

# Britain May Continue with Some EU Cooperation Post-Brexit: Johnson

LONDON - Britain could pay in to some EU programs after Brexit but the government will take back control of its own money and will no longer spend large amounts in Brussels, Foreign Minister Boris Johnson said on Sunday.

Businesses, investors and opposition lawmakers are clamoring for clarity on the government's negotiating position before it triggers the formal exit procedure from the European Union by the end of March.

Last week, Brexit minister David Davis said Brit-



ain could pay into the EU budget to get access to the bloc's single market of 500 million customers, easing fears that the government is heading for a "hard Brexit" involving a clean break with the bloc. But Johnson, speaking on the BBC's Andrew Marr television program, declined to confirm whether that was a priority for the government, saying ministers were considering several options. "I've always thought that there were aspects of EU cooperation ... where actually ... to be part of that ... (More on P4)...(17)

## Putin Confident Trump will Make Responsible Decisions

MOSCOW - Russian President Vladimir Putin says he is confident that President-elect Donald Trump will soon realize the level of responsibility his job entails.

Despite Trump's pro-Russian statements during the campaign, Russian politicians are concerned about reports that Trump is considering Mitt Romney, known for his harsh stance on Russia, to be his secretary of state.

Putin said in an interview

with the NTV channel to be broadcast later on Sunday that he is confident that Trump will make responsible choices.

Putin said in remarks released by NTV that Trump's business accomplishments show him to be a "smart man." He added that "if he is a smart man, that means that he will fairly soon become aware of a different level of responsibility. We expect that he act with these considerations in mind." (AP)

## US, China, EU, Others Fail to Reach Environmental Goods Deal

GENEVA - High-ranking officials representing 46 countries including the U.S., China and European Union nations have failed to agree on a list of "environmental goods" like solar-powered air conditioners or LED light bulbs that could be targeted for lower tariffs.

The two-day meeting at World Trade Organization involved a bid to agree on reducing tariffs on over 200 environment-friendly goods worth more than \$1 trillion in trade annually.

Diplomats cited troubles over Chinese demands on many goods including bicycles, and disagreements over sustainable-development lumber between Canada and New Zealand on one side and Japan and Taiwan on another.

Any agreement would only be a first step. The incoming administration of U.S. president-elect Donald Trump is expected to have important say on the final contours of the Environmental Goods Agreement. (AP)

## Syrian Army Calls on Civilians to Return to Liberated Neighborhoods in Aleppo

DAMASCUS - The Syrian army on Saturday urged displaced civilians to return to areas that have recently been retaken by the army in the northern city of Aleppo, amid ongoing progress the army is achieving against the rebels in the city, according to state news agency SANA.

The government has started the rehabilitation process in areas the army captured in the rebel-held part east of Aleppo, according to a statement car-



ried by SANA. Recently, the Syrian army forces and allied fighters succeeded to capture the northern part of eastern Aleppo, as part of a major offensive

## Giuliani, Romney Pit Hardliner Against Moderate for U.S. Secretary of State

WASHINGTON - President-elect Donald Trump is narrowing down his choices to fill the position of U.S. Secretary of State, with two of the four candidates representing the choice of a hardliner against a moderate.

Incoming President Trump is scrambling to put together a cabinet before he takes office several weeks down the road, and his choices for the nation's top diplomat are down to a list of four - former candidate for president Mitt Romney, former New York City

mayor Rudy Giuliani, Gen. David Petraeus and Sen. Bob Corker. The choice of Romney or Giuliani could put two very different faces on U.S. foreign policy, as Romney is a more moderate candidate representing more mainstream viewpoints, and Giuliani is more of a hardliner, having governed the city of New York in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks on his home city and Washington, which killed nearly 3,000 people.



"With Giuliani, nominating him as Secretary of State will satisfy the Trump grassroots and demonstrate that Trump is will-

ing to shake up the status quo in terms of the way the State Department works and the shape of American ... (More on P4)...(18)

## Turkey Seeks Trade in Local Currencies with Russia, China

ISTANBUL - Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Saturday that his country is seeking trade in local currencies with Russia and China amid a fluctuation in Turkish lira.

