

Russian Air Strikes Kill 1500 in Syria in 2 Months

DAMASCUS - Russian air strikes in Syria have killed over 1,500 people over the past two months, a monitor group reported Monday.

As many as 485 of the total death toll were civilians, as the rest were militants with the Islamic State (IS) group or the al-Qaida-linked Nusra Front, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

It said the death toll is the result of thousands of Russian air strikes on several Syrian areas, since the Russian air force started striking the militants' positions



in Syria late last September. Russian officials have repeatedly said the

Russian warplanes target only the terrorist groups, as part of Mos-

cow's declared war on terror in Syria. Syrian government of-

officials have hailed the Russian air raids as effective, adding that the

strikes enabled the Syrian army to advance on ground. A well-informed official Syrian source told Xinhua on Monday that the Russian air force is using advanced reconnaissance system in Syria, adding that they use such technics before carrying out air strikes to make sure the targets are only militant groups. Speaking on condition anonymity, he said the rebels try to accuse Moscow of targeting civilians to tarnish the Russian anti-terror campaign. (Xinhua)

Syria Denies Using Chemical Weapons in Civil War

THE HAGUE - Syria on Monday denied ever using chemical weapons in its four-year-old civil war, telling a global watchdog it was cooperating fully with the destruction of its toxic stockpile. Damascus's rebuttal comes amid growing accusations it is not being transparent with the world's chemical watchdog and UN efforts are stepped up to track down the perpetrators of deadly chlorine gas attacks in the war-torn country last year.

"We wish here to state

categorically that we have never used chlorine or any other toxic chemicals during any incidents or any other operations in the Syrian Arab Republic since the beginning of the crisis and up to this very day," Deputy Foreign Minister Faisal Moqdad told the annual meeting of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Damascus rejected "the false accusations against Syria with respect to its supposed use of chlorine ... (More on P4)... (14)

Russian Strikes in Syria must only Target Islamic State: France

PARIS - Russian air strikes in Syria must clearly target only Islamic State, France's foreign ministry said on Monday in response to questions over recent raids by Moscow on opposition groups in the north of the country. After traveling to the Russian capital on Thursday, French President Francois Hollande said he had agreed with his counterpart Vladimir Putin that these attacks would only hit Islamic

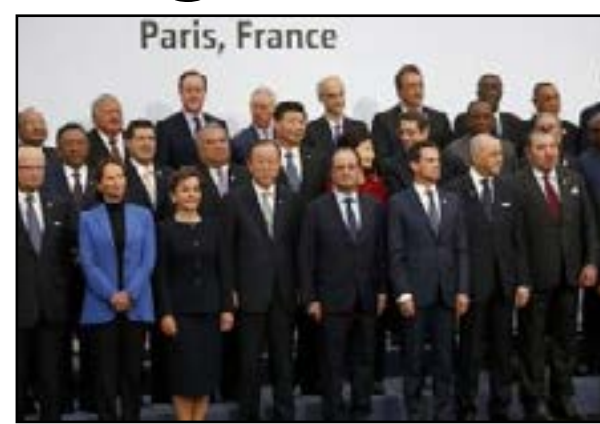
State and similar jihadi groups in Syria. The West has accused Moscow of mostly targeting Western-backed rebel groups fighting Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Asked about strikes since Friday on ethnic Turkmen areas near the Syrian-Turkish border, foreign ministry spokesman Romain Nadal said: "There can be no possible ambiguity on the objectives being pursued, which must only target ... (More on P4)... (16)

World Leaders Launch Bid for Climate Breakthrough in Paris

PARIS - World leaders launched an ambitious attempt on Monday to hold back the earth's rising temperatures, with French President Francois Hollande saying the world was at "breaking point" in the fight against global warming. Some 150 heads of state and government, including U.S. President Barack Obama and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping, urged each other to find common cause in two weeks of bargaining to steer the global economy away from its dependence on fossil fuels. They

arrived at United Nations climate change talks in Paris accompanied by high expectations and armed with promises to act. After decades of struggling negotiations and the failure of a summit in Copenhagen six years ago, some form of landmark agreement appears all but assured by mid-December.

