

German Migrant Coordinator Calls for Doubling Deportations

BERLIN - Germany should step up deportations of migrants whose asylum applications have been rejected, the country's government coordinator for migrant issues said in comments printed Saturday, suggesting it would be realistic to double last year's numbers of those sent home. Some 22,200 migrants were deported from Germany last year and 37,220 returned home voluntarily, Peter Altmaier was quoted by the Funke



Media group of newspapers saying. "A realistic benchmark for 2016 would be a doubling of these numbers — that's where the states must take action," he said. Germany saw 1.1 million migrants enter the coun-

try last year and has been working to speed up the process of either granting them asylum or sending them home if they don't qualify for it. So far, most of the migrants who have been deported have come from the Balkans, after Germany made clear that it would only accept the asylum requests from people fleeing conflict or persecution, not those seeking to improve their economic situations. Germany is currently working on a deal with Afghanistan that would ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

US Deploys B-52 Bombers to Qatar for Fight Against IS

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Air Force deployed B-52 bombers to Qatar on Saturday to join the fight against Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, the first time they have been based in the Middle East since the end of the Gulf War in 1991. U.S. Air Forces Central Command said it last flew the long-range bombers operationally in the region in May 2006 as part of the war in Afghanistan, and during a U.S.-led military exercise in Jordan in May 2015. "The B-52 demonstrates our continued resolve to

apply persistent pressure on Daesh and defend the region in any future contingency," said Air Force Lieutenant General Charles Brown, commander of U.S. Air Forces Central Command. Daesh is the Arabic acronym for the Islamic State militant movement. Lieutenant Colonel Chris Karns, spokesman for the Central Command, said he could not provide the exact number of B-52 bombers to be based at Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar due to "operational security reasons." Washington's decision to



deploy its powerful B-52 bombers to Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar came as the U.S. military stepped up the fight against Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. Brown said the bombers

would be able to deliver precision weapons and carry out a range of missions, including strategic attack, close-air support, air interdiction, and maritime operations. *(Reuters)*

19 Yemeni Soldiers Killed in Al-Qaida Ambush

ADEN - About 19 army soldiers were killed during an ambush by militants of the Yemen-based al-Qaida branch in the country's southern province of Abyan on Saturday morning, a military official told Xinhua. "Masked al-Qaida attackers ambushed three trucks carrying dozens of travelers, most of who are army soldiers in the tribal area of Ahwar in southern Abyan province, killing about 19 soldiers at the scene," the local military official said on condition of anonymity. "The army soldiers were traveling to another province in order to receive their monthly

salaries, but unfortunately were killed in a heinous way before reaching their destination," the military source said. However, a tribal chief told Xinhua that "the al-Qaida terrorists forced the three trucks to move to a rugged area and then executed some of the soldiers by knives." "Several bodies were found with their heads separated and other soldiers were killed by gunshots," the anonymous tribal source said by phone. Abyan province, the home of Yemen's internationally recognized President ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

DPRK Announces Successful Test of Intercontinental Ballistic Rocket Engine

PYONGYANG - The top leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) Kim Jong Un has overseen a successful test of a heavy-lift engine of a new-type intercontinental ballistic rocket, the official KCNA news agency reported Saturday. The ground test was conducted at the Sohae Space Center, which is located at the DPRK's North Pyongan Province, the KCNA said, without specifying when the test was carried out. The test proved a great success and is of significance in strengthening the country's

nuclear forces and defense capabilities, said KCNA, adding that the engine of the intercontinental ballistic rocket met all scientific and technological indexes. Kim made the order to commence the test and was satisfied with the result, saying that the success "provided a firm guarantee for mounting another form of nuclear attack upon U.S. imperialists and other hostile forces and make it possible to have access to more powerful means capable of reacting to nukes in kind." The DPRK is now able to ...*(More on P4)...(19)*

