

UNHCR Warns EU Against Carrot-And-Stick Approach to Migration

BRUSSELS - Linking aid for countries in the Middle East and Africa to how they manage migration can create dangerous precedents, the United Nations top refugee official warned the European Union on Monday. Overwhelmed by the arrival of more than a million refugees and migrants in 2015, the EU has tightened its external borders and sought to strike deals with countries along main migration routes to contain the flow of people. Under the most prominent such collaboration,



it promised Turkey an initial 3 billion euros in aid for Syrian refugees living there, accelerated EU accession talks and visa-free travel to Europe for its citizens. In exchange, Ankara has increasingly prevented people from leaving its shores for Greece, which was the main gateway to Europe last year but is now much less active. But with a crackdown in Turkey following July's botched coup straining ties with the EU, President Tayyip Erdogan has warned that Turkey ...*(More on P4)...(16)*

IT Security More Important to German Craft Businesses: Merkel

BERLIN - IT security has become increasingly important to craft companies of the country, said German Chancellor Angela Merkel in her weekly video podcast this weekend. The federal government has launched an initiative "IT security in economy" for small and medium-sized enterprises, which craft businesses take large proportion of. But enterprises should also take some responsibility to best protect themselves, said Merkel when being asked

about the government's measures to combat cyber attacks against companies. Around 900,000 internet routers of Deutsche Telekom, a German telecommunications company, suffered from cyber attacks last weekend, affecting its clients' use of internet, telephone and television. Merkel will attend next Friday a forum held by the association of German craft sector ZDH, according to the video. *(Xinhua)*

Ceasefire in Aleppo only Possible after Russia-U.S. Deal: Russian FM

MOSCOW - A ceasefire in Syria's Aleppo will only be possible after Russia and the United States reach an agreement on a total withdrawal of militants from the city, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Monday. "Russia-U.S. consultations will coordinate particular routes and a timetable for the withdrawal of all militants from eastern Aleppo," Lavrov told reporters.

"As soon as these are agreed upon, the ceasefire regime will take effect,"

Lavrov said.

He noted that a round of consultations concerning the issue would be held in Geneva on Tuesday evening or Wednesday morning, and he hoped the United States would be able to use its influence to persuade the rebels to abandon the vicinity of the besieged Syrian city.

Lavrov said it is would be "counterproductive" to vote on a new draft of the U.N. Security Council



Resolution on Aleppo, which is currently being prepared. He said that the pause

would like to grant the militants would "surely be used by the extremists for regrouping and rearmament." *(Xinhua)*

UN Says S. Sudanese Refugees in Sudan Reach 263,000

KHARTOUM - The UN refugee agency said Sunday that the number of South Sudanese refugees in Sudan has reached 263,000, with October 2016 marking the highest monthly arrival rate. "About 263,000 South Sudanese refugees have arrived in Sudan since Dec. 2013," said the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in a statement. "With continuing insecurity in South Sudan, a steady influx of new refugees is expected through-

out December and into next year." The majority of the South Sudanese refugees live in the camps distributed in the states of White Nile, East Darfur, West Kordofan and Khartoum. On March 17, the Sudanese government decided to treat the South Sudanese nationals inside the country as foreigners, saying it would adopt legal procedures against those who do not have passports or entry visas. An armed conflict ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

UN Official Warns Rising of Racism in Australian Politics

CANBERRA - A United Nations official has urged the Australian government to be aware of racist and hate talks in mainstream politics. Mutuma Ruteere, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, has just wrapped up a visit to Australia to gather first-hand information on the situation in Australia. He made the remarks at a press conference in Canberra on Monday. "I am concerned about

some remarks made by elected politicians about newly-arrived migrants, and in particular against Muslims. I have been made aware that xenophobic hate speech has been on the rise, leading to the creation of a negative perception of migrants, particularly Muslims and persons of African descent. I also heard of continuing fears, threats and incidents of anti-semitism faced by



members of the Jewish community in Australia," said Ruteere. He said he had noticed with concern that some populist politi-

cians, cheered on by sections of mainstream media, continue to stereotype and fan hostility against ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

