

# UN Chief Calls for more Protection for Refugees, Migrants

UNITED NATIONS - UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Friday called for more protection for refugees and migrants after learning of latest loss of lives in the Mediterranean and Europe. "I am horrified and heartbroken at the latest loss of lives of refugees and migrants in the Mediterranean and Europe," said a statement of the secretary-general's spokesperson.

Thursday saw the grim discovery of the bodies of more than 70 people inside a truck abandoned near the Austrian border with Hungary. Reports indicate that many of the victims were Syrian asylum seekers, in-



cluding children, it said. Recent days have brought yet more news of hundreds

of refugees and migrants drowning in perilous journeys on the sea, it said.

"Earlier this year, I visited search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean.

Despite the concerted and commendable efforts of the joint European search and

rescue operation, which has saved tens of thousands of lives, the Mediterranean Sea continues to be a death trap for refugees and migrants," it said. A large majority of people undertaking these arduous and dangerous journeys are refugees fleeing from places such as Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. International law has stipulated - and states have long recognized - the right of refugees to protection and asylum, it said. Ban stressed that religion or other identity should not be used as criteria to decide whether to take in a refugee....

.. (More on P4)...(24)

## Turkish Jets Join U.S.-Led Coalition Strikes on Islamic State

ANKARA - Turkish jets took part in U.S.-led coalition air strikes against Islamic State in Syria for the first time on Friday, the Turkish Foreign Ministry said. "Our jets started last night to carry out air operations with coalition forces against IS targets in Syria which pose a threat to our security too," a statement released on Saturday said.

The operation followed a technical agreement with the United States on Aug.

24 about Turkey's role in the campaign against the Sunni Islamists who control large areas of Syria and Iraq. Turkey last month agreed to open its strategically important air bases to the coalition, but has been reluctant to play a leading role in the fight against Islamic State, fearing a backlash. On July 24, Turkish warplanes attacked Islamic State targets in Syria, but not as part of the coalition operation. (Reuters)

## Iran to Unveil Domestically-Made Strategic Radars

TEHRAN - A senior Iranian commander says Iran will unveil two domestically-manufactured strategic radars within the next few days. The two radars, named Bina and Nazir, will be deployed in two different mountainous and plain areas inside the Iranian territory, said Brigadier General Farzad Esmaili, the commander of Iran's Khatam al-Anbiya Air Defense Base. He added that the home-built radars, which will be unveiled on Tuesday, have advanced technological capabilities and are "unique" in the region. The commander added

that the long-range radars can detect small flying objects and cruise missiles with high accuracy. Esmaili said the country's Fat'h 14 radar would also be deployed in an air defense site, adding that the long-range system has semiconductor technology. Furthermore, he said the Talash missile system has been produced in cooperation with Iran's Defense Ministry to intercept targets at medium and high altitude. The commander also noted that Iran would also produce and unveil..

(More on P4)...(27)

## Brief Ceasefire Between Syria Regime, Rebels Ends



BEIRUT - A truce between Syrian regime forces and rebel groups in three key towns ended early Saturday as the warring parties resumed clashes and shelling, a monitor and a mediator said.

Pro-regime forces, including Hezbollah militia, had agreed on a 48-hour ceasefire until dawn on Saturday in the rebel bastion of Zabadani and the government-held villages of Fuaa and Kafraya. "The ceasefire has collapsed in Zabadani, Fuaa, and Kafraya this morning," said Rami Abdel Rahman, head of the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group. "There are clashes and shelling in Zabadani, and opposition fighters are shelling Fuaa and Kafraya." He had no details on who began firing and

whether there were any casualties. A Kafraya resident speaking to AFP by phone said "dozens of shells" had fallen on the town since early Saturday. Fuaa and Kafraya, the last two regime-held villages in Syria's north-west Idlib province, have been surrounded by a rebel alliance including Al-Qaeda's affiliate Al-Nusra Front. The siege came in retaliation for a fierce offensive on Zabadani, along Syria's border with Lebanon, by pro-regime forces early last month. Warring parties were negotiating to reach a broader deal including rebel fighters leaving Zabadani and the evacuation of civilians from Fuaa and Kafraya, whose residents are minority Shiite Muslims. (AFP)

## Commemorative Concert Marks End of WWII at UN Headquarters

UNITED NATIONS - With delicate yet powerful music rising and flowing, the audience at the United Nations headquarters savored the performance by Shanghai Symphony Orchestra to mark the end of World War II (WWII). The event, titled "Concert in Commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of the Founding of the United Nations and the End of the Second World War," was performed at the General Assembly Hall of the United Nations headquarters in New York Friday night.

