

3,573 Migrants Perish in Mediterranean Crossings over Last 365 Days : IOM

GENEVA - The International Organization for Migration (IOM) indicated on Tuesday that 3,573 migrants have lost their lives while attempting to reach Italy, Greece and Spain since last August.

Representing just under 10 fatalities per day over the last 365 days, statistics show that the flow of migrants seeking to reach European shores is continuing to rise, with as many as 267,121 maritime migrant arrivals being reported so far in 2015.

IOM indicated that Greece (157,228 migrant arrivals to date) is by far the top destination for populations seek-



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ing to escape conflicts and prosecution in countries such as Syria, Afghanistan

and Iraq. Italy also records high arrival rates this year with 107,633 migrants

originating from Eritrea, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan and Syria reaching Italian

shores, while both Spain (2,166) and Malta (94) add to total arrivals in Europe.

"Migration flows to Italy are mixed: there are asylum seekers, as well as vulnerable migrants such as women victims of trafficking and unaccompanied minors, and also a large proportion of job-seeking migrants," said Federico Soda, director of the IOM Coordination Office for the Mediterranean. While the "death toll changes almost hourly" according to IOM spokesperson Joel Millman, Mediterranean crossings have claimed the lives of 2,373 migrants so far this year, compared to 2,081 over the same period last year. (Xinhua)

French President: We Must Prepare for new Attacks

PARIS - French President Francois Hollande says his country should be prepared for more attacks such as the thwarted assault on a high-speed train last week. Hollande said that Friday's incident "could have degenerated into monstrous carnage without the courage of the passengers," including three Americans and a Briton who subdued the gunman. In a wide-ranging diplomatic speech Tuesday,

Hollande said his country remains "exposed" to violent extremism and "this aggression is new proof that we should prepare ourselves for other assaults." He didn't elaborate on a specific threat, though France has been on high alert for attacks all year. Hollande stressed his commitment to French counterterrorism efforts at home and abroad against Islamic State extremists. (AP)

IAEA Warns Money Running out to Monitor Iran Nuclear Deal

VIENNA - The U.N. nuclear watchdog said on Tuesday it will run out of money next month to monitor implementation of nuclear accords with Tehran and asked countries to increase funding the costs of its Iran work, which will rise to \$10 million a year. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief Yukiya Amano said he had asked member states for contributions to ensure its work can go ahead. Under the agreement reached between Tehran and six world powers on July 14, sanctions relief for Iran hinges on IAEA reports on its past and present nuclear program. So far, costs for the IAEA's activities on Iran have been met through extra-budgetary contributions from mem-

ber states. But Amano said the 800,000 euros (\$924,000) per month the agency receives to verify current Iran nuclear agreements would be exhausted by the end of next month. The IAEA will need an additional 160,000 euros per month in the run-up to the implementation of the agreement which could happen in the first half of next year. Once it is implemented, the agency will need an annual 9.2 million euros (\$10.6 million) to ensure verification of the deal. Following Amano's request, the United States - the agency's biggest financial contributor - said it was committed to ensuring it had enough money for its Iran operations. (Reuters)

Iraqi PM Says Defense of Refinery Town Key to Defeating IS



BAGHDAD - Winning the ongoing battle for control of an oil refinery town north of Baghdad is a key step toward defeating the Islamic State group in Iraq, the country's prime minister said in remarks aired on state television Tuesday. "Victory at Beiji is a crucial step toward ending Daesh's presence in Iraq," Haider al-Abadi told military and militia commanders during a visit to the area the day before, using an Arabic acronym for the extremist group. The military retook the town of Beiji from the IS group in No-

vember, but government forces and allied Shiite militiamen there have come under mounting pressure in recent weeks. Militants now control up to half of the town and oil refinery to the north, a top commander told The Associated Press. Al-Abadi said the extremist group, which controls large swaths of territory in western and northern Iraq, is throwing significant resources into the battle for Beiji. "Daesh wants to punch a hole there so our situation, not just in Beiji, but in the ... (More on P4)... (26)

