

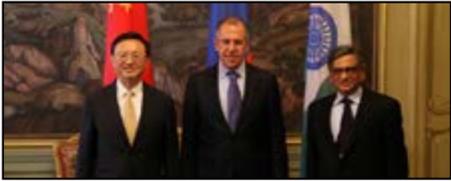
# Islamic Summit Focuses on Overcoming Terrorism, Sectarianism

ISTANBUL - A two-day summit bringing together leaders of the Islamic world concluded in the Turkish city of Istanbul with a pledge to combat terrorism, cast aside sectarian differences and address regional conflicts. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan chaired the final session of the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation summit on Friday morning. "As Muslims, we cannot overcome our difficulties without achieving unity in spite of our differences," he said at



the closing ceremony held after a break for delegates to perform prayers. The Turkish leader said that sectarianism, racism and terrorism are the three largest challenges confronting the Muslim world. He said establishing an international arbitration body in Istanbul was part of the OIC 2025 action plan. Iyad Madani, the secretary general of the 57-member Islamic bloc, said more than 200 decisions were taken in the course of the summit.(AP)

## Foreign Ministers of China, Russia, India to Meet in Moscow



BEIJING - Foreign Minister Wang Yi will participate in the 14th Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of China, Russia and India on April 18 in Moscow, Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang announced Friday. During the meeting, the foreign ministers will exchange views on international and regional issues

of common concern and discuss ways to push trilateral pragmatic cooperation forward, said Lu at a routine press conference. China believes that the meeting will be conducive to strengthening political mutual trust and pushing forward exchanges and cooperation among the three countries, he said.(Xinhua)

## Italy Insists 'No Invasion' After Spike in Migrant Arrivals

ROME - Italy insisted Friday it was not facing an "invasion" after a spike in migrant boat crossings from Libya exacerbated fears the country is on the verge of becoming the main entry point for people trying to reach Europe. Nearly 6,000 mostly African migrants have landed at southern Italian sports since Tuesday but Prime Minister Matteo Renzi said the overall trend this year was broadly in line with the 2015 pattern. "We are not facing an invasion," the premier told



a press conference after the figures were released by the International Organisation for Migration in Geneva. Fears are running high in Italy that it could pay the price of EU moves to close

routes through the Greek Islands and the Balkans. Italian officials are also wary of the possibility of neighbouring EU countries closing their borders, as France did temporarily last year and Austria is

threatening to do now. Austria has begun preparing for a possible reintroduction of border controls at the Brenner pass in the Alps, prompting protests from Italy and the European Commission.(AFP)

## Hollande, Merkel Hope Ukraine's New Gov't Engage Rapid, Concrete Reform

PARIS - French President Francois Hollande and German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Friday were hopeful the new Ukrainian government would put rapid reforms in place to modernize the country and ensure its stability. During phone talks with Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko, both European leaders expressed their full support for the refreshed executive team in Kiev. "It is necessary that the new momentum created by the government

reshuffle results in rapid and concrete results," they said in a statement released by Hollande's office. Hollande and Merkel also "encouraged Ukrainian authorities to accelerate domestic reforms, in the continuity of significant actions taken since 2014, and mainly to modernize the country, fight against corruption, and reform the justice field." Besides, they urged for progress in the full implementation of the Minsk



peace deal with a major focus on security, the release of prisoners, and organi-

zation of elections in eastern Ukraine to peacefully end the crisis. (Xinhua)

## S. Africa Confirms its Military Cooperation with Saudi Arabia

JOHANNESBURG - South Africa is in military cooperation with Saudi Arabia, the presidency said on Friday, in reference to a military factory in Saudi Arabia. Presidential spokesperson Bongani Majola was responding to reports that during his visit to Saudi Arabia last month, South African President Jacob Zuma inaugurated an arms factory in the kingdom. Majola confirmed that during his state visit, President Zuma and Saudi Deputy Crown Prince Mohammad

Bin Salman, who is also the Minister of Defence, visited the Saudi Military Industries Corporation facilities, operated by Rheinmetall Denel Munition Ltd, in which South Africa's armament manufacturer Denel holds a 49 percent stake. Zuma and the Crown Prince met with and personnel and senior management of Rheinmetall Denel Munition and the South African staff at the military factory, according to Majola. Zuma's visit sought to ...*(More on P4)...(27)*

