

Turkey Says its Patience with Russia 'has a Limit'

ROME - Turkey's foreign minister said Ankara's patience with Russia "has a limit" after Moscow's "exaggerated" reaction to a weekend naval incident between the two countries, an Italian newspaper reported on Monday.

A Russian destroyer fired warning shots at a Turkish vessel in the Aegean on Sunday to avoid a collision and summoned the Turkish military attaché over the incident.

"Ours was only a fishing boat, it seems to me that the reaction of the Russian naval ship was exaggerated," Mevlut Cavusoglu told Italian daily Corriere-



della Sera in an interview. "Russia and Turkey certainly have to re-establish the relations of trust that

we have always had, but our patience has a limit," Cavusoglu said. The incident is likely to

heighten tensions between the two nations who are at odds over Syria and Turkey's downing of a Rus-

sian warplane last month. Cavusoglu said Russia had already "put itself in a ridiculous position" with

accusations by its President Vladimir Putin that Turkey had shot down the jet to protect oil supplies from Islamic State.

"No-one believed it" he said. He also criticized Russia's military intervention in Syria, saying it was aimed at propping up the regime of President Bashar al-Assad, not combating Islamic State.

"Unfortunately Russia is not in Syria to fight terrorists," he said, adding that only 8 percent of its air strikes had been aimed at Islamic State while 92 percent were against other groups hostile to Assad. (Reuters)

Moscow Makes Military Cooperation with Political Organizations Priority

MOSCOW - Development of cooperation with several political organizations has become a priority, the Russian Defence Ministry said on its official website on Monday.

The organizations include the Union State of Russia and Belarus, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

According to the annual

report on the international activities of the Russian Defence Ministry in 2015, military cooperation has been maintained with over 80 countries.

The report said over 30 international exercises of different levels have been held this year, the most important of which were the "Combat commonwealth", "Naval interaction", "Selenga" and "Indra."

The main quality qaand quantity index this year increased compared with that of 2014. The



amount of military hardware received under the State Defence Order has increased by 7 percent, while the proportion of

the Russian Armed Forces' equipment with modern military hardware has reached 47 percent. (Xinhua)

Turkey Withdraws some Troops from Camp in Iraq

ANKARA - Turkey on Monday withdrew some of its soldiers from a camp in Iraq, its prime minister announced, days after Iraq had demanded that Turkish troops immediately leave its territory. Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said in an interview with A Haber news channel that a group of soldiers was pulled out as part of a "rearrangement" of troops and a "military necessity." Turkey has had troops near the Islamic State group-held city of Mosul in northern Iraq since last year

to help train local Kurdish and Sunni forces, but the arrival of additional troops earlier this month sparked uproar in Baghdad. Turkey subsequently halted new deployments, but has refused to withdraw its soldiers. Davutoglu wouldn't provide details but suggested on Monday that the group of trainers would remain near Mosul. Turkey's state-run Anadolu Agency, quoting unnamed military officials, said a 10- or 12-vehicle convoy in cluding ... (More on P4)... (19)

Neighbor News

Nawaz in China to Attend SCO Summit

ZHENGZHOU - Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Monday arrived in China on a two-day visit to represent Pakistan at the 14th Heads of Government Council meeting of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). Upon his arrival in Zhengzhou city of China's Henan province, Zhang Weining, the vice governor of the province received him at the airport.

Nawaz Sharif will deliver a speech at the 14th SCO Heads of Government Council Meeting on Tuesday (tomorrow), which is scheduled to be attended by prime ministers of Russian

Federations, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Chinese Premier Li Keqiang will chair the meeting. The prime minister of Belarus, the chief executive of Afghanistan, the vice premier of Mongolia, the minister of state for foreign affairs of India and the minister from Iran will also attend the meeting as representatives of SCO observers countries. Nawaz will also join the SCO heads of government at the welcome reception hosted by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang in honour of the heads of government of SCO member states and observer countries. (Agencies)

Karimov, Gurbanguly hold Talks in Ashgabat

BISHKEK - President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov held a meeting with President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov in Ashgabat, reports the press service of the Uzbek President. The sides praised Uzbek-Turkmen relations and exchanged views on further development of cooperation, issues of strengthening regional and international security. Karimov noted that the situation

in the various parts of the world is being escalated: threat of terrorism, extremism and drug trafficking is increasing. Berdimuhamedov expressed gratitude to his Uzbek counterpart for participation in the festival and International Conference on Turkmenistan's neutrality policy and highlighted consistent development of cooperation between two countries in all areas. (AKIpress)

