

Kerry, Lavrov Hold Talks in Geneva

GENEVA - U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov held talks on Friday to discuss a number of issues, including Syria and Ukraine.

According to the U.S. mission in Geneva, Kerry arrived in Geneva on Thursday evening for the talks.

Prior to the Geneva talks, the two men discussed the situation in Syria and Ukraine over phone, the Russian



Foreign Ministry said Wednesday.

They discussed prospects for bilateral coordination of actions in Syria and the need for disengagement of Washington-oriented opposition groups from terrorists, which are not covered by the ceasefire. The latest face-to-face talks in Geneva between them are expected to give new impetus to brokering a political end to the five-year conflict in Syria. (Xinhua)

US, Saudi Plan to Revive Yemeni Talks

RIYADH - U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry revealed on Thursday in Jeddah a new U.S.-Saudi initiative to revive the standstill Yemeni talks, local news channel Al Arabiya reported.

The initiative aims to convince the Yemeni militias to hand over their weapons and form a national unity government, according to Kerry.

He said the initiative will be implemented following a negotiation between UN Envoy to Yemen Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed and all Yemeni political parties.

Kerry urged the Yemeni minority Houthis to accept the new initiative, saying both political and military solutions to the Yemeni crisis are possible options by Gulf countries. The U.S. official said more efforts could be made to battle the Islamic State (IS) militants and al-Qaida only if the conflicts in Yemen are ended. Meanwhile, Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir said his country rejected any civil putsches in Yemen and the crisis should be solved peacefully. (Xinhua)

IOE President Hopes G20 Summit to be Engine of Reform

GENEVA - Daniel Funes de Rioja, president of the International Organization of Employers (IOE), has expected that the upcoming G20 summit could give a strong impetus to comprehensive reform efforts at national level.

"The G20 is an important international platform for policy coordination, but it has not yet become an engine for reform," De Rioja, who is also a co-chair of Business 20 (B20) Employment Task Force,



told Xinhua on Thursday in an exclusive interview. This year's G20 summit will be convened on

Sept. 4-5 in Hangzhou, China and its theme is "Toward an Innovative, Invigorated, Intercon-

ected and Inclusive World Economy." B20 supports the work of G20 by ... (More on P4)... (19)

Turkish Army Hits YPG Fighters in Northern Syria

ANKARA - The Turkish military on Thursday hit the Kurdish fighters of People's Protection Units (YPG) with artillery fire in northern Syria, as the group ignored warnings and moved towards south of Jarablus, local media reported.

The Turkish military launched the attack late on Thursday, after entering Syrian town of Jarablus as part of the Euphrates Shield operation to back Syrian rebels expelling the Islamic State (IS) militants off the border.

The assault hit a YPG unit near the north of Manbij,

another Syrian town controlled by the U.S.-allied YPG, the state-run Anadolu Agency reported.

The Turkish forces opened fire at 6:00 p.m. local time (1500 GMT) after intelligence showed the YPG militants were advancing despite a promise by the U.S. that the Kurdish militia would retreat, Anadolu said. The shelling by howitzers occurred near Manbij after the militants did not heed a warning from Turkish forces, CNN Turkey reported.

An Turkish security official ... (More on P4)... (20)

Turkey Vows "Total War" against Terrorism Amid Repeated Attacks

ISTANBUL - Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim on Friday declared a "total war" against terrorism, as the country has come under repeated deadly attacks in recent days.

"Let our nation know that we have opened a total war against these terrorist groups," Yildirim said at a joint press conference in Istanbul with his Bulgarian counterpart Boyko Borissov.

"We will give all kinds of necessary response to these villains who target-



ed the fellowship and unity of 79 million people," added Yildirim. Eleven police officers

were killed and 75 people injured earlier in the day when a police checkpoint in the southeastern city of

Cizre was hit by a bomb-laden truck, the latest in a series of bombing attacks that ... (More on P4)... (21)

Iraqi PM Meets Syria's Mualllem over Anti-IS Fighting

BAGHDAD - Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi on Thursday met with the visiting Syrian Deputy Prime Minister Walid al-Mualllem and discussed the war against the Islamic State (IS) militants and the security of the border areas between the two countries.