"I proposed to Putin to conduct our trade in local currencies," Erdogan said of his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin at the opening ceremony of a shopping mall in Istanbul.

"I said whatever I buy I shall pay you in ruble, and whatever you buy from me make the pay-

ment in Turkish lira," the president noted. He said he had asked the same from China and his offers were found reasonable by both countries. The president noted that he had given necessary instructions to Turkey's central bank, saying "I hope we will move on this way." The Turkish lira lost 10 percent of its value against the U.S. dollar in No-



vember alone and hit a record low of 3.59 on Friday, prompting Erdogan to call on Turks to covert

their foreign exchanges into gold or Turkish lira in an attempt to curb the rise in dollar. (Xinhua)

## Hamas Interior Ministry Commences Large Security Exercise in Gaza

GAZA - The interior ministry and the security apparatuses run by Islamic Hamas movement in the Gaza Strip commenced on Sunday a large security exercise at its security and police headquarters, similar to a war status on Gaza, said a ministry official statement.

The statement said that the security maneuver lasted for four hours, while all security apparatuses joined, adding that emergency services and civil defense forces had also participated in. Witnesses in Gaza said they heard heavy explosions and gunfire shots all over Gaza city, mainly the western part, where all security and police headquarters are located. "The exercise included a training that simulates Israeli air ... (More on P4)...(20)

## US Dentist Faces Proceedings as Patients Possibly Exposed to Hepatitis, HIV



NEW YORK - A dentist at the Tomah Veterans Affairs Medical Center in the mid-west U.S. state of Wisconsin is facing administrative proceedings for violating regulations and possibly exposing patients to diseases like AIDS, local media reported.

A review board would question the dentist on Monday, while the responsible medical center has been providing free blood tests and other necessary assistance for the 592 veterans treated by the dentist since his employment from last October. These patients might be infected with hepatitis B, hepatitis C, or HIV as the doctor repeatedly used his own medical tools instead of sterile and disposable equipment during dental treatment, the medical center said.

It added that the unnamed dentist has handed in resignation just one business day before a review board could be held to investigate his services.

"Although we cannot prevent the dentist from resigning while administrative actions are pending, we are continuing reporting procedures to the state licensing board and the National Practitioner Data Bank," said the center's acting medical director Victoria Brahm. (Xinhua)

## Thousands Protest Corruption, Support Judiciary in Brazil

RIO DE JANEIRO - Thousands of protesters are crowding Rio de Janeiro's beachfront to express disgust with public corruption and to support the judges and prosecutors pursuing those crimes.

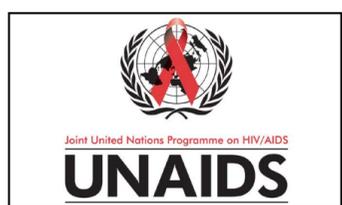
Protests are also under way Sunday in other Brazilian cities. An investigation into a kickback scheme at the national oil company has shocked Brazilians both for the scale of corruption it has revealed and for the commitment of the judiciary to see it through in a country where many feel the powerful act with impunity. But prosecutors leading that investigation last week ... (More on P4)...(21)

## UNAIDS Hails Nigeria's New HIV/AIDS Initiative

LAGOS - The Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) hailed Nigeria for launching a new plan that would speed up HIV treatment and prevention in the country.

The documents would help quickly put 500,000 more people living with HIV on treatment and get Nigeria back on track to achieve the 90-90-90 treatment target, Charles-Martin Jjuuko, Communications and Global Outreach Officer of UNAIDS Nigeria, said in a statement to Xinhua on Sunday.

Two documents were launched in Abuja, Nigeria's capital, to commemorate the 2016 World AIDS Day. They aim to boost



national response to HIV/AIDS, improvement of related care and services, and halting its spread in Nigeria by 2030. The documents are the National HIV Guidelines, Prevention, Treatment and Care 2016, and Fast tracking HIV and Prevention of Mother ... (More on P4)...(22)

## Nieghbor News

### Australia, China Agree to Open Aviation Market

CANBERRA - Australian and Chinese governments have settled arrangement to open aviation market between the two countries, Australian Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Darren Chester and Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment Steven Ciobo said in a statement on Sunday.