China, Kazakhstan to Step up Capacity Cooperation

BEIJING - Premier Li Keqiang held talks with his Kazakh counterpart Karim Massimov in Beijing on Monday, vowing to step up bilateral cooperation in industrial capacity, agricultural products, energy and regional connectivity. Li recalled his visit to Kazakhstan last year, during which he reached consensus with President Nazarbayev and Massimov on bilateral production capacity cooperation. He said capacity cooperation had improved over the past year, citing a recently signed agreement on capacity and investment cooperation, and the establishment of a capacity cooperation fund. Among the 52 bilateral

"early-harvest projects," those related to automobile assembly and polypropylene had already been launched, while construction on a light railway transportation system in Astana will start by the year-end, and a dozen more projects in steel, smelting and cement are expected to kick off next year, Li said. China Railway Group (CRG) will help build the 22.4 km light railway in Astana, which will have 18 stations and one depot, according to the bilateral deal signed in May this year. Li said China hopes to explore a capacity cooperation model with Kazakhstan covering investment, production, sale and service. (Xinhua)

Obama Says may Visit Cuba in 2016 if Citizens Enjoy more Freedoms

WASHINGTON - U.S. President Barack Obama is open to visiting to Cuba in 2016 but first wants to see ordinary citizens there enjoy more personal freedoms, he said in an interview released on Monday.

In an interview with Yahoo! News, Obama said he has told Havana that without such progress, he is unlikely to visit the Communist island nation before he leaves office, despite the historic re-establishment of diplomatic ties between

the two countries earlier this year. "I am very much interested in going to Cuba, but I think the conditions have to be right," Obama said. "And what I've said to the Cuban government is 'If, in fact I with confidence can say that we're seeing some progress in the liberty and freedom and possibilities of ordinary Cubans, I'd love to use a visit as a way of highlighting that progress.'" "If I go on a visit, then part of the ... (More on P4)... (20)

Japan Taps India to Boost Tepid Economy, Nuke Deal Draws Flak

TOKYO - Japan and India over the weekend inked a number of pacts during talks between the two nation's leaders, with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe being eager to return from the soon-to-be world's most populous country with new projects and contracts that will help bolster Japan's still tepid economic recovery.

All major deals primarily inked between Abe and his Indian counterpart Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi were within market



expectations, although analysts here said that Japan's push to export its civil nuclear technology to India was to an extent being keenly eyed by

stakeholders and other interested parties, including other countries in South and East Asia. "Japan had previously been reluctant to forge such a deal with

India as it has yet to become a signatory of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) which only recognizes Britain, China, ... (More on P4)... (21)

U.S. Urges more Vigilance as WTO Talks Kick off in Kenya

NAIROBI - The U.S. government has called on delegates attending the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference scheduled to take place in Nairobi from Dec. 15-18 to be more vigilant due to terror threats. In its special travel alert to American delegates received by Xinhua on Sunday, the U.S. State Department said there is the opportunity for criminal elements to target participants and other visitors in large public events.

"Large-scale public events, such as the WTO Conference, can be a target for terrorists. U.S. citizens should maintain a high level of security awareness, and enroll in the Smart Travel En-



vironment Programme (STEP) to receive pertinent safety and security information," the travel alert warns. The alert which expires on Dec. 22 notes that road closures, hotel room shortages and restricted movement in Nairobi's central business district are anticipated at the time of the conference. "The already congested central business district

will see up to 5,000 official WTO delegates. As with past WTOs, protests, rallies, and demonstrations could occur with little notice," it warns. The notice came as Kenyan authorities said security will be tightened in the city and its environs to ensure that the WTO ministerial conference which kicked off in Nairobi on Tuesday is incident-free. (Xinhua)

Houthi Say Fired Missile at Saudi-Led Coalition in Yemen, Killing 146

SANAA - Yemen's Houthi rebels said they fired a missile on Monday on a headquarters of a Saudi-led coalition, killing at least 146 soldiers, including two senior army commanders, in an escalation just one day before the start of scheduled peace talks in Switzerland.