## Migrant Arrivals in Europe Continues to Decline: IOM

GENEVA - The International Organization for Migrants (IOM) on Friday reported a significant drop of migrant arrivals in Europe in the first half of April, when compared with the first half of March. A total of 1,903 migrants arrived in Europe in the first half of April, a decline of 90 percent when compared when the number of arrivals in the first half of March, during which 19,323 migrants reached

Europe. With overall arrivals of March running at under half of the total recorded in February 2016, IOM estimates 42 percent of the newly arrived migrants and refugees are adult men, 37 percent children and 21 percent adult women. According to IOM, an estimated 177,207 migrants and refugees have entered Europe by sea in 2016 so far, with some 5,664 have ...*(More on P4)...(28)*

## Japan, Russia to Schedule Talks Between Abe, Putin

TOKYO - Japan and Russia on Friday agreed to schedule a date for Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin in a move Tokyo hopes will help improve bilateral ties with Moscow and see both sides move closer towards settling a long-held territorial dispute. "We will compile a solution acceptable to both sides. We held a positive debate that will give a boost to the negotiations going forward," Japan's Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida told a press briefing following talks with

his Russian equivalent Sergey Lavrov. Officials here have said that Abe will almost certainly visit Sochi in Russia, located on the Black Sea and host of the 2014 Winter Olympics, early next month, for talks with Putin, with hopes that Putin will pay a return visit to Japan thereafter. Following Abe's upcoming meeting with Putin, Kishida and Lavrov agreed that additional senior officials' meetings will be held to further discuss the territorial dispute between both nations, although fundamental difference on the



issue still remain. While showing signs of thawing to some extent following the latest ministers' meeting, bilateral ties between Tokyo and Moscow became increasingly strained following Japan slapping new sanctions against Rus-

sia in response to its annexation of Crimea and the crisis in eastern Ukraine, alongside steps taken by the U.S. and the European Union. The move in 2014 saw diplomatic ties frayed between both countries ...*(More on P4)...(29)*

## Car Bomb Explodes Near Foreign Ministry Building in Yemen

ADEN - A car bomb went off on Friday near the Foreign Ministry building in Yemen's temporary capital of Aden, with no casualties reported so far, a security official told Xinhua. The local Yemeni security source said that the huge explosion occurred in the neighborhood of Mansourah. Witnesses near the scene confirmed to Xinhua that a suspected al-Qaida attacker detonated his car at the scene after he failed to reach his target. Meanwhile, local medical officials said that two passers-by were injured in the suicide blast. The explosion occurred just few hours after pro-government forces supported by UAE helicopters launched an all-out offensive and recaptured new ground from al-Qaida in neighboring southern province of Lahj. The anti-terror offensive ...*(More on P4)...(32)*

## Pro-Gov't Forces Recapture New Ground from Al-Qaida in Yemen

ADEN - Forces loyal to Yemen's government on Friday continued fighting al-Qaida militants in the country's south, regaining full control over new areas from al-Qaida terrorist group in the southern province of Lahj after a well-planned military operation. The pro-government forces air-covered by Saudi-led helicopters in the early morning made significant advance in Houta town, the provincial capital of Lahj province, and managed to recapture all neighboring areas after short armed confrontations with al-Qaida members there, according to a local Yemeni government official. The government source said that dozens of fighters of the Popular Resist-

ance, an anti-Houthi southern militia, participated in the military operation alongside with pro-government forces and succeeded in entering several al-Qaida-controlled positions in Lahj. A military source said on condition of anonymity that "an all-out anti-terror offensive is still ongoing against al-Qaida militants in Lahj, but most of the key areas are now under the control of pro-government forces." "Hundreds of well-armed soldiers backed by military UAE armored vehicles came from neighboring province of Aden and took control over government institutions in Lahj," the military source said. ...*(More on P4)...(33)*