The overture of the symphony "Shanghai 1937" premiered at the concert, which was composed es-

pecially for the event.

According to its composer Zou Ye, the overture is about the heroic and brave spirit of the Chinese army in a deadly battle, the second Songhu Battle, which took place in China's metropolis Shanghai in 1937, the same year that Japan began its full-scale invasion in China. "Shanghai 1937" showcases the enormous sacrifices that the Chinese people made in fighting the fascist Japan during the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, said Zhou Ping, president of Shanghai Symphony Orchestra. "The idea of composing such a musical



score came to me about two years ago and it took me four months to compose it," said Zou Ye. "It is a great honor for me to have my score premiered here at the United Nations headquarters to commemorate the 70th anniversary

of its founding and the end of WWII," said Zou Ye. Besides Chinese musicians, artists from other countries also performed in the concert. "We invited many renowned artists to join us in the concert, such .. (More on P4)...(25)

## Hollande, Merkel, Putin Back Ceasefire Plan for Eastern Ukraine

PARIS - France, Germany and Russia back plans for a complete ceasefire in eastern Ukraine from Sept. 1, the French presidency said after their respective leaders spoke by telephone on Saturday.

Ukraine and pro-Russian separatists, in a gesture to shore up a tenuous ceasefire, agreed on Aug. 26 to strive for an end to all truce violations from next Tuesday, the OSCE

and rebel representatives have said. In a statement, French President Francois Hollande's office said he also agreed with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Russian President Vladimir Putin that it would be useful to hold a summit with Ukraine's Petro Poroshenko in the coming weeks. "They strongly backed the call for a complete ceasefire from Sept. 1," Hollande's office



said. "They underlined .. (More on P4)...(26)

## EU Parliament Chief Attacks 'Cynical' States over Refugee Crisis

BERLIN - The "glaring failures" of some European countries to take in refugees are turning the Mediterranean into a mass grave and creating gruesome scenes at borders, the head of the European Parliament has said. Martin Schulz, a German Social Democrat, said those European governments that have resisted European Union proposals to agree a common plan must do more to deal with the crisis, which is intensifying due to a surge in migrants fleeing war and poverty. The International Organization for Migration estimates a third of a million people have crossed the Mediterranean so far this year to wash up in southern Europe.

"We are not dealing with a failure of the EU, but rather with a glaring failure of some governments, who don't want to take responsibility and thereby impede a joint European solution," Schulz told Germany's Die Welt newspaper.

Germany expects to receive a record 800,000 refugees and asylum-seekers this year. "The governments of some member states must finally remove their blockade and end this unworthy game," Schulz said. He did not single out any states. However, Hungary, which is part of Europe's passport-free Schengen zone, is building a fence along its border with Serbia to contain what it calls a threat to European security, prosperity and identity.

Britain has a long-standing exemption from EU rules on border issues, along with Ireland and Denmark. Eastern European states have pleaded immigrants would simply not fit in. The difficulty of agreeing a common policy was manifest in June when leaders angrily rejected European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker's proposal that they accept binding quotas to share out asylum-seekers from Italy and Greece. (Reuters)

## India Vows to Become Modern, Credible Aerospace Power

NEW DELHI - Indian Air Force chief Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha Saturday said the armed force is determined to become a modern, flexible and credible aerospace power. "The mission of the Indian Air Force is to build a modern, flexible and credible aerospace power, with full spec-

trum capability to safeguard nation's interest," he said in southern city of Bengaluru. The Air Force chief, who was delivering a lecture at the Institute of Aeronautical Medicine, also said field trials on various counter measures are underway to detect and combat fatigue. (Xinhua)

## Egyptian Court Sentences Three Al Jazeera Journalists to Prison

CAIRO - An Egyptian court sentenced three Al Jazeera TV journalists to three years in prison on Saturday for operating without a press license and broadcasting material harmful to Egypt, a case that has stirred an international outcry. The verdict in a retrial was issued against Mohamed Fahmy, a naturalized Canadian who has given up his Egyptian citizenship, Baher Mohamed, an Egyptian, and Peter Grete, an Australian who was deported in February. Rights advocates say their arrest was part of a crackdown on free speech waged since the army overthrew President Mohamed Mursi, a senior Muslim Brotherhood figure, in July 2013 following mass unrest over

his rule. Judge Hassan Farid said the defendants, dubbed the "Marriott Cell" by the local press because they worked out of a hotel belonging to that chain, "are not journalists and not members of the press syndicate" and broadcast with unlicensed equipment. Baher received an additional six months in prison. The state news agency MENA said that extra time was handed down because he was in possession of a bullet at the time of his arrest. The three men were originally sentenced to between seven to 10 years in prison on charges including spreading lies to help a terrorist organization, a reference to the Muslim Brotherhood which the military toppled from power two years ago. (Reuters)

