

# Migrant Sea Arrivals in Europe Top 350,000 Mark: IOM

GENEVA - A total of 350,573 migrants and refugees have crossed the Mediterranean Sea to reach Europe so far this year, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) reported Friday.

Some 173,188 of those arrivals have been recorded on Italian shores, with a further 171,751 entries documented in Greece.

A further 5,445 and 189 individuals have reached Spain and Cyprus respectively.

While the number of arrivals since January pales in comparison



with 2015's figure over the same period (over 883,000 entries), the number of deaths this year has been much higher.

According to IOM, 4,699 men, women and children have drowned attempting to cross the Mediterranean to reach Europe this year, compared to 3,567 at this point in 2015.

By far the deadliest this year, the central Mediterranean passage linking North Africa with Italy has claimed the lives of 4,207 people.

A further 429 individuals ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

## EU Lawmakers Demand Higher Standards for Commissioner Conduct

BRUSSELS - In a nearly unanimous vote, the European Parliament on Thursday called on the European Commission to substantially revise its code of conduct for Commissioners.

Members of European Parliament (MEPs) demanded that special attention be given to the disclosure of financial interests and the "cooling off" period before an ex-Commissioner may take a private sector job in his or her area of expertise.

They called for the "cool-

ing off" period to be doubled from 18 to 36 months for former Commissioners, despite European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker's recent proposal of prolonging it to 24 months.

Adopted by a remarkable 615 votes in favor to 5 against, with 6 abstentions, the non-binding resolution runs in line with recent public discontent regarding so-called "revolving door" cases, in which former ...*(More on P4)...(21)*

## Fighting Displaces over 31,000 People in Syria's Aleppo: UN Agencies

GENEVA - Some 31,500 civilians have been displaced within Aleppo since fighting between warring factions escalated on Nov. 24, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported Friday.

Over half (18,000) of those who have been forced to flee their homes have done so to Jibreen, a government-held district of western Aleppo, OCHA indicated in a press briefing here.

A further 8,500 have fled to the Kurdish area of Sheikh Maqsood, while 5,000 have

been displaced within east Aleppo which has been under siege for almost five months, the UN body added.

According to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), around 60 percent of those displaced by clashes between Syrian government forces seeking to take over rebel-held eastern districts are children.

Though unable to reach civilians who have not left eastern parts of the war-torn city, the UN said Thursday that it is able to provide much needed food ...*(More on P4)...(22)*

## Nearly 80,000 Flee Iraq's Mosul as Fighting Rages: IOM

GENEVA - Some 77,826 civilians have fled Mosul and its adjacent districts since Iraq's military operations to recapture Mosul, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) reported Friday.

"We are deeply concerned about both the displaced and host communities' ability to cope with the winter weather," IOM Iraq Chief of Mission Thomas Lothar Weiss said in a statement.

"Now that the rains have begun, people living in makeshift shelters or un-

finished buildings are at risk from the cold, damp weather, which is affecting their health and well-being, particularly the elderly and children," he added.

According to the organization's latest statistics, 80 percent of those recently displaced by military operations are living in formal camps.

A further 14 percent have taken shelter in private settings, while five percent are in critical shelter



arrangements and one percent is passing through screening sites. Meanwhile, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has distributed over 8,000 kits containing blankets and quilts to recently retaken towns and villages to the east of Mosul. (Xinhua)

## Each EU Member State to Prepare National Integrated Energy Plan: Official

BRATISLAVA - Each European Union member state will prepare its national integrated energy plan heading towards the joint European energy policy, European Commission (EC) Vice-president for Energy Union Maros Sefcovic said Thursday.

Sefcovic made the remarks at the "SET Plan - Central European Energy Conference (CEEC)" held in Bratislava.

"We expect the proposed measures to annually mobilise 177 billion euro (188 billion U.S. dollar) worth

of investments, create 900,000 new jobs, chiefly in the energy efficiency sector, and allow for an annual GDP growth of as much as 1 percent," said Sefcovic.

Sefcovic said that through these proposals, the EC is implementing strategic goals in the field of energy and climate change agreed upon by EU leaders in 2014, as well as commitments stemming from the Paris Agreement.