Warnings from climate scientists, demands from activists and exhortations from religious leaders like Pope Francis have coupled with major advances in cleaner energy sources like solar



power to raise pressure for cuts in carbon emissions held responsible for warming the planet. Most scientists say failure to agree on strong measures in Paris would

doom the world to ever-hotter average temperatures, bringing with them deadlier storms, more frequent droughts and rising sea levels as polar ice caps ... (More on P4)... (15)

EU-Turkey Deal on Refugees has Wider Implications: Analysts

ANKARA - A deal reached Sunday between the European Union and Turkey to stem the flow of refugees, mostly Syrians, to Europe has wider implications, analysts said. In return, the EU offered concessions such as provision of 3.2 billion U.S. dollars and speedup of talks on Ankara's EU accession. The deal was hailed as a success by most analysts in Turkey, although some expressed reservations over the negative impacts on Ankara.



"The EU was reminded of Turkey due to a refugee crisis. Whatever the case is, Turkey needs to capi-

talize on that," Gungor Uras, a Turkish expert, said. "The mutual confidence was lost. Now, in a sense,

there is a return to the normalcy (in ties)," he added. The 3.2 billion dollars, to be given in installments, is to help Turkey take care of refugees in the hope that over 2.2 million Syrians living there will not venture out to try to reach Europe.

In addition to Syrians, the refugees also include nationals from such countries as Myanmar, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Iran, who will be repatriated to Tur ... (More on P4)... (17)

NATO Welcomes Turkey's Effort to Establish Contact with Moscow

BRUSSELS - NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg on Monday said he welcomed Turkey's efforts to establish contacts with Moscow to de-escalate the situation after his meeting with visiting Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu. They discussed the crisis in Syria and last week's incident of a Russian jet downing by Turkey.

"All Allies fully support Turkey's right to defend its territorial integrity and its airspace," the NATO chief said at a joint press conference with Davutoglu. "I welcome Turkey's efforts to establish contacts with Moscow and through its contacts with Russia, to de-escalate the situation. It is important



to stay calm and to calm tensions," he added. Stoltenberg highlighted the need to avoid similar situations in the future through strengthening international mechanisms in relationship with Russia. He said the issue of risk-reduction mechanisms will be discussed at the following NATO Foreign Ministers' meet-

ing on Tuesday. The Secretary General also urged Russia to play a constructive role in Syria by targeting ISIL, which he said is their common enemy. Davutoglu reaffirmed at the press conference that Turkey's action of attacking Russian fighter jet was "defensive", adding that Turkey "cannot ... (More on P4)... (18)

Germany Increases Security Staff to Manage Refugee Influx



BERLIN - A record influx of refugees has increased demand for security staff in Germany, the federal employment agency said on Monday, as the burden of managing large numbers of arrivals and securing refugee centers grows. In its monthly job index, the agency noted a sharp rise in demand for security guards in the social and public sector. "This increase may be linked in particular to the large demand for workers to help manage refugees," the agency said. More than 690 arson and other attacks have been carried out on refugee centers so far this year, as Germany expects up to one million asylum seekers. This compares to 198 for the whole of last year. The German government and its federal states want to increase controls of security personal, the Sueddeutsche-Zeitung reported on Monday, citing a benchmark paper from the federal-state committee.

Following the Paris attacks on Nov. 13, the German government said its security agencies had intensified monitoring of radical right-wing activists, fearing a backlash against refugees. As local authorities struggle to cope with the surge in new arrivals, tensions have also simmered among asylum seekers. (Reuters)

Unprecedented Security in Place for Lavrov, Kerry Visits

NICOSIA - Unprecedented security measures will be in place during visits by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry to Cyprus this week, a Ministry of Justice and Security source said Monday. Lavrov is due in Cyprus on Tuesday for a two-day visit and talks with the government. Kerry will pay a one-day visit on Thursday, which was originally planned for November but put off in the aftermath of the downing of the Russian SU-24 fighter by Turkish planes. The source said airports and ports were being guarded round the clock by detachments of the special anti-terrorist police ... (More on P4)... (19)

UAE Says Ready to Commit Troops to Fight Syria Jihadists

ABU DHABI - The United Arab Emirates has said it is ready to commit ground troops against jihadists in Syria and described Russian air strikes in the country as attacks on a "common enemy". Quoted by the official WAM news agency on Monday, Emirati State Minister for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash said the UAE would "participate in any international effort demanding a ground intervention to fight terrorism". "Regional countries must bear part of the burden" of such an intervention, he said during a Sunday discussion on Syria. The UAE is a member of the US-led coalition carrying out air strikes against the jihadist Islamic State group in territory under the jihadists' control in Syria and Iraq. As the jihadists have held out against more than a year of strikes ... (More on P4)... (21)