Italian PM Resigns after Defeat in Crucial Constitutional Referendum

ROME - Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi on Monday announced his resignation after a defeat in Sunday's constitutional reform. "My government clearly ends here," Renzi told a press conference on Monday. He said he would call a last Cabinet meeting in the afternoon and then hand his formal resignation to President Sergio Mattarella. The most significant changes of the reform concern Italy's law-making



process, parliament composition, and balance of power between the central government and the regions. The major constitutional amendment pro-

posed in the referendum was to cut the size of the senate to 100 from 315 seats, and strip it of the power to bring down the ...*(More on P4)...(19)*

Russia Gets More than 7,000 Units of New Military Equipment in 2016

MOSCOW - The Russian armed forces got more than 7,000 units of military equipment in 2016, Deputy Defense Minister Dmitry Bulgakov said Monday. "It can be said that the year of 2016 has been very rich for logistics of the Russian armed forces," Russian newspaper Izvestia quoted Bulgakov as saying. He stressed that half of the Russian military equipment is brand new. The Russian Defense Ministry has delivered more than 710 tons of rockets, ammunition, fuel and lubricants, food commodities and other materials to the country's military base in Syria, Bulgakov said, adding that for quick delivery of necessary supplies, the Russian military has built up a "unique logistic system." *(Xinhua)*

West Mosul Shelled as Iraq Steps up Fight Against Islamic State

BAGHDAD - Western-backed Iraqi forces have begun shelling parts of west Mosul, residents said, in preparation for a new front against Islamic State seven weeks into a difficult campaign to drive the militants from the city.

Federal police forces, stationed a few miles (km) south of Mosul, on the west bank of the Tigris river that divides the city, have long said they aim to advance toward the airport on the southwestern edge.

Military commanders hope that by opening a second front within the city they can increase pressure on the few thousand jihadists who have deployed suicide bombers, snipers and militant cells against elite Iraqi troops in eastern districts.

Some 100,000 Iraqi soldiers, security forces, Kurdish peshmerga fighters and mainly Shi'ite paramilitary forces are participating in the assault that began on Oct. 17, with air and ground support from a U.S.-led international military coalition.

Mosul is the largest city under Islamic State control and driving the militants out would roll back the self-styled caliphate which it declared in Iraq and Syria 2014 after seizing large parts of both countries.

The campaign entered its eighth week on Monday but militants still control three-quarters of the city, where around 1 million residents are living under increasingly siege-like conditions as winter sets in. *(Reuters)*

Nieghbor News

China, Iran Vow to Enhance All-Round Strategic Partnership

BEIJING - Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli met with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif in Beijing Monday, pledging to cement substantial cooperation and strategic partnership with Iran. Zhang recalled President Xi Jinping's state visit to Iran in January when both sides forged a comprehensive strategic partnership. He said relevant departments of both sides have coordinated closely to implement the outcome of Xi's visit and made new progress in bilateral cooperation in politics, energy, infrastructure building and culture. Zhang

called on both countries to maintain high-level exchanges, consolidate political foundations and facilitate cooperation on the Belt and Road Initiative. China and Iran should combine development strategies, enhance cooperation in energy, trade, investment and finance, and map out plans for cooperation in interconnectivity and capacity, the vice premier said. Calling China a trustworthy friend of Iran, Zarif said Iran hopes to participate in the Belt and Road Initiative and strengthen cooperation with China in various areas to enrich the bilateral partnership. *(Xinhua)*

Army Launches Airstrikes in NW Pakistan, Killing 12 Militants

ISLAMABAD - At least 12 militants were killed and five others injured when Pakistani army launched airstrikes in the country's northwest tribal area of Khyber Agency on Sunday, local Urdu media reported.

