

UN Urges France to Draw up 'Civil Emergency' Plan for Calais Migrants

UNITED NATION - The UN refugee agency said for the past year it had been calling for an "urgent, comprehensive and sustainable response" by Europe as a whole, but especially by French authorities to the worsening asylum crisis and reception conditions in Calais. "Let's treat that as a civil emergency," Vincent Cochetel, head of UNHCR's Europe division. He stressed though that the emergency was a small one that could easily be addressed if Paris was willing to do so.

"This is a manageable situation," he said. Some 3,000 migrants and refugees, in-



cluding many fleeing war and persecution in countries like Syria, Libya and

Eritrea, are camped out in a makeshift tent village in Calais waiting for a chance

to cross to Britain in what Cochetel described as "appalling conditions".

UNHCR also voiced "alarm" at the rising death toll among people risking

their lives to attempt to cross the Channel Tunnel to Britain, with at least 10 having perished since the beginning of June. Cochetel pointed out that both French and British governments had been opposed to setting up a large-scale reception centre in Calais for fear it would become a "magnet" and attract more people.

But he stressed that this fear did not remove their responsibility to find an acceptable solution, pointing out that France could easily transform some of its many army barracks around the country into proper reception centres. (AFP)

Neighbour News

Indian Contingent Reportedly Deployed in Tajikistan

DUSHANBE - Indian contingent is currently deployed in Tajikistan alongside the Russian military base, according to the Tajikistan's Ministry of Defense (MoD). An official source at a MoD says representatives of the Indian military contingent together with servicemen of the Tajik national army and the Russian military base are participating in sports competitions that are being held from August 4 to August 12. These sports competitions are reportedly dedicated to the 22nd anniversary of formation of the Tajik national army. Faridoun Mahmadiyev, a spokesman for the MoD, says 73 Indian servicemen, mostly military doctors, now work at the

hospital of the MoD military unit 07017 deployed in Khatlon province. The India-Tajikistan Friendship Hospital with 50 beds was officially opened in early October last year and 73 medical workers from India will work at this hospital during two years. They will also train their Tajik colleagues in operating the state-of-the-art equipment at the hospital. "Besides, about 100 Indian technical specialists and instructors now work at the Ayni airfield," Mahmadiyev told Asia-Plus in an interview. According to him, Indian instructors train Tajik military pilots. We will recall that the renovated Ayni airfield belonging to the Tajik Ministry of Defense was officially opened on ... (More on P4)... (26)

EU Increases Aid for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

BEIRUT - The European Union (EU) boosted its humanitarian funding for Syrian refugees in Lebanon by an additional 18.7 million U.S. dollars, the Daily Star reported on Saturday. "Life for Syrian refugees is getting harder and harder, as they have spent most of what they had on food, housing and medical treatment," the daily quoted a statement by Bruno Rotival, head of the European Commission Humanitarian

Aid and Civil Protection Department's office in Lebanon. "Families are getting deeper and deeper into debt and many Syrian children are forced to work to help the family financially. There is a sense of desperation and people are resorting to dangerous coping mechanisms," he added. Bruno said a vulnerability assessment carried out in June showed that the number of "severely vulnerable" Syrian refugees had doubled in



the past year, rising from 29 percent in 2014 to nearly 50 percent in 2015. This additional aid will enable the Lebanese ministry of

health to treat more refugees, the statement said, adding that the EU has provided 248 million dollars... (More on P4)... (23)

Russian Opposition Activists end 12-Day Hunger Strike

MOSCOW - Six Russian opposition activists ended their hunger strike on Saturday after one of them was hospitalized following 12 days of going without food to protest being barred from elections. The activists in Novosibirsk, Russia's third-largest city, said their decision was in response to urging from opposition leader Alexei Navalny and two other prominent opposition figures. Navalny had called on the activists to abandon the strike for the sake of their health and devote their energies instead to organizing a protest in Moscow on Sept. 13, the day local elections will be held across Russia.

Leonid Volkov, who was leading the opposition campaign for the regional legislature in Novosibirsk, agreed. "The right for elections has been taken away from us - no more illusions - so we must hurry to make use of the right to walk through the streets before it is taken away, too," Volkov wrote on his website. Navalny was instrumental in organizing the mass street protests that broke out in Moscow in late 2011 after a national parliamentary election that independent monitors said involved large-scale ballot stuffing and other voting fraud. (AP)