Abadi received Mualllem in his office and the two discussed "means to boost bilateral ties and the war against the IS as an enemy to both countries, the region and the world," a statement of his office said.

Abadi also discussed with Mualllem and his accompanying delegation means to secure the border areas between the two countries, especially after the Iraqi security forces came closer toward the border line after the recent victories against the IS militants in Iraq's western province of Anbar, according to the statement. During his visit, Mualllem held meetings with Iraqi President Fuad Masoum and Iraqi Foreign Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari.

After meeting with Jaafari, Mualllem said at a joint press conference that "Iraq and Syria are defending themselves, and are fighting on behalf of the world countries, be ... (More on P4)... (22)

Clinton, Trump Suffer from High Unpopularity Among Likely Voters: Poll

WASHINGTON - More than half of the likely voters, or 53 percent, said they had "strongly unfavorable" views of Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump, while 46 percent said the same about his Democratic rival Hillary Clinton, according to a national poll released Thursday.

Clinton now holds 10-point lead over Trump, 51 percent to 41 percent, among likely voters in a two-way race, the Quinnipiac University poll finds.



The New York billionaire leads Clinton among white men, 59 percent to 32 percent, and voters who are 50 years of age and older, while Clinton has the support of women,

60 percent to 36 percent, and those younger than 50, the poll shows, noting Trump has only 29 percent support of millennials aged from 18 to 34, and 15 ... (More on P4)... (23)

Boko Haram Violence Gravely Impacts Children in Lake Chad Basin: UN Agency

UNITED NATIONS - The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) on Thursday warned of the devastating consequences of the Boko Haram insurgency on children in Africa's Lake Chad Basin, saying that years of violence by the extremist militants have led to a worsening humanitarian crisis that has displaced 1.4 million children and left at least one million still trapped in hard-to-reach areas.

Almost half a million will suffer from severe acute malnutrition this year, up from 175,000 at the beginning of the year, UNICEF said in a report released on Thursday, adding that an estimated 38 children have also been used to carry out suicide attacks in the region so far this year. The Lake Chad Basin is the largest endorheic drainage basin in Africa,

centered on Lake Chad. It has no outlet to the sea and contains large areas of desert or semi-arid savanna. The basin spans seven countries, including most of Chad and a large part of Niger.

Across the Lake Chad Basin, the UN estimates that more than nine million people need humanitarian assistance, the United Nations said.

UNICEF said that humanitarian needs were outpacing the response, especially now that new areas previously unreachable in north-east Nigeria have become accessible. The UN agency has received only 13 percent of the 308 million U.S. dollars it needs to provide assistance to the families affected by Boko Haram violence across Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon. (Xinhua)

8 Police Killed in PKK Bombing Attack in SE Turkey

ANKARA - Eight Turkish police officers were killed and 50 people were wounded in a bomb-laden truck attack in front of a police station in the Cizre district of Turkey's province of Sirnak on Friday, local media reported.

A car bomb by Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) militants hit a police station in Turkey's southeastern Sirnak province at 6:40 am local time (3:40 GMT).

Dogan News Agency reported that 8 police officers were killed and 50 people

injured by the attack. The police station building was seriously damaged. Many ambulances, police and 2 helicopters were dispatched after the attack. The wounded were sent to local hospital. Over 600 members of Turkish security forces and thousands of PKK members have been killed in confrontations inside Turkey and in northern Iraq since July of 2015, and Turkish forces have killed over 7000 PKK militants, local media figured. (Xinhua)

China, ASEAN Mark 25th Anniversary of Dialogue Relationship

BEIJING - A reception to mark the 25th anniversary of the dialogue relationship between China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was held here on Thursday.

Before the reception, Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi met with ASEAN ambassadors and representatives in Beijing, saying bilateral relations have made big strides over the past 25 years and contributed to regional peace, stability and prosperity.

China is willing to work with ASEAN to hold a successful commemora-

tive summit marking the 25th anniversary of the dialogue relationship in September this year and to advance bilateral relations to a higher level, Yang said. The ASEAN diplomats said China is the most active dialogue partner for ASEAN and ASEAN will work with China for a better relationship.