External Forces Complicate Situation in Nagorno-Karabakh: Russian PM

MOSCOW - External forces should refrain from words or actions that may escalate the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said here on Saturday. Many "forces are closely looking into the consequences" of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict for the situation in the Middle East and Russia, Medvedev said during an interview with Rossiya TV channel. "All conflicts at a given time may in one way or another be a factor in political

decision," the prime minister said, adding that "I do not rule out that there are factors that are influencing the conflict from abroad." Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's statement on supporting Azerbaijan against the independence claim of the Nagorno-Karabakh region is a cause of concern, Medvedev said. The Turkish president on Wednesday also accused Russia of siding with Armenia in the conflict. Nagorno-Karabakh is a mountainous enclave with



a large ethnic Armenian population, that lies inside the territory of Azerbaijan. This region has been the subject of a long-lasting dispute between the two

neighboring countries as the first conflict broke out in 1988 when the region claimed independence from Azerbaijan to join Armenia. *(Xinhua)*

US Defense Secretary to Visit India Sunday

NEW DELHI - U.S. Defense Secretary Ashton Carter will arrive in India Sunday on a three-day visit, sources said Saturday. During his India tour, Carter will visit both the national capital and the western state of Goa at the invitation of Indian Defense Minister Manohar Parrikar, the sources said. On the eve of his visit, the U.S. Defense Secre-



tary has said that Washington has a "whole global agenda" with India covering all issues.

"The days are gone when we only deal with India as the other side of the Pakistan coin, or

Pakistan as the other side of the India coin," he said in New York. *(Xinhua)*

Taiwan Leader Visits Island, Urges Peace in Contested Waters



PENGJIA ISLET - Taiwanese President Ma Ying-jeou called for peace in Asia's contested waters on Saturday as he visited a small island in the East China Sea, one of his last symbolic foreign policy moves before leaving office next month. Ma's visit to Pengjia, about 35 miles (56 kilometers) north of Taiwan proper, was his administration's second propaganda trip to an island in three weeks.

It came four years after Ma last visited Pengjia to propose a plan to address territorial disputes among China, Taiwan and Japan over the nearby chain known as Senkaku in Japanese and Diaoyutai in Chinese. During his eight years as president, Ma has sought to carve out Taiwan's position as a mediator in the region's numerous territorial disputes while asserting ...*(More on P4)...(22)*

US Embassy in Turkey Issues Security Warning to Citizens

ANKARA - The U.S. Embassy in Ankara on Saturday issued a security warning to its citizens in Turkey, saying that there are threats to tourist sites in Istanbul and Antalya. The U.S. mission in Turkey would like to inform citizens that there are credible threats to tourist areas, in particular to public squares and docks in Istanbul and Antalya, the embassy said on its website. It urged the citizens to be extremely cautious if they are in the vicinity of such areas and to monitor local media. The embassy had issued a security warning to its citizens days before a bombing attack struck the Turkish capital city of Ankara in March. Turkey's cultural capital Istanbul will host the 13th summit of Organization of Islamic Cooperation this month. The 2016 Horticultural Expo will be held in touristic capital Antalya from April 23 to October 30. *(Xinhua)*

Five Refugees Drown As Boat Sinks Off Greek Island

ATHENS - Five people, including one child, drowned Saturday as a boat carrying migrants and refugees from Turkey sank off a Greek island, Greek authorities announced. A small boat capsized off the northeast coast of the Greek island of Samos, close to the Turkish shores. So far the bodies of four women and one child have

been found, while five people have been rescued. Authorities search the area with a helicopter in order to locate other survivors. The precise number of people on board remains unclear. The incident occurred a day after a second batch of 124 refugees and migrants were returned to Turkey ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

Hundreds of Civilians Start Returning to Syria's Palmyra

DAMASCUS - Hundreds of civilians were transported on Saturday to the ancient city of Palmyra in the central province of Homs, following the Syrian military's recapture of that millennia-old oasis city, a government source told Xinhua. Ten buses carrying civilians, including women

and children, headed on Saturday to Palmyra, as part of the government's efforts to return the displaced people to their homes in the city, which was taken by the Islamic State (IS) group last May and liberated by the Syrian army and allied fighters last month, a source in ...*(More on P4)...(21)*

Nigeria to Sustain Tempo in War Against Insurgency: President

LAGOS - The Nigerian Armed Forces will sustain the tempo in the ongoing war against insurgency in the restive North-East of the country to stamp out terrorism, President Muhammadu Buhari said on Saturday. The Nigerian leader, who was represented by the Chief of Defense

