

India to Host Global Maritime Summit on Peace, Cooperation in Navigation

NEW DELHI - Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that India will host a Global Maritime Summit in April to discuss peace and cooperation of ocean navigation.

Speaking as the chief guest at the International City Parade held in Visakhapatnam in the southern Indian state Andhra Pradesh, Modi said one should cooperate and not compete on freedom of navigation. "Our approach is evident in our vision of Sagar, which means ocean, and stands for security and growth for all in the region," said Modi.

"Navies and maritime



agencies of the world need to work together and engineer virtuous cycles of cooperation."

He also said given the scale and complexity of modern day challenges, international maritime stability cannot be the preserve of a single nation.

"Threat of sea-borne terror, of which India has been a direct victim, continues to endanger the regional and global peace and stability," he said.

He welcomed the participation by some 50 nations' navies in the parade, saying "your participation is a message of cooperation and friendship that we deeply cherish". (Xinhua)

North Korean Rocket Puts Object into Space, Angers Neighbors, U.S.

SEOUL - North Korea launched a long-range rocket on Sunday carrying what it called a satellite, but its neighbors and the United States denounced the launch as a missile test, conducted in defiance of U.N. sanctions

and just weeks after a nuclear bomb test. The U.S. Strategic Command said it had detected a missile entering space, and South Korea's military said the rocket had put an object into orbit. North Korea ... (More on P4)...(19)

Britain Strongly Condemns DPRK Rocket Launch

LONDON - British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond on Sunday strongly condemned the rocket launch of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK),

saying it is "a clear and deliberate violation of a number of UN Security Council resolutions." The actions of the DPRK "continue to present a threat to ... (More on P4)...(20)

DPRK's Satellite Estimated to Double Predecessor in Weight: S.Korea

SEOUL - The weight of a newly launched satellite of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) was estimated to have doubled that of its predecessor, indicating an advancement in ballistic missile technology, South Korea's spy agency said Sunday. The DPRK announced a successful launch of a Kwangmyongsong-4 Earth observation satellite into space aboard a Kwangmyongsong rocket, which Seoul sees as a long-range ballistic missile. The National Intelligence Service (NIS) reported on the launch to the

parliamentary intelligence committee, two members of the committee told reporters, according to Yonhap news agency report. The Kwangmyongsong was estimated to weigh around 200 kilograms, two-fold the weight of its predecessor Kwangmyongsong-3 that was launched by the DPRK in December 2012 into orbit. The spy agency believed that the newly launched rocket didn't go through an experiment of atmospheric re-entry, a prerequisite for developing an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). But, the



DPRK seemed to have advanced ICBM technologies on rocket stage separation and guided control given the flight time, stage separations and drop zones of the separated stages. Whether the satellite works normally will take a couple of days to determine, according to the NIS. The rocket's key components were estimated to have been imported mostly from Russia. (Xinhua)

Reaching Limits but will Keep Taking in Refugees: Turkey

KILIS - Turkey has reached the end of its "capacity to absorb" refugees but will continue to take them in, the deputy premier said Sunday, as his country faced mounting pressure to open its border to tens of thousands of Syrians who have fled a government onslaught. Turkish authorities say up to 35,000 Syrians have massed along the border, which remained closed for a third day on Sunday. The governor for the Turkish border province of Kilis said Saturday

that Turkey would provide aid to the displaced within Syria, but would only open the gates in the event of an "extraordinary crisis." Deputy Prime Minister Numan Kurtulmus told CNN-Turk television that Turkey is now hosting a total of 3 million refugees, including 2.5 million Syrians. "Turkey has reached the end of its capacity to absorb (refugees)," Kurtulmus said. "But in the end, these people have nowhere else to go. Either they will die beneath the



bombings and Turkey will ... watch the massacre like the rest of the world, or we will open our borders." Kurtulmus said some 15,000 refugees from Syria

were admitted in the past few days, without elaborating. He put the number of refugees being cared for on the other side of the border at 30,000. (AP)

