

Russia

Kiev behind Deteriorating Situation in East Ukraine

MOSCOW - Moscow urged Kiev to end its "irresponsible actions" in east Ukraine, a day after the Ukrainian military reported the heaviest shelling by Russian-backed rebels since a truce was agreed in February.

The Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Tuesday the situation on the front line had deteriorated in recent days.

"Unfortunately, Kiev's belligerent rhetoric has sharply increased," the



ministry said. "We call on the Ukrainian side to show restraint and not violate

the implementation of the Minsk agreements on security with irresponsible actions," the

statement said, referring to the ceasefire deal agreed in the Belarusian capital in Febru-

ary. Ukraine on Monday accused the rebels of carrying out the heaviest

artillery attacks since the truce was agreed.

Kiev and the West say Russia is the driving force behind the rebellion in east Ukraine and have slapped sanctions on Moscow over the conflict. Moscow sides with the rebels but denies allegations that it has sent serving Russian troops to east Ukraine or provided the militants with arms. More than 6,500 people have been killed since the conflict erupted in spring 2014. (Reuters)

Obama to Host Nuclear Summit in Washington next Year: White House

WASHINGTON - U.S. President Barack Obama will host a fourth Nuclear Security Summit in Washington in 2016 to continue coordinating global efforts to fight nuclear terrorism, the White House announced Monday. The summit is scheduled to be held from March 31 to April 1 at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, the White House said in a statement. "The Summit will continue

discussion on the evolving threat and highlight steps that can be taken together to minimize the use of highly-enriched uranium, secure vulnerable materials, counter nuclear smuggling and deter, detect, and disrupt attempts at nuclear terrorism," the statement said. The U.S. seeks a strengthened global nuclear security architecture that is comprehensive, is based on international standards, builds confi-

dence in nations' nuclear security implementation, and results in declining global stocks of nuclear weapons-usable materials, it said. "We cannot afford to wait for an act of nuclear terrorism before working together to collectively raise our standards for nuclear security," it said. In a 2009 speech delivered in Prague of Czech Republic, Obama, describing nuclear terrorism as "the most immediate and extreme threat

to global security," announced an international effort to secure vulnerable nuclear materials, break up black markets, and detect and intercept illicitly trafficked nuclear materials. The first Nuclear Security Summit was held in Washington in 2010 to draw global attention to the need to secure nuclear materials and prevent terrorists from obtaining them. It was followed by additional Summits in ... (More on P4)...(23)

Turkey Vows to Fight PKK until its Disarmament

ANKARA - Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan Tuesday vowed to continue military operations against the outlawed Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) until the disarmament of the group. "We will persevere in our struggle until they lay down and bury their arms, and until the last terrorist leaves the country," said Erdogan at the farewell ceremony of the Chief of General Staff Necdet Ozal in Ankara.

The president accused the PKK of not comprehending the essence of the peace process aiming to end three decades of Kurdish insurgency. The process is "frozen" he said referring to the peace talks between imprisoned PKK leader

Abdullah Ocalan and the government in 2012. Meanwhile, Turkish war planes carried out a new wave of air strikes against PKK targets in the southeastern province of Sirnak Tuesday, the military said in a written statement. The aerial attack was in retaliation to PKK militants who opened fire with long-barreled weapons against a military post. The armed forces retaliated, said the military. Turkish war planes have been bombing PKK targets for over two weeks in their strongholds in the mountains of northern Iraq as well as southeastern Turkey. Tensions between the PKK and Turkish security forces is... (More on P4)...(24)

'Early Details' of Plan to Fight IS Start to Emerge: Russia

MOSCOW - Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Tuesday "early details" of how to coordinate international efforts to fight Islamic States (IS) have started to emerge. Lavrov was speaking at a joint news confer-



ence with Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir. He said Moscow and Riyadh agreed that international players should join ranks to counter the Sunni jihadists who control swathes of Syria and Iraq. (Reuters)