WHO, UNICEF Support Myanmar for Mass Polio Vaccination Campaign

YANGON - The World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) are supporting Myanmar's Ministry of Health to conduct a polio vaccination campaign in 102 townships across Myanmar, a joint statement from WHO and UNICEF said Monday. The campaign targeting 1.4 million children under five years of age will start off in early December, with rounds of vaccination conducted across

15 high risks townships in Rakhine, Chin, Magway, Bago and Ayeyarwady. The first three rounds of the campaign, scheduled on Dec. 5-7, Dec. 26-28 and Jan. 16-18, will target all children under five in these 15 high risk townships across the country. In addition, two additional rounds of polio immunization will be conducted in another 87 townships in January-February 2016. In Rakhine state, ... (More on P4)... (20)

Neighbor News

Iran Ready to Resume Oil Exports to Egypt

TEHRAN - A senior oil official says Iran is ready to resume crude exports to Egypt which used to transport Iranian oil through the Suez Canal and internal pipelines before 2012 sanctions on Tehran dried them up. Egyptian oil officials have said they were looking to Iran's return to the market when sanctions are lifted in early 2016. Former oil minister Sherif Ismail said in July that Egypt had no objections to importing crude from Iran. "Iran has no restrictions for

the sale of crude oil or petroleum products to Egypt," Deputy Petroleum Minister and Managing Director of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) Roknoddin Javadi said on Monday. "In case a formal proposal is made, it will be subject to consideration," he added. Egypt's Petroleum Minister Tarek El Molla said earlier this month that his country looked to a rise in oil volumes through the Sumed pipeline once Iran returned to pre-sanction export levels. (PressTV)

Gen. Raheel Signs Black Warrants for School Attack Convicts

ISLAMABAD - Pakistani army chief General Raheel Sharif on Monday signed black warrants of four hardcore terrorists involved in the Taliban attack that killed nearly 150 students and staff members in December last year. The black warrants mean there is no legal impediment left in implementation of death sentence of the four convicts. The warrants were issued 10 days after President Mamnoon Hussain rejected a mercy petition of the four militants. "Chief of Army staff today signed black warrants of four hardcore

terrorists involved in APS Peshawar massacre," an army statement said. Those who will be hanged include Maulvi Abdus Salam, Hazrat Ali, Mujeeb Rehman and Sabeel alias Yaya. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had advised the president to reject the petitions of all four convicted terrorists.

The outlawed Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan had quickly claimed responsibility for the brutal attack where a group of suicide bombers entered the Army Public School (APS) and opened indiscriminate fire at the students, teachers and staff members last December. (Xinhua)

Xi Meets Obama Ahead of UN Climate Conference, Pledging Cooperation

PARIS - Chinese President Xi Jinping, who is attending the opening session of a major United Nations climate change conference here, met with his U.S. counterpart Barack Obama on Monday, discussing issues from bilateral ties to climate change talks.

Xi stressed China and United States should stick to the right direction of building a new type of major country relations and the principles of non-conflict and non-confrontation, mutual respect as well as cooperation and win-win results.

He urged China and the United States to advance their practical communication and cooperation at bilateral, regional and global levels, and in areas including enhancing coordination on macro-economic policies, pushing for the achievement of the anticipated

goals at this UN climate change conference and manage differences and sensitive issues in a constructive manner. China and the United States should make concerted efforts in maintaining the sustained, health and stable development of bilateral relations, and safeguard and promote peace, stability and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific and the world at large.

Around 150 heads of state or government are gathering here for the UN conference, officially called the 21st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The highly-anticipated meeting aims to yield a new international agreement to reduce greenhouse gases beyond 2020, when the 1997 Kyoto Protocol expires. (Xinhua)

Humanitarian Aid for \$2.1 Million from Kazakhstan Arrives in Tajikistan

BISHKEK - Some parts of the humanitarian aid allocated by the government of Kazakhstan to Tajikistan arrived in Dushanbe at the end of last week. Kazakh government adopted a decree on providing humanitarian aid for \$2.1 million on October 29. This assistance will be distributed to the people suffered from devastating floods in the Rasht valley and Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region

of Tajikistan this summer. Tajikistan was provided 500 liters of vegetable oil, 39 tons of metal slate, 800 tons of equipment, 400 thousand units of milk and more than 10.7 thousand of canned meat, 400 tons of rice, more than 192 tons of sugar, 70 tons of butter. Some parts of the humanitarian aid were delivered by 28 railway wagons, another 15 are on the way. (AKIpress)