British Foreign Secretary Discusses Counter-Terrorism with Turkish FM

LONDON - British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond on Friday discussed counter-terrorism cooperation with his Turkish counterpart Mevlut Cavusoglu in a phone call, renewing their commitment to defeating the Islamic State (IS), also known as ISIL. "We talked about Turkey's recent action against ISIL and the increased use of Turkish air bases that will further enhance coalition efforts to counter the ISIL

threat in the region," Hammond said in a statement following the phone call. Turkish military has joined the U.S.-led fight against IS and bombed IS targets in Syria and Iraq since late July. "The Global Coalition, including Turkey, is committed to defeating ISIL - a fight that will take time and patience but one we must win," Hammond said. "Turkey has also suffered

a recent series of PKK (Kurdish Workers' Party) terrorist attacks. I passed my condolences for the loss of so many lives," he added. The foreign secretary said Britain condemns all acts of terrorism and recognizes the Turkish government's "right to respond proportionately." "I made clear the UK's continued support for getting the Kurdish peace process back on track,"

he noted. Turkey recently launched an offensive against IS militants in Syria and PKK rebels in northern Iraq, including air strikes and artillery shelling against the targets. In late July, Turkey agreed to open its air bases, including the key Incirlik Airbase in southern Turkey, for the use of coalition forces fighting against IS in Syria and Iraq. (Xinhua)

Pro-Kurdish Party Leader Calls for Steps to Halt Turkey Violence

DIYARBAKIR - The leader of Turkey's pro-Kurdish HDP urged the militant Kurdistan Workers Party on Saturday to "remove its finger from the trigger" and said the government should launch talks to halt a surge in violence. The militant PKK announced it was stepping up attacks in mid-July, saying Turkish forces were violating a 2013 ceasefire. Turkey began an air campaign against PKK camps in northern Iraq on July 24. Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) leader Selahattin Demirtas told reporters: "Today we call to both sides: the PKK must immediately remove its finger from the trigger and declare it will observe the ceasefire." Speaking in the southeastern city of Van, a day after six people were killed in clashes between security forces and militants in the mainly Kurdish southeast,

he said the government must halt security operations and revive a peace process launched with jailed PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan in 2012. Demirtas' HDP won 13 percent of the vote in a June 7 election which has yet to produce a coalition government. He had regularly visited Ocalan in his Imrali island jail south of Istanbul. Deputy Prime Minister Yalcin Akdogan said the state was continuing talks with Ocalan but the HDP could no longer visit him because it had "betrayed" the process. In comments to Milliyet newspaper published on Saturday, he said tactical PKK declarations on halting violence were unacceptable. "Their withdrawal from Turkey and a complete halt to activities is now a pre-requisite," he said. (Reuters)

Iran's Military Chief Comes out in Support of Nuclear Deal

DUBAI - Iran's military chief and a close ally to the Supreme Leader expressed his support on Saturday for the country's nuclear deal with world powers, a key endorsement for the accord that faces strong opposition from hardliners. Conservative members of the Iranian parliament and chief commander of the elite Revolutionary Guards, Mohammad Ali Jafari, have sharply criticized the deal, saying it undermined the Islamic Republic's military capabilities. While Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has not publicly approved or disapproved of the deal, he has told officials and experts to take legal procedures to ensure the other side does not breach it, say-

ing some of the world powers involved were untrustworthy. Major General Hassan Firouzabadi listed 16 "advantages" to the deal, which Iran signed in Vienna in July, without detailing any drawbacks. "The armed forces have the most concerns about the effect of the deal on Iran's defense capabilities ... but this agreement and the U.N. Security Council resolution have many advantages that the critics ignore," Firouzabadi was quoted as saying by Fars News Agency. The agreement, a major initiative for both U.S. President Barack Obama and Iran's pragmatic President Hassan Rouhani, has been met with resistance from hardliners in both countries. (Reuters)

Chinese Investment Rockets in Germany: Official

BERLIN - Chinese investment was increasing rapidly in Germany and covering various sectors from manufacturing to cultural exchange, said a Chinese official in a recent interview with Xinhua, suggesting newcomers localize themselves when running business abroad. In the first quarter of 2015, Chinese direct investment in Germany amounted to 210 million U.S. dollars, up by 246 percent from the same period of previous year, data from China's Commerce Ministry showed. In 2014, China became the biggest investing country in Germany with a record 190 investment projects. "Chinese investment in Germany is rocketing up in both terms of project numbers and investment values," said Wang Weidong, the Commercial Counselor of Chinese Embassy in Germany. According to him, Chi-

nese investment in Germany covered various sectors including finance, aerospace, telecommunication, steel, renewable energies, restaurants, tourism and cultural exchange. Currently, around 2,000 Chinese companies were running business in Germany, its biggest trading partner in Europe. Among them were traders, manufacturers, as well as service providers. Wang said merger and acquisition (M&A) was the main strategy that Chinese investors favored in recent years. After acquiring, most Chinese companies kept the German management and workers. A survey by Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Germany (CHKD) last year showed that despite high labor costs, Chinese companies were willing to hire German employees... (More on P4)... (27)

Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan Reach Agreement on Resolving Border Incident

DUSHANBE - Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan have reportedly reached agreement on resolving the recent border incident. An official source at the Isfara mayor's office says that as a result of negotiations residents of the Tajik village of Chorkuh have agreed to reopen a road that residents of the Kyrgyz village of Kok-Tash use to reach a cemetery where relatives are buried and Kyrgyz residents of Kok-Tash have agreed to unblock the flow of water to the Tajik village of Chorkuh. According to him, local authorities of both countries have committed themselves to carry out explanatory work among the population in order to prevent new conflicts between residents of border areas. Meanwhile, Radio Liberty's Tajik Service reports that Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have made progress in talks aimed at easing tensions over recent cross-border violence. Kurbanbai Iskandarov, a member of the Kyrgyz delegation, told RFE/RL on August 7 that the talks had "brought some preliminary results." Iskandarov said the neighbors will sign a final agreement after both meet mutually agreed conditions. We will recall that Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan on August 6 ... (More on P4)... (25)

Iran Nuclear Deal Ushers in Heightened Diplomacy in Syria

DAMASCUS - The long-stalemated Syrian crisis is now witnessing a flurry of diplomatic talks and marathon meetings that could usher in a political solution, in what appeared to be the first positive repercussions of the Iranian nuclear deal on Syria, analysts say. The nuclear accord concluded recently between Tehran and the six world powers surely has positive impacts on the thorny issues in the region, including the Syrian, Iraqi and Yemeni files, Osama Danura,



a Syrian political analyst told Xinhua. "The recent flurry of diplomacy is the first indicator of the good behind the deal on the region's crisis," he added. In less than a month since the signing of the nuclear

deal, the initiatives' fever started finding its way to the Syrian arena that has been for long stalemated with news of battles and extra chaos eclipsing any horizon for a solution. Iran... (More on P4)... (24)

UN Chief Condemns Rocket-Firing from Gaza Towards Israel

UNITED NATIONS - UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Friday condemned the numerous rockets launched from Gaza towards Israel over the last few days. Reports said Gaza militants loyal to the Islamic State (IS) fired three rockets from central Gaza Strip into Israel Thursday night. In a statement released by Ban's spokesperson, Ban said he is very concerned over recent violence in the occupied West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza. The violence included Thursday's car ramming near the settlement of Shiloh which resulted in serious

injuries of two Israeli soldiers; the firebomb attack that seriously injured an Israeli woman in East Jerusalem Monday; and the violent clashes in the aftermath of the Duma terrorist attack, according to the statement. "The Secretary-General condemns these acts and expects all parties to speak out against and prevent such incidents," said the statement. "He calls upon Israeli and Palestinian political and community leaders not to allow extremists solution can sustainably put an end to violence," it added. (Xinhua)

U.S. to Keep Antidumping Duty Orders on Diamond Sawblades from China

WASHINGTON - The U.S. government determined Friday that it would maintain the existing antidumping duty orders on diamond sawblades and parts thereof from China, despite Beijing's repeated calls for Washington to drop protectionism. The U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) concluded in a ruling that revoking the current antidumping duty orders on these products from China would be likely to lead to continuation or recurrence of material injury within a reasonably foreseeable

time. It is the first "sunset review" for the antidumping duty order on imports of steel threaded rod from China, which was introduced in 2009. The antidumping duty margin on this product runs from 47.37% to 206%. This is the second "sunset review" for the antidumping duty order on imports of diamond sawblades and parts thereof from China, which was first issued in 2009. The antidumping duty margin on the product runs from 21.43 to 164.09 percent. A "sunset review" was conducted every five years after

anti-dumping and countervailing duties were introduced. The Uruguay Round Agreements Act requires the U.S. Department of Commerce to revoke an anti-dumping or countervailing duty order, or terminate a suspension agreement, after five years unless the department and the ITC determine that revoking the order or terminating the suspension agreement would likely lead to the continuation or recurrence of dumping or subsidies and of material injury within a reasonably foreseeable time. (Xinhua)

Iran Foreign Minister to visit Pakistan soon

ISLAMABAD - Pakistani Foreign Office (FO) spokesman Qazi Khalilullah has said that Iran Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif is to visit Islamabad soon. "I can confirm that Iran Foreign Minister Zarif will visit Islamabad soon but the date yet to be decided," the FO spokesman said, in an interview with IRNA news agency

on Saturday. Two sides are in touch to finalise a date in near future for the upcoming visit. Zarif is planning to visit some neighboring and regional countries including Pakistan, Turkey and Lebanon in the coming days. The upcoming visit - will be Zarif's third visit to Pakistan in the last two years. (Agencies)