

Obama, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Discuss Need for Military Equipment

WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama met for more than an hour with Abu Dhabi's crown prince on Monday and discussed the conflicts in Yemen, Iraq, Syria and Libya, and the United Arab Emirates' need for military equipment, the White House said. Obama and Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al-Nahayan "reaffirmed their mutual commitment to close defense and security cooperation," the White House said in a statement after the meeting. The UAE is part of the U.S.-led coalition fighting Islamic State militants in Iraq



and Syria, and is also part of the Saudi-led alliance engaged in air

strikes in Yemen against the Iran-allied Shi'ite Houthi group. "The lead-

ers discussed the ongoing need for expedited provision of essential

military equipment and supplies to the UAE" in the context of the fight

against Islamic State and U.S. support for the Yemen operations, said Alistair Baskey, a spokesman for the White House National Security Council. Obama also discussed the framework deal reached with Iran and world powers earlier this month with the crown prince, the White House said. Obama will meet with the leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council at the White House on May 13 and at the presidential retreat at Camp David, Maryland, on May 14 to discuss the issues roiling the Middle East. (Reuters)

Kazakh Leader to Extend Long Rule, Promises Stability

ALMATY - President Nursultan Nazarbayev will extend his nearly 26-year rule of Kazakhstan in an election on Sunday which investors hope will maintain stability in the Central Asian state despite criticism of his rights record. The 74-year-old former steelworker has held power since 1989 when the oil-producing nation of 17 million stretching from the border with China to the Caspian Sea was part of the Soviet Union, and has never faced a genuine challenge at the polls. Usually met by huge crowds, he has toured

his vast steppe nation, opening shopping malls, recreation centers and even two underground metro stations in the financial capital Almaty last weekend. He looks down from huge billboards. "To new victories together with the Leader of the Nation!" read one. An ally of Russian leader Vladimir Putin, he called the vote a year before his current term is due to end, removing the danger of growing economic pains developing into a full-blown crisis that might dent his chances of victory. (Reuters)

Philippines Accuses China of Turning Water Cannon on Its Fishing Boats

MASINLOC, Philippines - Filipino activists denounced China's coast guard on Tuesday for turning water cannon on Philippine fishing boats in disputed waters, near where hundreds of Filipino and American Marines landed on a beach in a mock assault. The presidential palace in Manila said China's coast guard used water cannon on Monday to drive away a group of Filipino fishermen at Scarborough Shoal, damaging some of their wooden boats. Chinese ships rammed a fishing

boat in the area a few months back. China in 2012 took control of Scarborough Shoal, about 130 miles west of a former U.S. naval base northwest of Manila, preventing Filipino fishermen from getting near the rich fishing grounds. "China has no right to use water cannon on the poor fishermen," Renato Reyes, secretary-general of left-wing activist group Bayan (Nation), said in a statement, while criticizing the government's dependence on the U.S. military to protect the country. (Reuters)

Protest Held in Ethiopia

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia - Hundreds of Ethiopians in Addis Ababa on Tuesday protested the killings of dozens of Ethiopian Christians by Islamic extremists in Libya as parliament weighed a response to the killings. The killings have roiled this predominantly Christian country in East Africa. Hundreds of protesters departed

from the homes of two of the victims and tried to reach Meskel Square, the Ethiopian capital's main gathering place, but police blocked them. They also tried to go to the Parliament but were blocked again. Most of the dozens of Ethiopians shot or beheaded by the extremists linked to the so-called Islamic State were migrants. (AP)

Syrian Kurds See Islamic State Threat in Northeast

BEIRUT - Islamic State is preparing for a possible attack on a city in northeastern Syria near the border with Iraq where it remains a big threat despite recent setbacks, a Kurdish official told Reuters on Tuesday. Hasaka province in northeastern Syria is strategically important for all sides and abuts Islamic State-held territory in Iraq, where the group is back on the offensive after losing the city of Tikrit at the start of the month. The Syrian Kurdish YPG militia has recorded significant victories against Islamic State this year, driving it from the town of Kobani at the Turkish border and then taking two towns in Hasaka province with the help of a U.S.-led air campaign. But Islamic State remains a danger, said Redur Xelil, YPG spokesman. Its targets include the provincial capital, Hasaka city, and the town of Tel Tamr, to the northwest. (Reuters)