## Neighbor News

### OIC Dominated by Some Members, Rarely Unbiased: Iran

TEHRAN - Iran has criticized the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) for being dominated by certain member states and for its failure to avoid bias in its decision-making processes. "The general atmosphere governing the OIC under the current circumstances is not really indicative of cooperation among Muslim countries and unity in the Muslim world," Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi, who is attending the organization's 13th summit in the Turkish city of Istanbul, said on Thursday. "Unfortunately, the organization has invariably suffered from this structural and organizational

weakness," he added. Araqchi expressed regret that there have only been a few occasions when the body managed to act in a unified manner mainly due to Iran's efforts, and those limited instances of solidarity concerned external threats facing the Muslim world, like the Bosnian War. "When it comes to the internal issues of the Muslim world, [there is no such unity] owing to dominance by some countries, which try to advance their own interests in the name and under the guise of the organization using their financial resources, threats, and bribery," the Iranian official stated.(PressTV)

### Turkmenistan, EU Implementing Joint Project in Energy Saving Sphere

ASHGABAT - Turkmenistan and the EU implement joint project "Support to the introduction of Sustainable Development Policies - Rational use of natural resources in the energy-environment sectors in Turkmenistan," Neutral Turkmenistan newspaper reported. This project's implementation is aimed at creating a national model of the energy-efficient economy, according to the newspaper. "The project is being implemented within the framework of the bilat-

eral partnership of Turkmenistan and the EU in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding on energy cooperation," reported the newspaper citing Sylvia Pietropaolo, policy officer at the European Commission, as saying. The joint project is based on the provisions of Turkmenistan's National Climate Change Strategy and contributes to the execution of the country's obligations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).(Agencies)

### Pak President Turned Down 513 Mercy Petitions over Last Five Years: MoI

ISLAMABAD - The Pakistani president rejected as many as 513 mercy petitions of condemned prisoners over the last five years, a document from Pakistani Ministry of Interior (MoI) revealed on Friday. The Interior Ministry, in a written response to a question raised by Jamaat-i-Islami Senator Sirajul Haq, said that all mercy petitions sent to the president during the time period were rejected. Only 38 mercy petitions of condemned prisoners who were awarded a death sentence are pending with the Interior Ministry, of which 13 cases are under submission to the President Secretariat for deci-

sion, the document said. "Appeals of these condemned prisoners have already been rejected by higher courts," the Interior Ministry said. Earlier this month, an Amnesty International report said Pakistan carried out 326 executions last year - the highest ever recorded by the organisation for the country. In 2015, Pakistan completely removed a seven-year moratorium on the death penalty after a Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan attack on Peshawar's Army Public School in which at least 144 people, most of them children, were killed. (Agencies)

### World to Benefit From China's Development, China-Europe Cooperation: Official

PARIS - China's development and China-Europe cooperation have become sources of positive energy for the world, Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi has said. In a speech delivered Thursday at the French Institute of International Relations, Yang talked about the Chinese economy, its diplomacy and China-Europe relations. Yang was co-chairing this year's China-France strategic dialogue with Jacques Audibert, diplomatic advisor to the French president. He also met French President Francois Hollande and Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault on Wednesday. CHINESE

ECONOMY The Chinese economy, as an anchor and a source of growth for the world economy, will continue to inject positive energy to the global economic growth, Yang said. China has made enormous contributions to the world economy, said Yang. China's gross domestic product grew by 6.9 percent last year, much lower than previous years. But the growth still places the Chinese economy at the forefront of major economies and represents the biggest increment in the world, equivalent to the GDP of a middle-income country, Yang said. (Xinhua)

## Probe Reveals 7,000 Palestinians Remain Jailed by Israel

RAMALLAH - Israel is imprisoning in its prisons 7,000 Palestinians, including 70 women, an official Palestinian survey published on Friday said. The survey conducted by the Palestinian Corporation for Prisoners and Freed Ones said that the prisoners are held in 22 prisons, jails and deten-

tion camps in Israel and the West Bank. The survey said that since early October last year, Israel arrested 4,800 Palestinians, including 400 children, most of them are from east Jerusalem and from the southern West Bank city of Hebron. The corporation's survey ...*(More on P4)...(31)*