The statement said the new arrangements will remove all capacity restrictions between Australia and China for each country's airline, allowing Australian tourism businesses to take advantage of the largest and fastest growing consumer market in the world.

"We have also liberalised traffic rights and code share arrangements, which are important for

Australian airlines. This will enable Australian and Chinese airlines to service destinations between and beyond both countries, and will allow them to take full advantage of their cooperative arrangements with their commercial alliance partners," said Chester.

The two countries have seen a boom of direct flights in recent months. Air China, China's national flag carrier, started its Chengdu-Sydney in November this year, while China Southern Airline is expected to begin its Guangzhou-Adelaide service in December. Australia's flag carrier Qantas also announced to relaunch its daily service from Sydney to Beijing in January. (Xinhua)

### Iranian Foreign Minister to Visit China

BEIJING - Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif will pay an official visit to China from Monday to Tuesday at the invitation of his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang announced Sunday. Wang and Zarif will co-

chair the first annual foreign ministers' meeting, according to Geng. During Chinese President Xi Jinping's state visit to Iran in January, both countries agreed to set up an annual meeting mechanism as a part of efforts to deepen mutual strategic trust. (Xinhua)

### Iran Vows to Cooperate with Russia to Annihilate Terrorism

TEHRAN - Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said here on Saturday that Iran and Russia will continue cooperation in fighting terrorism until it is eradicated in the region, Tehran Times daily reported.

"There is good cooperation between Tehran and Moscow in this respect which will continue until the eradication of terrorism and establishment of peace and stability in the

region," Rouhani said during a meeting with Alexander Lavrentiev, the Russian president's special envoy for the Middle East. Terrorism is a "serious threat" to the world, he said, adding that Iran-Russia cooperation is necessary to tackle this issue.

He also said that the crisis in Syria can be settled only through holding ... (More on P4)...(23)

### PPP Lambasts Nawaz for 'Unfair' CPEC Sharing

LAHORE - Pakistan Peoples Party Sindh President Nisar Khuhro says Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh and Balochistan are dejected over "unfair sharing" of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects and chided Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif for creating rifts among three provinces.

Khuhro said the prime minister had conveniently ignored Port Qasim towards Ketu Bandar, coastal highway and Karachi's circular railways. He said Sindh had been given just five per cent of the \$47 billion CPEC - for the construction of a highway.

"This is the height of

prejudice on the part of the prime minister," he lamented.

Mr Khuhro was speaking at a news conference flanked by PPP leaders including party's Sindh chapter general secretary Waqar Mehdhi and Sindh information secretary Senator Aajiz Dhamra at the Lahore Press Club on Saturday.

He said former president Asif Ali Zardari had paid several visits to China and strengthened Sino-Pak relations for working together for development. But, now, the most of CPEC fund was being used in Lahore completely ignoring five times bigger city - Karachi. (Monitoring Desk)

### Turkmenistan, Germany Discuss Joint Business Projects

ASHGABAT - The Turkmen-German business forum has been recently held in Ashgabat, Turkmen Foreign Ministry said in a message.

The event was organized by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Turkmenistan and the representative office of the German economy for Central Asia, the message said.

According to the message, some 70 big German companies took part in the meeting. Among those companies are Robert Bosch GmbH, Wilhelm Layher GmbH & CO.KG, MC Bauche-

mie Müller GmbH & Co.KG, Trubatec GmbH, Germany Trade and Invest, Sparkassenstiftung. "The long-term bilateral cooperation has recently renewed," Andreas Peschke, spokesman for the German Foreign Ministry, said.

Around 167 investment projects and contracts with German capital totaling \$540 million and about 555 million euros were registered in Turkmenistan. The volume of trade turnover between Turkmenistan and Germany amounted to \$306 million in 2015. (Trned)