Yang and the ASEAN diplomats also visited an exhibition featuring China-ASEAN relations and unveiled a commemorative envelop to mark the 25th anniversary of the relationship at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse. (Xinhua)

Neighbor News

Pakistan PM Seeks Regional Cooperation to End Poverty, Illiteracy, Social Ills

ISLAMABAD - Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Friday urged regional countries to work jointly in changing economic landscape of the region and getting its people out of clutches of poverty, illiteracy and other social ills.

He made the remarks when inaugurating a day-long meeting of finance ministers of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in Islamabad. Ministers and senior officials from SAARC groups including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, the Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka were participating in the conference.

Officials said the delegates discussed proposal to move from the South Asian Free Trade Area to the South Asian Economic Union, focus on

customs-related trade facilitation measures, finalizing the draft on SAARC Agreement on Promotion and Protection of Investment, implementation of the SAARC Agreement on Trade in Services (SATIS), Avoidance of Double Taxation and Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters and Transactions in Local Currencies. "Three decades back South Asian leadership had made commitment to accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development of our region," the Pakistani prime minister said in his opening remarks that was aired live on the state TV.

"For economic and social progress of the masses, increasing connectivity, ease of communication, freer trade and finding ... (More on P4)... (24)

Development Issue to Take Prominent Position in G20 Hangzhou Summit

BEIJING - The upcoming G20 Summit will focus more on development issues to inject new impetus into the world economy and promote international consensus on development, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang said Friday.

The 11th G20 summit will be held from Sept. 4 to 5 in China's eastern city of Hangzhou, with China choosing "Toward an Innovative, Invigorated, Interconnected and Inclusive World Economy" as the theme of the Hangzhou summit, identifying four key priorities, namely, "breaking a new path for growth," "more effective and efficient global economic and financial

governance," "robust international trade and investment" and "inclusive and interconnected development."

As one of the key priorities to be discussed, "inclusive and interconnected development" is expected to be a highlight of the summit, Lu said, adding that this entails sustainable development, promoting coordinated growth of various economies, interconnected industries with win-win results and shared prosperity of all sectors. Lu said that it was hoped that collective and individual actions on the part of the G20 will give a strong impetus to the UN sustainable development agenda. (Xinhua)

Military Operations in Syria Must be Coordinated with Damascus: Iran

TEHRAN - The Iranian Foreign Ministry says any military action in Syria against foreign-backed Takfiri terrorists must be coordinated with the Damascus government.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has repeatedly declared that the fight against terrorist groups on Syrian soil must take place in coordination with the central government, and must respect the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity as a fundamental principle of the international law," Foreign Ministry Spokesman Bahram Qasemi said on Thursday.

"We have always underlined that the fight against terrorism is an international obligation,

and regional states need to combat this ominous phenomenon through joint cooperation," he pointed out.

Qasemi's remarks came in response to the Turkish army's deployment of military forces and tanks to the northern Syrian border city of Jarablus, located in Syria's strategic province of Aleppo and some 398 kilometers (248 miles) northeast of the capital Damascus.

Shortly after the operation was launched on Wednesday, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said it was meant to confront such "terror groups" as Daesh and the Democratic Union Party (PYD) - a US ... (More on P4)... (25)

Oil Terminal Construction Nears End in Turkmenistan

ASHGABAT - Construction of a terminal for reception, storage and shipment of oil products at the Ymamnazar customs point in the Lebap region of Turkmenistan is being completed, the Turkmen oil and gas complex said in a message.

The Turkmen Lebap region borders with Afghanistan. The terminal capacity will be 540,000 tons.

Commissioning of this facility will open opportunities to increase the

volumes of oil products export to other countries, according to the message. The project is being implemented by the 'Turkmenogardar-nebitgurlushik' trust.

Turkmenistan produced 12.7 million tons of oil in 2015, which is by 5 percent more than in 2014, says BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2016. Meanwhile, the country's share in global oil output was 0.3 percent in 2015.

Turkmennebit (Turkmenoil)... (More on P4)... (26)