

# World Powers Turn Screw on Yemen Rebels

NEW YORK - World powers united against Yemen's Huthi rebels on Tuesday, hitting them with a United Nations arms embargo and new United States sanctions. The Huthi revolt has forced President Abdelabdo Mansour Hadi to flee the impoverished Arab state and threatens to provoke a humanitarian disaster. The conflict has also further heightened tensions in the broader Middle East, with Saudi Arabia accusing Iran of fomenting the rebellion. A Saudi-led coalition of Sunni-led states has launched air strikes against the Shiite rebels, and the civilian death toll

is mounting. The UN Security Council responded by slapping an arms embargo on the Huthis and demanding their fighters withdraw from the capital Sanaa. Separately, the United States demanded that Iran obey the embargo and added two top figures in the rebellion to its sanctions blacklist. Iran, meanwhile, was working on its own plan to end the conflict, proposing a negotiated peace plan that would lead to a power-sharing government. Saudi Arabia, which is determined to punish the Shiite rebels on its borders for driving its ally



from Sanaa, will give that short shrift. Saudi spokesman Brigadier General Ahmed al-Assiri told reporters the

UN resolution shows the world supports the Saudi-led intervention. "The United Nations vote today was a victory

for the Yemen citizens before anyone else," he said, adding the Council "sees the dangers in Yemen." The UN Security

Council resolution was the first formal action by the body since the start of Saudi air strikes on ... (More on P4)... (27)

## Millions of Middle East Children out of School, UN Warns

BEIRUT - Poverty, gender discrimination and violence are keeping more than 12 million children in the Middle East out of school, despite efforts to expand education, the UN children's agency warned Wednesday.



An additional three million children in Syria and Iraq have been forced out of school by conflict, UNICEF said in a new report. The joint report by UNICEF and UN cultural agency UNESCO's Institute for Statistics said the rates of out-of-school children in the region had been declining, "often by as much as half." "But in recent years, progress has stalled," it said,

with 4.3 million primary-aged children and 2.9 million lower secondary-aged children out of school. An additional 5.1 million children are not receiving pre-primary school education, bringing the total number of the region's children out of school to 12.3 million, the report said.

That figure represents around 15 percent of the children in the Middle East who should be receiving pre-primary, primary or secondary education. Yemen had the worst rate of pre-primary school age children receiving an education, with only six percent of them in school. (AFP)

## Egypt, Saudi Mull Exercises as Pressure Builds on Yemen Rebels

SANAA - Saudi Arabia and Egypt are considering holding "large-scale" military manoeuvres after launching air strikes on Yemeni rebels who have been slapped with a UN arms embargo and sanctions. In a possible sign the Saudi-led air campaign against the Shiite rebels may expand into a ground operation, Cairo said it and Riyadh were mulling the exercises in Saudi Arabia, with other Gulf countries participating. "It was decided to form a joint military committee to look into a large-scale strategic manoeuvre on Saudi territory," Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi's office said late Tuesday after he met the

Saudi defence minister. Saudi Arabia and a coalition of Arab countries launched the air strikes on March 26, after the Iran-backed rebels seized the capital Sanaa last year and advanced on the main southern city of Aden, where President Abdelabdo Mansour Hadi had taken refuge. Hadi fled to Riyadh from Aden, which has since seen heavy fighting between pro- and anti-government forces, with overnight rebel attacks killing at least seven people. Saudi Arabia has accused Tehran -- the main Shiite power -- of arming the rebels and the conflict has heightened tensions in the Middle East. World powers united

against the rebels on Tuesday, with the UN Security Council voting to impose an arms embargo on them and hitting their leaders with sanctions. The UN resolution -- the first formal action taken by the Security Council since the start of the Saudi-led raids -- demands the Huthis withdraw from Sanaa and all other areas they have seized. It slaps an arms embargo on Huthi leaders and their allies and puts chief Abdulmalik al-Huthi and ex-president Ali Abdullah Saleh's eldest son, Ahmed, on a sanctions list, imposing a global travel ban and an assets freeze on the two men. (AFP)

