a licence have thrown a wrench into their ambitions. Both Alibaba and Biren had already conducted expensive test runs of their latest chips at TSMC when Washington unveiled the controls. The rules have forced the companies to halt further production and make changes to their designs, according to six people briefed on the situation. They mark another blow for Alibaba, the tech group founded by billionaire Jack Ma. Its shares have lost 80 per cent of their value since Beijing cancelled sister group Ant's initial public offering two years ago. The group's new chip was to be its first graphics processing unit and was close to being unveiled, according to three people close to the matter. The US export controls extend to third-country chip manufacturers because almost all semiconductor fabrication plants use American components or software, meaning the rules may amount to an embargo on all high-end processors entering China. Washington earlier restricted such imports from California chip companies Nvidia and AMD. Meanwhile, China's own domestic chip plants are possibly decades away from producing cutting-edge chips such as those designed by Alibaba and Biren. Analysts said Washington's sanctions, of which the high-end processor restrictions are one part, aimed to forcibly slow China's tech sector development. "Attempting to freeze a country in place for a technological level of hardware is a big deal," said Paul Triolo, head of tech policy at consulting group ASG. "That is what the US is trying to do by restricting sales and closing off the manufacturing road map to get to these advanced levels of hardware." [Source: Financial Times]

**America is turning the screws on China's technological advancement, and this is in addition to US efforts to decouple supply chains and surround China militarily in the Asian Pacific region. Apart from stern rhetoric, there is very little effective mobilisation from the Chinese government to aggressively oppose such measures. The question remains has America's treatment of Russia dampened China's ambitions to become a great power.**