The troops, backed by jet fighters from Pakistan Airforce, pounded sev-

eral hideouts of the suspected militants in Rajgal area of Khyber Agency, a semi-autonomous tribal region along Pakistan-Afghanistan border, Dawn News reported. Identities of the killed militants have not been revealed by the army yet, but the targeted area is ...*(More on P4)...(22)*

Russia Promises Tajikistan "Large Quantity" of Military Aircraft

DUSHANBEH - Russia has promised a "large quantity" of military aircraft to Tajikistan over the next year. The aid is part of a deal that the two countries signed in 2012, but which has taken on more urgency since Moscow began worrying about China's military/diplomatic advances in Tajikistan. The deal was announced on November 30 at a meeting of defense ministers of the Commonwealth of Independent

States in Moscow. "Next year the key phase of our military-technical cooperation will begin, the delivery of weaponry and military equipment," said Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu said after a meeting with his Tajikistan counterpart, Sherali Mirzo. "In particular, this is a large quantity of aviation equipment, airplanes and helicopters. I think this will be implemented according to plan and on ...*(More on P4)...(23)*

Turkmenistan to Host Int'l Oil and Gas Conference

ASHGABAT - The 21st International Exhibition and Conference "Oil and Gas of Turkmenistan 2016" will be held in Ashgabat on December 7-9, the Turkmen government said in a message.

According to the message, the specialists from 40 countries and representatives of nearly 100 oil and gas companies are expected to participate in the event. Special attention will be paid to the diversification of supply of Turkmen natural gas to the world markets, as well as the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline construction

project, the message said. A number of documents related to the implementation of the project are planned to be signed, the message said.

"In the context of geopolitical cooperation, prospects of global, regional and national growth in the oil and gas industry, the market experts will consider the potential of Central Asia and the Caspian region as a major supplier of energy resources, Turkmenistan's role in global energy security," the Turkmen Dovlet Habarlary state news agency reported. *(Trend)*

Uzbekistan's President-Elect Thanks International Monitors in Russian

TASHKENT - Uzbekistan's President-elect Shavkat Mirziyoyev, speaking in Russian, thanked international observers from over 40 countries for monitoring yesterday's presidential election held in the Central Asian country.

"I would like to thank the monitors and prominent international organizations for actively participating and monitoring the elections and also for their great attention to democratic transformations in Uzbekistan," Mirziyoyev said in a speech

delivered at a ceremony at the Uzexpocentre on Monday. Over 5,000 people carrying national flags and symbols of the Liberal Democratic Party had assembled to greet the newly-elected president. On Monday, Uzbekistan's Central Electoral Commission published the election results, which revealed that Mirziyoyev had garnered 88.61 percent of the votes. Shavkat Mirziyoyev was born on July 24, 1957 to a family of a TB doctor in the ...*(More on P4)...(24)*

Putin Congratulates Mirziyoyev on Election as Uzbekistan's President

MOSCOW - Russian President Vladimir Putin has congratulated Uzbekistan's incumbent Prime Minister Shavkat Mirziyoyev on winning the Uzbek presidential elections, the Kremlin said Monday. Putin sent "warm congratulations" to Mirziyoyev on his victory in a phone call, and wished him successes as the Uzbek president, the Kremlin said in a statement. The Russian president also invited Mirziyoyev to pay an official visit to his country, the statement said. Earlier Monday, the Central Election Commission of Uzbekistan announced that Mirziyoyev scored 88.61 percent of all votes in Sunday's ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

UK Government Wants to Provide Certainty on Brexit: May's Spokeswoman

LONDON - The British government wants to provide certainty over its exit from the European Union by saying there is no going back once divorce talks have formally begun, Prime Minister Theresa May's spokeswoman said on Monday.

The government has launched an appeal against a High Court ruling last month that it had to seek parliament's assent before starting the formal Brexit process by invoking Article 50 of the European Union's Lisbon Treaty.

"While others ... make clear that they want to frustrate the will of the British people by slowing down the process of leaving and trying to tie the government's hand



in a negotiation, the government is getting on with respecting what the British people decided," she said when asked about the opposition Labor Party's pledge to amend any Article 50 bill. "Most people want certainty ... We are seeking to provide ...*(More on P4)...(21)*