US Warship Heads to Yemeni Waters; Could Block Iran Weapons

WASHINGTON - The Navy aircraft carrier, USS Theodore Roosevelt is steaming toward the waters off the country to beef up security and join other American ships that are prepared to intercept any Iranian vessels carrying weapons to the Houthi rebels. The deployment comes after a U.N. Security Council resolution approved last week imposed an arms embargo on the leaders of the Iranian-backed Shiite Houthi rebels. The resolution passed in a 14-0 vote with Russia abstaining. Navy officials said Monday that the Roosevelt was moving through the Arabian Sea. A massive ship that carries F/A-18 fighter jets, the Roosevelt is seen more of a deter-

rent and show of force in the region. The Navy has been beefing up its presence in the Gulf of Aden and the southern Arabian Sea in response to reports that a convoy of about eight Iranian ships is heading toward Yemen and possibly carrying arms for the Houthis. Navy officials said there are about nine U.S. warships in the region, including cruisers and destroyers carrying teams that can board and search other vessels. Yemen, the Arab world's poorest country, has been pushed to the brink of collapse by ground fighting and the Saudi-led airstrikes in support of current President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi, who was forced to flee to Saudi Arabia. Observ-

ers say the fighting in the strategic Mideast nation is taking on the appearance of a proxy war between Iran, the Shiite powerhouse backing the Houthis, and Sunni-dominated Saudi Arabia. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the ship movement on the record. Saudi Arabia and several of its allies, mainly Gulf Arab countries, have been trying to drive back the rebels, who seized the capital of Sanaa in September and have overrun many other northern provinces with the help of security forces loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The U.S. supports the Saudi campaign. Western governments

and Sunni Arab countries say the Houthis get their arms from Iran. Tehran and the rebels deny that, although the Islamic Republic has provided political and humanitarian support to the Shiite group. The U.S. has been providing logistical and intelligence support to the Saudi coalition launching airstrikes against the Houthis. That air campaign is now in its fourth week, and the U.S. has also begun refueling coalition aircraft involved in the conflict. White House spokesman Josh Earnest would not comment specifically on any Navy movements in Yemeni waters, but said the U.S. has concerns about Iran's "continued support for the Houthis. (AP)

Yemen Conflict Keeps Brent Crude Oil around \$63

LONDON - Brent crude oil steadied around \$63 a barrel on Tuesday, not far below the 2015 high, supported by worries that a civil war in Yemen could destabilize the Middle East, affecting oil supplies. Oil has climbed around 15 percent this month due to concern over the conflict in Yemen, Saudi Arabia's southern neighbor. The seaways around Yemen are some of the most important for the international oil trade with access points to the Red Sea and Suez Canal as well as the Middle East Gulf. The U.S. navy said on Monday it had sent an aircraft carrier and a guided-missile cruiser into nearby waters. Brent hit a 2015 high of almost \$65 a barrel on April 16, up more than 40 percent from a January low just above \$45. Prices have also been supported by speculation over falling U.S. output after data showing the number of U.S. exploration and production oil rigs fell to their lowest since 2010. Brent crude for June was down 30 cents at \$63.15 a barrel by 1105 GMT. U.S. crude for May, which was due to expire later on Tuesday, was down 10 cents at \$56.28 a barrel. "Geopolitics is supporting oil at the moment," said Tamas Varga, analyst at London brokerage PVM Oil Associates. But the global oil market is heavily oversupplied and a rapid build of inventories, particularly in the United States, has been weighing on prices. (Reuters)

Ukraine Aims to Prevent Russian Attacks at WW2 Commemorations

KIEV - Ukraine is planning an operation involving tens of thousands of police to guard against any attack by separatists or Russian agents during World War Two commemorations next month, security chiefs said on Tuesday. Tension is mounting in the capital and other cities amid an increase in rebel attacks in the east. Kiev said one Ukrainian serviceman had been killed in the past 24 hours, in an attack near



the airport in Donetsk. The airport fell to the rebels earlier this year. The killings in Kiev of two pro-Russian activists, a journalist, by what appeared to be... (More on P4)...(26)

Yemen's Houthi Fighters Have Tough Record in Ground War

SANAA - It's a nightly exercise in futility: Yemen's Houthi fire rifles at Saudi F-15 jets thundering overhead. But the guerrillas' Kalashnikovs would be more formidable if and when Saudi Arabia decided to fight a ground war. Cairo and Riyadh said this month they were discussing a "major military maneuver" in Saudi Arabia, a sign the Saudi-led alliance bombing the Houthis may make good on threats to launch a ground push across the kingdom's southern border into Yemen. The air

campaign has made little headway since it began on March 26, prompted by the Iranian-allied Houthi's military takeover of large parts of Yemen. The Saudis and their allies see the push as an unacceptable extension of Tehran's reach into Riyadh's backyard, but have not committed to an invasion. The Houthis are confident their experience in mountain warfare in their northern stronghold would give their Arab adversaries pause. A 2009-2010 war against government forces backed by Saudi Arabia left around 200

Saudi soldiers dead. "The American-Saudi coalition knows a ground invasion will fail, especially with the continuous advance of the army backed up by the (armed Houthis) on different fronts," Mohammed al-Bukhaiti, a member of the Houthi politburo, told Reuters. Outgunned but insisting they are winning what they describe as a revolution against al-Qaeda militants and corrupt lackeys of the West, the Shi'ite fighters have advanced on sandal-shod feet and by pick-up truck in battles across Yemen. (Reuters)

European Court Blames Russia for Fatal Shooting of Moldovan

STRASBOURG, France - Europe's top human rights court has ordered Russia to pay damages for the fatal shooting of a Moldovan man in 2012. Vadim Pisari, 18, was shot dead by a Russian soldier on Jan. 1, 2012 as he was driving across a bridge in a part of Mol-

dova where Russian, Moldovan and Trans-Dniester peacekeepers were stationed. The court says Pisari failed to slow for a checkpoint and crashed a barrier, and a Russian soldier responded by first firing in the air, then directly at the car.