Turkey to Hold Early Elections on Nov. 1

ANKARA - Turkey will hold a snap election on November 1, said Sadi Gunden, chairman of Turkey's Supreme Electoral Council, in a statement on Tuesday. The decision came as Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu has exhausted the 45-day period to form a coalition government following the June 7 elections. The Supreme Election Board (YSK) held a meeting on Tuesday and chairman of the body Sadi Gunden stated that they have agreed on holding the early elections on Nov. 1. Earlier Tuesday, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Er-



dogan gave a mandate to Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu to form an interim government which will take the country to an early election, the presidential office said in a statement.

According to the constitution, Davutoglu has five days to form the interim cabinet and has to offer cabinet posts to opposition members. He can also assign candidates from

outside parliament if the opposition parties turn down his offers. The opposition parties including the Republican People's Party and the Nationalist Move... (More on P4)... (25)

North, South Korea Reach Agreement to Ease Tensions

SEOUL - North and South Korea agreed early on Tuesday to end a military standoff that sparked an exchange of artillery fire and had ratcheted up tension on one of the world's most heavily-fortified borders. Under an accord reached in the early hours, following more than two days of talks, North

Korea expressed regret over the recent wounding of South Korean soldiers in landmine blasts and Seoul agreed to halt anti-Pyongyang propaganda broadcasts. North Korea also agreed to end the "semi" state of war it had declared. The two sides will hold follow-up talks to discuss a range of issues on improving ties, the joint



statement said. Both sides began rolling back heightened military postures at noon (0300 GMT), Seoul's defense ministry said. (Reuters)

U.S. Army Temporarily Sends Armored Vehicles to Bulgaria



SOFIA - The U.S. Army has sent to Bulgaria armored vehicles and other equipment to participate in a joint multinational drill to be held in September and October, officials said here on Tuesday.

The U.S. armament included armored personnel carriers Stryker, artillery systems, four M1 tanks and supporting equipment, Bulgarian Ministry of Defense said in a statement.

Units of the Bulgarian army, 160 troops from the U.S. Marine Corps, and 35 servicemen from Romania would participate in the exercise "Black Sea Rotational Force - PLATINUM LION 16-1" that would be held in two stages in September and October at Novo Selo Training Area, one of the four joint U.S.-Bulgarian military bases in the Balkan country, the statement said. "The aim of the drill is to improve the capacity for joint participation in counterterrorism operations and peacekeeping, as well as increase the level of interoperability between units of the U.S. Marine Corps and the formations of the Bulgarian Armed Forces," the statement said. Bulgaria, a NATO member since 2004, signed a defense cooperation agreement with the United States in 2006. (Xinhua)

UN Migrant Expert Urges EU to Increase Mobility in Border Control



GENEVA - The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants, Francois Crepeau, on Tuesday urged the Europeans to start focusing on regaining control of their external border from the smugglers by increasing mobility solutions available to most migrants. According to the UN expert, the European Union should establish a human rights-based, coherent and comprehensive migration policy which makes mobility its central asset. "It is the only way in which the EU can reclaim its border, effectively combat smuggling and empower migrants," he said. The UN expert said that "building fences, using tear gas and other forms of violence against migrants and asylum seekers will not stop migrants from coming or trying to come to Europe." According to the

UN expert, democratic borders are porous by nature, and providing migrants and asylum seekers with legal and safe mobility solutions will ensure such a control. "If Europeans want their governments to regain control of their borders, then they must urge them to bank on mobility and offer migrants and asylum seekers official channels to enter and stay in Europe," the human rights expert said. According to him, opening up the regular labor markets through smart visas allowing people to come to look for work and incentivise them to return if they don't find the job in question would allow for a much better regulated and controlled official labor market. "In addition, there is an obvious urgent need for Europe to create, jointly with other Global North countries, (Xinhua)

Neighbour News

Chinese VP Stresses Consultative Service for Manufacturing

BEIJING - Chinese Vice Premier (VP) Ma Kai urged better consultative services in the country's manufacturing sector on Tuesday. He made the remarks at the founding ceremony of a national consultative committee for upgrading the country's manufacturing sector. To speed up China's transformation into a manufacturing power is a strategic move to enhance national power and security, and achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, Ma said. The committee is a move to carry out the "Made in China 2025" plan and improve scientific and democratic decisions, he said. The consultative committee members should provide

quality consultative services on key problems and policies to tackle the bottlenecks and weak links in the manufacturing sector, Ma said.