Iraqi Parliament Approves Sweeping Reform Plans

BAGHDAD - The Iraqi parliament on Tuesday approved a package of crucial reform plan presented by Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, as well as an additional plan suggested by the parliament, which both came in response to recent demonstrations against corruption and poor services. The session opened with the presence of 297 out of 328 members of parliament who unanimously voted in the first package of reforms submitted by the head of Council of Ministers Haider al-Abadi during its extraordinary session on Sunday. The parliament's approval came after Abadi called for seven-point reform

plan, including canceling the three vice presidential posts and the three deputy prime minister posts. Afterwards, the parliament Speaker Salim al-Jubouri read an additional package of 25-point plan suggested by the parliament blocs, and the lawmakers again unanimously approved it. On Sunday, Abadi declared his plan that also included reduction of ministries and agencies in order to increase efficiency in the performance of the government and reduce expenditures. His plan called for immediate and comprehensive reduction of the numbers of guards for all top and senior officials, including the three



presidents (state president, ministerial president and parliament speaker), ministers, members of parliament, provincial governors and provincial councils' members, in addition to other senior officials. Abadi's measures included reduction of extra expenditures for the three presidencies and other

government institutions in accordance with instruction to be issued later by Abadi. It also included that a number of sensitive government posts to be filled by political and sectarian independents, and that the appointments of such posts would be in light of competence and integrity standards. (Xinhua)

Greece, Lenders Clinch Bailout Deal after Marathon Talks

ATHENS - Greece and its international lenders reached a multi-billion euro bailout agreement on Tuesday after talking through the night, officials said, potentially saving the country from financial ruin. The agreement, reached after a 23-hour session of talks, must still be adopted by Greece's parliament and euro zone countries. The single currency bloc's finance ministers are due to meet on Friday, giving time to finalize the deal before a major debt repayment next week. The negotiations appeared to have resolved all the main outstanding issues, after Greece's leftist government effectively capitulated last month to creditors' demands for

deep austerity measures in order to receive loans. "Finally, we have white smoke," a Greek Finance Ministry official said after exhausted Greek officials emerged in a central Athens hotel to announce the two sides had agreed on terms. "An agreement has been reached." Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos confirmed only "two or three small issues" were pending. Greek shares rose, with the banking index surging 6 percent, while two-year bond yields fell more than 4 percentage points. "The institutions and the Greek authorities achieved an agreement in principle on a technical basis. Now ... (More on P4)...(25)

Argentina's Presidential Hopeful Highlights Ties with China

BUENOS AIRES - Argentina's presidential front-runner and his running mate highlighted ties with China on Monday. Presidential candidate Daniel Scioli and his vice presidential hopeful, Carlos Zannini, both members of Argentina's ruling Front for Victory party, emerged as the favorites in Sunday's primary elections. At a press conference following the early results of the poll, Zannini said "the Latin American agenda has gained value, and we are going to build on top of the good that has been done. We have ties with every country in the world, including very strong trade

ties with China." "We will go in search of investment to generate markets for our exports. We will seek to have global companies be interested in our industries," Scioli added. Scioli, current governor of Buenos Aires province, garnered 38.41 percent of the vote, compared with 30.1 percent for his chief rival Mauricio Macri. Zannini is the legal and technical secretary for Argentine President Cristina Fernandez. Under Fernandez, Buenos Aires and Beijing have upgraded bilateral ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership. China is now Argentina's second largest trading partner. (Xinhua)

Britain to Expand Training Program for Ukrainian Troops: Defence Chief

KIEV - Visiting British Defense Secretary Michael Fallon said Tuesday that his country is committed to expanding its current training program for the Ukrainian armed forces. "We have already trained 1,000 Ukrainian servicemen so far and I have set a task to train a total of 2,000 members of the Ukrainian army by the end of the financial year in Great Britain, which ends on March 31, 2016," Fallon told reporters while visiting a Ukrainian army training facility in the northern Zhitomir region. The expanded training program will focus on infantry exercises, lessons in first aid,

dealing with landmines, creating fortifications and conducting operations in urban areas, Fallon said. Since March, a total of 75 British instructors have been providing security assistance to Ukrainian servicemen, who fight against pro-independence rebels in the eastern regions in a conflict that has killed over 6,800 people since April 2014. The insurgents' leadership has strongly objected the presence of foreign military personnel in Ukraine, claiming it undermines a peace process in the country. Fallon arrived in Ukraine earlier in the day for a one-day visit. (Xinhua)