The European Court for Human Rights on Tuesday said the soldier's "decision to shoot at the passing vehicle had not been justified." It ordered Russia to pay 25,000 euros (\$27,000) damages and about 5,500 euros (\$5,900) legal costs to Pisari's family. (AP)

Neighbour News

Pak Army to Protect Chinese Nationals

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan will deploy 10,000 army personnel, including commandoes with anti-terrorism training, for the protection of Chinese citizens working in the country, President Mamnoon Hussain said on Tuesday. Chinese President Xi Jinping raised the issue of security for the Chinese nationals working in Pakistan during a one-on-one meeting with Hussain. Responding to Xi's query, Hussain said Pakistan has created a special security division for the protection of Chinese engineers, project directors, experts and workers employed on various

Chinese funded projects across the country. "I am pleased to inform you that the government has accorded approval to provide security to the Chinese working in Pakistan and a special security division has been created for this purpose," said Hussain. A force of 10,000 personnel is being given the task, officials said. "A major-general will head the force and will directly report to army's headquarters about security issues," he said. The force also included army commandoes who have already received special anti-terrorism training. (Agencies)

It is Increasingly Clear Which Country Destroys Yemen: Iranian Envoy

BAKU - APA Reports on Iranian arms supplies to Yemen are groundless, Iranian Ambassador to Azerbaijan Mohsen Pak Ayen said at a press conference on Tuesday. According to the ambassador, Iran does not have a role in the Yemen crisis. "It is increasingly clear which country destroys Yemen and kills innocent civilians there. Therefore, it's useless to look for a culprit. It is Saudi Arabia that interferes in it. As the conflict brought out within the country it should be resolved internally. Illegal intervention of foreign countries was unacceptable," he said. The ambassador said

that Iran put forward a four-point plan for solution of the Yemen crisis. "It includes hammering out a ceasefire, launching an intra-Yemeni dialog, sending humanitarian assistance to the Yemeni people, and establishing a broad-based government through elections", he noted. The diplomat said military intervention in Yemen is against the international law. "Because, an intervention in a neighboring country is an outrage and illegal act. If the U.S. is concerned about it, then it should respect the international law," he added. (APA)

Tajikistan, China's Xinjiang to Deepen Cooperation

DUSHANBE - Tajikistan and China's Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region agreed Monday to advance exchanges and cooperation in such fields as agriculture, infrastructure, economy and trade, and security, with an eye on the construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt. The two sides made the pledge in Dushanbe, capital of Tajikistan, during talks between Tajik President Emomali Rahmon and Zhang

Chunxian, secretary of the Xinjiang Regional Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC). Zhang made the visit to Tajikistan to implement the consensus reached between the leaders of the two countries when Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Tajikistan last year. Zhang also held talks with Tajik Prime Minister Qohir Rasulzoda during his stay in Tajikistan. (Xinhua)

Xi Hails Pakistan's Help

ISLAMABAD - Chinese President Xi Jinping praised Pakistan on Tuesday for its contribution to security in China's restive far west where a Muslim minority chafes against Beijing's rule, while Pakistan promised to step up cooperation in tackling terrorism. Xi, in an address to Pakistan's parliament, also called for closer economic cooperation between the traditional allies a day after they launched energy and infrastructure pro-

jects in Pakistan worth \$46 billion. Xi has linked economic cooperation with security and said on Tuesday the two countries "share a common stake in security." "Over the years Pakistan has overcome all kinds of difficulties and contributed greatly to the security and stability of China's western border areas and this is something that we shall never forget," Xi told parliament. (Reuters)

2015 Year: Year of Care for Senior Generation in Uzbekistan: Health Ministry

TASHKENT - The Ministry of Health of Uzbekistan has undertaken measures to improve the quality of healthcare for elderly people under the "Year of Attention and Care for the Senior Generation" State Program. In early 2015, the Ministry of Health launched major serious medical examinations of elderly people in an effort to detect chronic diseases, including hidden ones. The efforts have been undertaken by doctors of rural medical posts and city family clinics in collaboration with colleagues from central district clinics, where special teams of 7-9 doctors each have been put together. Each team includes a neurologist, an otolaryngologist, an ophthalmologist and a cardiologist. Special emphasis is... (More on P4)...(27)