## Up to 400 Migrants Died in Boat Capsize off Libya: Survivors

ROME - Up to 400 illegal migrants died after their vessel capsized off the Libyan coast, said survivors who were brought to Italy, where tension is mounting over a surge in boat arrivals from North Africa. The Italian coastguard on Monday said they had managed to rescue 144 of the people on the sunken vessel, while nine bodies were also recovered. The International Organization for Migration and the charity Save the Children said between 144 and 150 survivors arrived at Reggio Calabria, on Italy's

southern tip, on Tuesday morning. "There were 400 victims in this shipwreck, which occurred 24 hours after (their vessel) left the Libyan coast," Save the Children said in a statement, citing survivors. "There were several young males, probably minors, among the victims" and also children among those rescued, the international NGO said. IOM spokesman in Italy Flavio Di Giacomo told AFP several of the survivors had told his organisation there were between 500 and 550 people on board

when the ship sank. "We are continuing to investigate in order to understand how the shipwreck happened," Di Giacomo said. Initial investigations indicate the boat may have capsized after passengers started moving when they saw the Italian rescue team. The latest tragedy came as Italian authorities said around 8,500 migrants had been rescued at sea between Friday and Monday, reigniting a debate in Italy about whether the country has a duty to house all new arrivals.

## NATO Commander Urges Russia to Stop Fuelling Ukraine Conflict

BRUSSELS - NATO's top commander, U.S. General Philip Breedlove, voiced concern on Wednesday at a new flare-up of fighting in Ukraine and urged Russia to stop fuelling the conflict. "Concerned by renewed fighting in Ukraine. Vital all sides pull back verifiably, Russia stops fuelling conflict," NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, said on Twitter. Six servicemen were killed and 12 wounded in eastern Ukraine in



the previous 24 hours despite a ceasefire deal, Ukraine's military said on Tuesday. Russia denies NATO's assertions that it has sent troops and equipment to Ukraine. (Reuters)

## Never Possible to Recognize 1915 Armenia Killings as Genocide: Turkey

ANKARA - Turkey says it will never recognize as genocide the 1915 killing of Armenians as the European Parliament considers whether to pass a resolution on the Ottoman-era massacre. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Wednesday, "For Turkey, it will never be possible to recognize such a sin, such a blame." Erdogan pointed to the European Parliament's plan and said

the resolution "will go in one ear and out the other." The World War I event, during which Armenia says up to 1.5 million of its people were killed, was first qualified as genocide in a similar resolution passed in 1987 by the European Parliament, which says the planned resolution is to honor "the 100th anniversary of the Armenian genocide." A picture re-

leased by the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute dated 1915 shows soldiers standing over the skulls of victims from the Armenian village of Sheykhlan in the Mush valley, on the Caucasus front during World War I. The Turkish president, meanwhile, defended the present-day treatment of Armenians in Turkey, saying, (Agencies)

## Indonesia Protests Beheading of Migrant Worker in Saudi Arabia

JAKARTA - Jakarta summoned the Saudi Arabian ambassador on Wednesday to protest the beheading of an Indonesian domestic worker and complain that her family and consular staff were not given prior notice of the execution. Saudi authorities said Siti Zainab was executed on Tuesday in Medina after being convicted of stabbing and beating Saudi woman Noura Al Morobei to death in 1999. Human rights groups

have used Zainab's beheading to urge Indonesia to abandon its support for the death penalty, as Jakarta presses ahead with plans to execute several foreigners on death row for drug crimes. Indonesian president Joko Widodo and three of his predecessors had previously written to the Saudi king asking for the victim's family to forgive Zainab. But the sentence was carried out despite Jakarta claiming Zainab's family and con-

sular officials were not given adequate notice before her execution. "From the beginning, the government has struggled to provide her with assistance and has asked the family [of the victim] for forgiveness," Indonesia's foreign ministry said. The Saudi interior ministry said Zainab's execution was delayed until the victim's children were old enough to decide whether the punishment should proceed. (Agencies)

## Iran's Zarif Says will Use Influence to Broker Peace in Yemen

LISBON - Iran's foreign minister said on Wednesday Tehran will use all its influence in the region and in Yemen to broker a peace deal for Yemen in order to end Saudi-led air strikes against Houthi rebel forces allied to Tehran. "We are a major force in the region and we have relations with all groups in various countries and we are going to use that in order

to bring everybody to the negotiating table, to the point that we can," Foreign Minister Mohammed Javad Zarif told reporters in Lisbon. He said efforts to bring peace to Yemen must "start with the right premise, that we need to end this bombardment and all the bloodshed and prevent al Qaeda from taking advantage of this nasty situation". (Reuters)

## Neighbour News

### Congress will Not Derail Nuclear Talks: Iran

DUBAI - Iran will not allow U.S. domestic politics to derail nuclear negotiations, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Marzieh Afkham said on Wednesday, after U.S. President Barack Obama conceded that Congress will have the power to review any final deal. Republicans and some Democrats in Congress had pressured Obama to allow legislative oversight of the nuclear negotiations.