According to Sefcovic, the EC's proposals are to reform the current model of electric energy production and consumption, impose measures to reduce en-

ergy consumption, and better integrate energy generated from renewable energy resources, such as solar and wind energy. (Xinhua)

## NEW BOOK: Capital Market Integration in South Asia; Realizing the SAARC Opportunity

Lee Kuan Yew, credited for converting Singapore into an economic success, once described ASEAN as "Unpromising Start, Promising Future". This phrase can also describe SAARC, which has seen few successes as geopolitics slowed progress. Institutional investors use acronyms for groups of developing countries, but all is not rosy with these groups either. At such times, SAARC doesn't look too bad. SAARC is a combination of sizable Emerging and Frontier markets with low correlation. While India is the largest in size, the other SAARC markets have seen decisive improvement in their metrics relative to India. Return on Equity and Profit Margins of top companies in Pakistan and Bangladesh has improved relative to India; while Sri Lankan companies have seen buoyant topline growth. The combined package should help counter volatility of single-market exposure. Investors may argue why they should look at SAARC asset class, and it is better to look at India or Frontier

markets (FM) separately. But India benefits from the returns and low-correlation of SAARC's FMs, while the FMs benefit from India's size. A SAARC portfolio can increase the upside from multiple growth enablers, while minimizing the downside due to low-correlation constituents. A SAARC asset class may hasten country-specific funds for South Asian FMs, as current FM funds have only a small allocation to them.

Economic projections show the opportunity of SAARC vs other prominent regional groups like ASEAN, BRICS, Next-11, etc. The incremental economic size SAARC will add from 2014-2020 is next only to BRICS and Next-11. SAARC ranks high in savings growth, savings rate, and aggregate savings as of 2020. Capital market penetration is low, so depth has headroom to expand. Income is more evenly distributed, so investor breadth has headroom to expand. SAARC has the youngest demographics with a near absence of social benefits. Incremental capital forma-



tion is amongst the highest in SAARC. Not only is SAARC a large consumer base, it is building production capabilities across sectors.

As this economic story unfolds, it should translate into a financial story. This book discusses possible capital market Products/activities which regional stakeholders could explore to help realize the economic opportunity in this region. Some ideas may be implementable now; while some may be implementable as markets mature further. This book includes extensive data analysis of SAARC's economic projections, and corporate performance and market indicators. The purpose is to mobilize ...*(More on P4)...(23)*

## Russia Invents Method of Producing Nuclear Fuel

VLADIVOSTOK, Russia - Scientists at the Far Eastern Federal University have invented a new method of producing nuclear fuel using electric current, said the university Friday.

Main advantages of the new technology are low cost, quick manufacturing process, and improvement of product quality. Fuel can be produced even from uranium dioxide powder, which is not suitable for common technology, the press service said.

"The key idea of our method is heating with electric current. It flows through a mould that already has some powder on it. In such conditions uranium oxide fuel experiences the powerful pulsed discharge and mechanical pressure simultaneously," said Ivan Tananaev, head of the department of nuclear technologies at the school of natural sciences. (Xinhua)

## Turkey Due to Launch New Intelligence Satellite

ANKARA - Turkey will launch a new intelligence satellite on Monday, local Daily Sabah reported on Friday.

The Gokturk-1, designed to meet the satellite imagery needs for the Turkish military with, was assembled by the Telespazio of Italy and Thales Alenia Space of France in Cannes. The new satellite went through environmental tests at Turkey's first Space Systems Integration and Testing Center in the Turkish Aerospace Industries' Akinci Air Base and was later sent to the Kourou Launch Center in French Guiana. The Gokturk-1, which is set to sit at a low-altitude orbit, will be ...*(More on P4)...(24)*

## Turkish Foreign Minister Calls for Immediate Ceasefire in Syria

BEIRUT - Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu called for an immediate ceasefire in Syria on Friday, describing the situation in Aleppo as critical and saying that President Bashar al-Assad was unfit to rule.

Asked about Assad at a news conference in Beirut, Cavusoglu said it was undeniable that the Syrian leader was responsible for 600,000 deaths and that somebody with that record should not be running a country.