In a statement posted online, the group said the missile hit the coalition headquarters at Shib al-Jinn area in Bab al-Mandab southwest of Yemen, killing two commanders, one from Saudi Arabia and the other from the United Arab Emirates.

There has been no independent confirmation of and immediate response to the Houthi claim, though the Saudi-led coalition said in a statement Monday that Abdullah al-Sahyan, a Saudi colonel, and Sultan al-Kitbi, a Emirati officer, were killed at dawn Monday in southwest Yemen.

Three Apache helicopters were also destroyed in the attack, said the Houthi rebel group, which has been fighting the internationally recognized government of President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi.

The Saudi-led coalition of nine countries has been conducting military operations against the Houthi since late March in an effort to restore Hadi's authority. Representatives from the Hadi government and the Houthi rebel group are expected to attend United Nations-sponsored peace talks on Yemen scheduled to start on Tuesday in Switzerland. (Xinhua)

EU Increases Humanitarian Aid for Yemen Crisis

BRUSSELS - The European Union (EU) is releasing an additional 15 million euros (about 16.48 million US dollars) of emergency aid to provide life-saving assistance in Yemen, the European Commission, EU's executive body, said in a statement on Monday. The money will bring the EU's total humanitarian support to the country to 52 million euros for 2015. The humanitarian crisis in Yemen continues to worsen due to the ongoing armed conflict over the last nine months. The country has been classified by the United Nations as a Level 3 emergency - the most severe, large-scale humanitarian crisis. "The ongoing conflict has caused a large number of civilian casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure including medical facilities. We are stepping up our support to help humanitarian agencies in the country provide life-saving assistance such as health care, water and sanitation, nutrition and food security," said EU ... (More on P4)... (22)

Russia Criticizes U.S. Policy on Syria

MOSCOW - Russia stepped up its criticism of U.S. policy on Syria on the eve of a visit to Moscow by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, saying the United States had not shown it was ready to cooperate fully in the struggle against Islamic State militants. Russia would continue to urge Washington to rethink its policy of "dividing terrorists into good and bad ones", Russia's Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Monday, ahead of Kerry's visit to Moscow, which is scheduled for Dec. 15. (Reuters)

Merkel Draws Party Cheers for Centrist Line on Refugees

KARLSRUHE - German Chancellor Angela Merkel pledged Monday to reduce a massive refugee influx but insisted on keeping the door open to the world's neediest, drawing a rousing standing ovation from her party. After weeks of infighting over the expected arrival of around one million asylum seekers to Germany this year, Merkel appeared to unite her conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) behind a centrist

line of generosity with clear limits. She drew loud applause as she repeated her rallying cry "We can do it" during an impassioned hour-long speech, capped by nine minutes in which the 1,000 delegates took to their feet to cheer their chancellor, who beamed and waved to the crowd. Merkel appealed to the venerable party's sense of history, saying that the same strength that allowed it "to rebuild from the ... (More on P4)... (23)

Iran to take Action if Finds US Visa Legislation in Breach of JCPOA: Araqchi

TEHRAN - A senior Iranian official says Tehran will take action if it finds that the recent bill by the US House of Representatives on tightening visa-free travel to the United States runs counter to the recent nuclear agreement between Iran and the P5+1 group. The US House overwhelmingly voted on December 8 in favor of tougher travel restrictions for foreign citizens allowed to enter the United States with-

out a visa. The measure would require visitors from the 38 "visa waiver" countries to obtain a visa to travel to the US if they have been to Syria, Iraq, Iran or Sudan in the past five years. Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Abbas Araqchi said on Sunday that the bill has "different legal aspects" and that Iran is holding consultations with the P5+1 group and the European ... (More on P4)... (24)

Tajikistan's Military Expenditures Increase by more than Twice in Seven Years

BISHKEK - Military expenditures of Tajikistan have increased more than two times over the past seven years - from \$50 million in 2008 to \$104 million in 2014, according to Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). Military expenditures of the country made 1.1% of GDP in 2014 versus 1% of GDP in 2008. The

highest growth of military expenditures were recorded in 2002-2004 - 2.1%-2.2% of GDP. Military expenditure per capita in Tajikistan in 2014 amounted to \$12.4, whereas in 2008 this figure was \$7.2. According to the Institute, the military expenditure of Tajikistan, in total, increased from 3.8% to 4.2%. (AKIpress)