"That is an issue related to their domestic affairs. We are dealing with the American government," Afkham said at a news conference carried by state television. The development injects a new element of uncertainty into the delicate final stages of negotiations between major powers and Iran aimed at curbing Tehran's nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief. (Reuters)

### Pakistan Successfully Test Fires Nuclear-Capable Ghauri Missile

RAWALPINDI - Pakistan test-fired on Wednesday ballistic missile Ghauri, which is capable of carrying both conventional and nuclear warheads up to a distance of 1,300 kilometres. In a statement, the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) said the launch of the intermediate-range Ghauri was conducted by a Strategic Missile Group of the Army Strategic Forces Command (ASFC) that was aimed at testing the operational and technical readiness of (ASFC). The launch was witnessed by senior officers from Strategic Plans Division, strategic forces and scientists and engineers belonging to strategic organisations. Director General Strategic Plans Division Lieutenant General Zubair Mahmood Hayat congratulated the scientists,

engineers and all ranks of the strategic forces. The director general also expressed complete satisfaction over the "excellent standard" achieved by strategic forces during the training, which was reflected by proficient handling of the weapon system in the field as well fulfillment of operational and technical objectives. Lieutenant General Zubair also emphasised that Pakistan can be justifiably proud of its defence capability as well as its nuclear deterrence. President Mamnoon Hussain along with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif also warmly appreciated the launch while congratulating the strategic forces and the rest of the team on their outstanding achievement. (Agencies)

### China, Russia Vow to Bring Cooperation on Law Enforcement

MOSCOW - China is ready to work with Russia to bring cooperation on law enforcement and security to a new height. Noting that Russia-China relations are progressing smoothly with frequent mutual visits by top officials of both sides, Patrushev said Guo's visit will surely help to promote bilateral cooperation on law enforcement and security, adding that Russia is willing to work for closer coordination with China and jointly deal with common threats and challenges. During his visit, Guo also met with heads of the Russian Federal Drug Control Service, Federal Security Service, Federal Guard Service and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, with several co-operation agreements signed between China and Russia. (Xinhua)

### Tajikistan is the World's Most Remittance Dependent Country: WB

DUSHANBE - The World Bank's Migration and Development Brief, released on April 13, notes that growth in global remittances, including those to developing countries, will slow sharply this year due to weak economic growth in Europe, deterioration of the Russian economy and the depreciation of the euro and ruble. Officially recorded remittances to the developing world are expected to reach \$440 billion in 2015, an increase of 0.9 percent over the previous year. Global remittances, including those to high income countries, are projected to grow by 0.4 percent to \$586 billion. The 2015 remittance growth rates are the lowest since the glob-

al financial crisis in 2008/09. Nonetheless, the number of international migrants is expected to exceed 250 million in 2015, and their savings and remittances are expected to continue to grow. The slowdown in the growth of remittances this year will affect most developing regions, in particular Europe and Central Asia where flows are expected to decline by 12.7 percent in 2015. The positive impact of an economic recovery in the U.S. will be partially offset by continued weakness in the Euro Area, the impact of lower oil prices on the Russian economy, the strengthening of the US dollar, ... (More on P4)... (28)

## IS Militants Seize New Areas in Iraq's Ramadi

RAMADI, - The Islamic State (IS) group on Wednesday captured four areas in Ramadi, capital of Anbar province in western Iraq, while heavy clashes are underway, a provincial security source said. The IS militants carried out attacks at dawn on the positions of the security forces and allied

Shiite and Sunni militias and managed to seize the areas of Soufiyah, Albu Ghanim, Albu Mahal and Albu Souda in eastern Ramadi, some 110 km west of Baghdad, the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity. He said the extremist militants in early hours of the day blew up three suicide truck bombs

at the police station in Soufiyah district and the blasts were followed by advance of dozens of IS militants who after four hours seized the whole district and spread to nearby areas. The security forces and Hashid Shaabi, or Popular Mobilization, militia-men withdrew from their positions. (Xinhua)