NATO member Turkey is a major backer of rebels fighting to oust Assad. The rebels have come under siege in eastern Aleppo after rapid advances by Syrian government forces in recent days, bringing them to the brink of a major defeat.

Cavusoglu said Turkey was speaking with Assad's allies Russia and Iran, as well as with Syria and Lebanon, about trying to find a solution in Syria.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan and Russia's Vladimir Putin have spoken by phone at least three times over the past week about Syria, while Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov met Cavusoglu in Turkey on Thursday. Cavusoglu said after that meeting that Moscow agreed on the need for a halt to fighting and the provision of aid in Aleppo, but deep divisions remain between them over the conflict. (Reuters)

## Nieghbor News

### China Opposes Unilateral Sanctions beyond UN Specifications

BEIJING - China on Friday said that it has always been opposed to any country's unilateral sanctions against other nations, which are over and above those specified in UN Security Council restrictive measures.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said the remarks when commenting on reports saying that the Republic of Korea and Japan announced Friday plans

to increase sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in response to DPRK's nuclear test in September.

Geng added that China has been even more strongly opposed to unilateral sanctions that could harm China's fair and lawful interests. He said that the current situation in the Korean Peninsula is complicated and sensitive, so all relevant ...*(More on P4)...(25)*

### US Extension of Sanctions Violates Nuclear Deal: Iran

TEHRAN - The Iranian Foreign Ministry said Friday that the U.S. Senate's vote to extend sanctions against the Islamic republic is a violation of an international deal on Tehran's nuclear issue clinched in July 2015.

"As it was repeatedly announced by senior Iranian officials, the recent decision by the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate to extend sanctions against Iran runs counter to the JCPOA (or the nuclear deal)," said Foreign Ministry Spokesman Bahram Qasemi. "It is also against the U.S. obligations under international law on non-interference in domestic and international relations of

other countries," Qasemi was quoted as saying by Press TV. Last week, the U.S. House of Representatives voted for the extension of the ISA for another 10 years, which was endorsed by the U.S. Senate on Thursday. To become a law, the bill has still to be signed by the U.S. president. The ISA was first adopted in 1996 to sanction Iran over its controversial nuclear program. Qasemi said Friday that "the political developments inside the United States and interactions between its legislative and executive branches cannot justify the country's failure to abide by its international commitments." (Xinhua)

### Every Year HIV & AIDS Claims A Large Number of Lives Globally: Mamnoon

ISLAMABAD - Pakistani President Mamnoon Hussain on World AIDS day said that World AIDS day is an occasion to reiterate our commitment to addressing the menace of HIV/AIDS in our country. Every year HIV & AIDS claims a large number of lives globally. Pakistan is also facing a challenge from this disease due to a number of risk factors which are similar to those which have in the

past led to the AIDS epidemic in other countries. He further added that on the occasion of World AIDS Day 2016, I am pleased to note that the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination has made concrete and concerted efforts through the National AIDS Control Programme to address various risk factors. I am also pleased to know ...*(More on P4)...(26)*

### Turkmenistan, Iran Mull Energy Co-Op

ASHGABAT - Turkmenistan's Foreign Minister Rashid Meredov held talks with the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Ebrahim Rahimpour, the Turkmen ministry said in a message.

The parties exchanged views on cooperation in energy, transportation and trade. They mentioned substantial potential for ex-

panding and diversifying trade turnover between the two countries.

A number of major economic projects in energy and transportation have been implemented over the years of the Turkmenistan-Iran cooperation.

Iran ranks third in Turkmenistan's foreign trade, primarily, due to natural gas purchase. In its turn, Turkmenistan ...*(More on P4)...(27)*

### Uzbekistan PM Mirziyoyev Poised to Win Presidential Election

TASHKENT - Uzbek Prime Minister Shavkat Mirziyoyev delivers a speech near a portrait of late President Islam Karimov during a mourning ceremony in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, September 3, 2016. Geogry Kakulia/Press Service of Georgian Government/Handout via Reuters/Files

Uzbekistan's interim president, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, looks set to become the Central Asian nation's second full-time leader since independence in an election on Sunday, facing timid opponents who have avoided any criticism of the government. Mirziyoyev, 59, served as prime minister from 2003 under President Islam Karimov, who died of ...*(More on P4)...(28)*