Neighbour News

Iran FM Leaves for Lebanon for Key Talks

TEHRAN - Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has left for Lebanon on the first leg of the second round of his regional tours following a nuclear agreement between Iran and six world powers. The Iranian minister left Tehran for the Lebanese capital of Beirut on Tuesday to hold talks with Lebanese officials including his counterpart Gebran Bassil on regional developments, particularly the ongoing crisis in Syria, and the conclusion of Iran-P5+1 nuclear talks. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman, Marzieh Afkham, said on Tuesday that Zarif is expected to discuss bilateral issues, regional developments as well as the scourge of terrorism and extremism during his regional trip. She added that the Iranian minister would also brief Lebanese officials on the Islamic Republic's new plan for the set-

tlement of the Syrian conflict. "From the very start, the policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the Syrian crisis has been based on three reasonable principles; respect for the Syrian nation's legitimate right to determine its own fate, opposition to foreigners' interference ... and opposition to the use of terrorism for the realization of political objectives," Afkham said. She noted that Iran's new four-point proposal is being updated in accordance with these principles and will be unveiled after consultation with the Syrian government and other influential countries. "Since the beginning of the crisis, the Islamic Republic of Iran believed that there is no military solution to the Syrian crisis and that it should end through a political and diplomatic solution based on dialog and agreement," said Afkham. (pressTV)

Around 40 Belarus - Pakistan Agreements Signed Since Early 2015

MINSK - Around 40 agreements in different fields have been signed since early 2015. The matter was discussed during the Belarus-Pakistan Business Forum on Tuesday, BelTA has learned. For example, Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko and Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif concluded a friendship and cooperation agreement on 10 August.

A number of documents to step up humanitarian and regional cooperation were signed in the presence of Alexander Lukashenko and Nawaz Sharif. The Belarusian Forestry Ministry and the Government of Pakistan's Punjab province concluded a memoran-

dum of understanding. Another agreement was inked to establish twinning ties between Minsk and Islamabad. Besides, a package of documents on inter-university cooperation was signed during the visit of Nawaz Sharif to Belarus. A set of twenty documents aimed at expanding Belarus-Pakistan cooperation in different fields including industry, agriculture and food processing, science and technology, investment, information and communication technologies, and education was signed during the official visit of Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko to Pakistan in May 2015. (BelTA)

Trade Turnover between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan Increases by 81%

BISHKEK - The volume of trade turnover between Tajikistan and eight CIS countries has declined significantly in the first half of 2015, the statistics authorities of the country said. Significant reduction of trade turnover of Tajikistan is observed with Azerbaijan, Armenia, Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus, and Kazakhstan. The trade turnover between Tajikistan and Armenia amounted to \$108.4 thousand (63% down). Decline of trade with Armenia, Moldova, and

Azerbaijan is explained by reduced revenue of foodstuffs from these countries. Tajikistan increased trade turnover with Uzbekistan - 81%, Kyrgyzstan - 25.3%, and Turkmenistan - 16.6%. Growth of trade turnover with these countries is associated with the increase of imports of energy, food and grain. In six months of 2015, the total trade turnover between Tajikistan and the CIS countries amounted to \$900 million, which is 13.5% less than the same period in 2014. (AKI)

China Holds Forum on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor

URUMQI - Northwest China's Xinjiang held a forum Tuesday to discuss cooperation on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a major project in China's Belt and Road Initiative. More than 300 officials and delegates from companies, think tanks and social organizations of the two countries attended the first China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Forum held in the oil-rich city of Karamay. The two-day event features six sub-forums on

topics including city-to-city and industrial cooperation and youth exchange. The forum is expected to issue a manifesto elaborating the goals of CPEC and sign a number of cooperation agreement. An economic corridor linking Pakistan's Gwadar Port to China's Xinjiang with highways, railways and pipelines, the CPEC is among the six economic corridors crucial to China's Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road. (Xinhua)