In order to transform China from a world factory into a world manufacturing power, the State Council, or the cabinet, unveiled the "Made in China 2025" plan in May. The plan lays out strategies for switching from low-end manufacturing to more value-added production, with domestic manufacturers expected to make technological breakthroughs in a number of emerging industries from numerical control tools and robotics to aerospace equipment and new energy vehicles. (Xinhua)

Nawaz Calls for Strengthening Economic, Trade Ties with Kazakhstan

ASTANA - Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said the purpose of his visit to Kazakhstan was to further strengthen ties, expand cooperation in different areas, and increase bilateral trade, investment and economic cooperation. "There is a large scope for trade in textile and cotton products, pharmaceuticals, food items, engineering equipment and machinery and construction enterprises," Nawaz mentioned as he met his Kazakh counterpart Ka-

rim Massimov. "Pakistan's ports (Gawadar and Karachi) provide the shortest route to sea for the Central Asian Republics (CARs)," he said, adding Pakistan was eager to see a prosperous Central Asia with all countries connected by rail, road and air-links and generating business. "Pakistan offers Kazakhstan the shortest access to the sea." Most of the Central Asian States had shown keen interest in using Pakistan's sea ports for their exports, he added. (Agencies)

Iran Denies Plans to Swap Prisoners with United States

DUBAI - Iran is not considering a prisoner exchange with the United States, a senior official said on Tuesday, ahead of an expected verdict for an Iranian-American journalist held in Tehran for more than a year. "The reports on the possible exchange of prisoners are not true and it is not on the table," Deputy Foreign Minister Hassan Qashqavi was quoted as saying by Iran's ISNA news agency. There has been speculation of a prisoner swap between Iran and the United States both before and after last month's landmark nuclear deal, but both

countries have consistently denied that such an agreement is imminent. Jason Rezaian, Tehran bureau chief for the Washington Post, was arrested in July 2014 and charged with espionage. His last closed-door hearing was held in early August and the Revolutionary Court is expected to issue a verdict shortly. The other U.S. citizens detained in Iran are Christian pastor Saeed Abedini and Amir Hekmati, a former sergeant in the U.S. Marine Corps. Robert Levinson, a private investigator, disappeared in Iran in 2007. (Reuters)

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Central Asia to Visit Uzbekistan

BISHKEK - Deputy Assistant Secretary for Central Asia at the U.S. Department of State Daniel Rosenblum will arrive in Tashkent on August 27, reports CA-News. Daniel Rosenblum plans to meet with the officials of the country to discuss issues of regional security and stability. Rosenblum visited Tajikistan last time in

April 2014. Back then, he led the U.S. delegation for a Central Asian tour. They visited Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan. Working within the State Department's Bureau for South and Central Asian Affairs, Rosenblum oversees the U.S. policy and diplomatic relations with five Central Asian states. (AKIpress)

Indian PM Offers Condolences over Loss of Lives in Nepal Violence

NEW DELHI - Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday offered condolences over the loss of lives in deadly clashes in Nepal Monday and called on all sections to eschew violence. "PM spoke to PM of Nepal Sushil Koirala to offer condolences at the loss of lives in recent violence. PM Modi assured PM Koirala of India's continued support to Nepal, while calling on all sections to eschew vi-

olence," Indian External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Vikas Swarup tweeted. The death toll in the violent clash that erupted over the proposed federalism in the far western Nepal has reached 20, according to local media. At least 17 police personnel and three protesters were killed in the clash that took place in Tikapur of Kailali district on Monday afternoon. (Xinhua)