## Neighbour News

### Pakistan Rejects U.S. Think Tanks Report on Nuclear Stockpile

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan has rejected as baseless U.S. think tanks reports that the country's nuclear stockpile could become the world's third largest. The Washington Post quoting reports published by two U.S. think tanks said this week that Pakistan could become the third largest nuclear stockpile within the next five to 10 years, behind only the United States and Russia. "We reject the report's assertion that Pakistan has the fastest growing nuclear arsenal as utterly baseless," the foreign affairs spokesman said in a statement on Friday. The report published on Thursday by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the Stimson Center said that Pakistan was far outpacing its rival neighbor in the development of nuclear warheads and may be building 20 nuclear warheads annually. The spokesman stated as

a nuclear state, Pakistan's policy is characterized by the utmost restraint and responsibility. "We strictly abide by the concept of credible minimum deterrence and our nuclear program is only aimed at maintaining peace and stability in South Asia. Pakistan has no desire to engage in nuclear arms race," the spokesman said. The report quoted analysts as claiming that Pakistan possesses around 120 nuclear warheads as compared to India's 100. The report also said Pakistan could have at least 350 nuclear weapons within five to 10 years. The spokesman said such reports have the effect of diverting attention from the exponential increase in India's fissile material stockpiles as a result of nuclear deals with a growing number of Nuclear Supplier Group countries and its destabilizing consequences for the region. (Xinhua)

### China Amends Laws to Empower Local Legislatures

BEIJING - China's top legislature on Saturday adopted amendments to laws that aim to give more powers to local legislatures so they can better oversee the work of the government. Members of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) passed the amendments to three laws regarding the organization, election and staffing of legislatures, or people's congresses, through a vote at the close of the bi-monthly legislative session. The Organization Law for Local People's Congresses and Local Governments, empowers the presidium of township-level people's congresses during adjournment. It says the presidium should regularly designate deputies to hear and review government

reports that most concern the public. Moreover, they should inspect law enforcement, collect public suggestions and criticism, and pass them to the relevant agencies. Lawmaker Wu Heng said the provision is an important measure to prevent the presidium from sitting idle during the adjournment, and to support them to play due roles on a regular basis. The law increases county-level people's congress standing committee membership from the previous 15-27 to 15-35. Counties with a population exceeding 1 million will have up to 45 members, compared with 35 previously. It further authorizes county-level people's congresses to establish legal, financial and economic committees. (Xinhua)

### Iranophobia on Deathbed: President Rouhani

TEHRAN - President Rouhani made the remarks in a press conference in the capital, Tehran, on Saturday, which marks the third anniversary of his administration taking office. "Iran is now being known as a peace-seeking country in the world... Iranophobia is in very dire conditions; it is nearing its death despite efforts to resuscitate it," the president said. In opening remarks, President Rouhani said his administration, now half way through its term, has sought to avoid causing social gaps and to narrow existing ones. The administration made efforts to soothe the market, contain the spiraling infla-

tion, and end stagnation, he said. The economic record of the administration, he said, has been an acceptable one despite such issues as the sharp fall in oil prices - from over 100 dpb to almost 40 dpb - and regional security concerns, which he said affect all countries as the world states are interconnected in terms of how they impact each other. President Rouhani also said his administration has taken unprecedented steps to address the issue of water scarcity in the country. Economy takes center stage in response to a question about how the administration plans to .. (More on P4)...(28)

### Tajikistan's Islamic Opposition Party Faces Ban Amid Crackdown

DUSHANBE - Tajikistan on Friday demanded that the country's largest opposition party halt its "illegal activities" in a move widely seen as an effective ban on the group. Analysts warned that the crackdown could radicalise the moderate Muslim opposition. The ex-Soviet nation's justice ministry sent a formal note to the beleaguered party, demanding that it "cease its illegal activities" as it attempted to hold a congress. The note, which comes amid increasing pressure on

the impoverished Central Asian country's largest opposition party, is seen by analysts as an offer to close voluntarily. IRPT has ten days to respond to the letter. The note said that the IRPT, which its leaders claim has around 40,000 members, is "no longer a republican-level party." The IRPT is the only registered faith-based party in the former Soviet Union and is one of the few potential sources of genuine opposition to Rakhmon's 22-year rule. (Agencies)