Staff, Gen. Abayomi Olanisakin, stated this while inaugurating the Nigerian Army Properties Limited mega filling station in northern city of Minna. "I applaud the successes of the armed forces in counter-insurgency operations in the North-East and urge ...*(More on P4)...(23)*

Neighbor News

G7 Should Not Hype up S. China Sea Issue: Chinese FM

BEIJING - The upcoming meeting of Group of Seven (G7) foreign ministers should not play up the South China Sea issue, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said here on Saturday. Wang told visiting British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond that China hopes Britain will adopt an objective and fair stand in the issue, and not take sides. The G7 foreign ministers from Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy,

Japan and the United States is scheduled to convene on Sunday in Hiroshima, Japan. Wang also reiterated China's stance on Hong Kong. The Hong Kong affairs are China's internal affairs, he stressed, noting the Chinese central government will adhere to the principles of "one country, two systems" and "Hong Kong people governing Hong Kong" with a high degree of autonomy. ...*(More on P4)...(24)*

Turkmenistan Names Chamber of Commerce Head

ASHGABAT - Dovran Khojajev has been elected the head of Turkmenistan's Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Turkmenistan's President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov has signed a corresponding decree to approve this decision of the board of Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Turkmenistan's Chamber of Commerce and Industry was established in 1994 to promote the development of the national economy and its inte-

gration into the world economic system, forming a modern industrial, financial and trade infrastructure, creating favorable conditions for business activities, assisting in establishing trade and economic, scientific and technical relations with foreign partners. It brings together enterprises, organizations, entrepreneurs and their associations, regardless of ownership and is meant to express and protect their interests. *(Agencies)*

US Not in Position to Comment on Iran's Missile Might: Cmdr.

TEHRAN - A senior Iranian commander has rejected US Secretary of State John Kerry's call for missile negotiations with Tehran, saying Washington is not in a position to make comments about the Islamic Republic's missile capabilities. It is outside the purview of US officials to talk about Iran's defense requirements, Brigadier General Hossein Salami, second-in-command of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), told reporters on Saturday. "Our missile capa-

bilities will never be up for negotiations or compromise," Salami said. He added that Iran's missile industry supports the nation's dignity, survival and glory, emphasizing that the Islamic Republic will proceed with boosting its missile might. Salami's reaction came after the US secretary of state suggested on Thursday that Washington was open to a "new arrangement" with Tehran for peacefully resolving disputes such as its recent ballistic missile tests. *(PressTV)*

Korea, Uzbekistan Reach New Cargo Partnership for Cargo Moving to Tehran

BISHKEK - Korean Air Cargo and Uzbekistan Airways launched a new cargo partnership which will enable cargo moving within Korean Air Cargo's network to reach Tehran's Imam Khomeini International Airport via Uzbekistan Air's Navoi hub. Korean Air Cargo already partners with Uzbekistan Air to feed cargo into Frankfurt, and by the end of April will be able to make use of the airline's twice weekly service to Tehran with one of its 767-300Fs, Air Cargo World reported. Given the deal with Uzbekistan Airways, Korean

Air stands to gain a sizeable foothold into Iran's cargo market. Last month it was announced that Iran's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport had granted Korean Air Lines the rights to operate passenger flights capable of carrying belly cargo, four times weekly between Incheon and Tehran. This announcement follows a string of new transactions following the removal of sanctions in Iran and subsequently has players within the global logistics industry racing to enter the market. *(AKIpress)*

Pakistan Navy Inducts Coastal Anti-Ship 'Zarb' Missile After Successful Test

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan Navy test fired the "Zarb" surface to sea missile aimed at consolidating its defence capability to thwart any possible aggression by adversaries from the Arabian sea. "The missile was fired from a strategic point located at a coastal area which successfully hit its target in the Arabian

sea," a spokesman for the Pakistan Navy Commodore Nadeem Bokhari said in a statement issued from naval headquarters in Islamabad. Zarb missile was formally inducted into Pakistan's Navy defence system soon after its successful launch. Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Zakaullah termed ...*(More on P4)...(25)*