Russia Condemns DPRK's Long-Range Rocket Launch

MOSCOW - Russia's Foreign Ministry on Sunday condemned the long-range rocket launch of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). "It is obvious that such action leads to a serious aggravation of the situation on the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia on the whole," the ministry said in a statement. "(The launch) plays into the hands of those who put stakes on bloc policies and the buildup of a military confrontation, and would cause serious

damage to the security of countries of the region, primarily of North Korea (the DPRK) itself," it said. Earlier in the day, the Korean Central Television (KCTV) reported that the DPRK had successfully launched a Kwangmyongsong-4 satellite, which was widely seen as a disguised test of long-range ballistic missile technology. By doing so, Pyongyang ignored calls by the international community, and the launch once again showed a "defiant ... (More on P4)...(21)

US Should Choose between Turkey, Kurdish Forces: Erdogan

ANKARA - Turkey's president has lashed out at the United States a week after a President Barack Obama's envoy visited a northern Syrian town that is under the control of Syrian Kurdish forces, which Ankara considers terrorists. In comments published Sunday, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Washington should choose between Turkey and the Kurdish Democratic Union Party, or PYD, as its partner.

That came after envoy Brett McGurk's visit to Kobani, where the PYD's military wing, aided by U.S.-led airstrikes, drove back Islamic State militants a year ago. Turkey considers PYD a terror group because of its affiliation with Turkey's outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK.

Erdogan said: "How can we trust you? Is it me that is your partner or is it the terrorists in Kobani?" (AP)

Syrian Army Gears up for Offensive Against Another Rebel Bastion

DAMASCUS - Syrian army has become only 13 km from Turkish borders, following the sweeping progress against militant groups in the northern countryside of the northern province of Aleppo, pan-Arab al-Mayadeen TV reported on Sunday.

After capturing the towns of Ratan and Mayer a couple of days ago, the Syrian army is moving forward toward the strategic town of Tal Rifat, another rebel bastion on the borders with Turkey. The army is only seven km from Tal Rifat, said the report, adding that



over 300 militants with the al-Qaida-linked Nusra Front had been killed during the recent battles in Mayer and Ratan, both constitutes weapon depots and key supply lines for the rebel from

neighboring Turkey. The Syrian army's wide-scale offensive in Aleppo aims at cutting the rebels supply lines from Turkey and separate the northern countryside of Aleppo ... (More on P4)...(22)

S. Korea Begins Negotiation on U.S. Missile Defense Deployment

SEOUL - South Korea's defense ministry said Sunday that the country and the United States had agreed to launch an official negotiation on the deployment of an advanced U.S. missile defense system, called Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD), on the Korean peninsula. Yoo Jeh-Seung, South Korea's deputy defense minister for policy, told a press briefing that Seoul and Washington had shared a view that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)'s recent nuclear test and long-range missile launch show serious threats of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile on peace and stability in South Korea and the entire Asia-Pacific region. To respond to mounting DPRK threats, South Korea and the United States decided to kick off an official negotiation on the THAAD deployment to the U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) to enhance a joint missile defense posture between the two allies, Yoo said. The decision was ... (More on P4)...(23)

China "Deeply Concerned" over Discussion on THAAD Missile System Deployment

BEIJING - China is "deeply concerned" over the decision by the United States and the Republic of Korea (ROK) to launch an official negotiation on the deployment of an advanced U.S. missile defense system, called Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD), on the Korean Peninsula, a spokesperson said on Sunday. "China holds a consistent and clear stance on the anti-missile issue," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said. "When ... (More on P4)...(26)

Neighbor News

China on Public Safety Alert for Lunar New Year

BEIJING - On Sunday, the eve of the Lunar New Year, Shanghai downtown resident Wei said he was the 6,403rd person to promise on instant messaging app WeChat not to set off fireworks this year. Wei's promise echoed many banners and short messages sent to residents by local police calling for no fireworks after a safety regulation was approved at the end of last year to ban fireworks within the inner-city ring area out of safety and pollution concerns. Chinese authorities are on high alert for public safety as the country embraced the Spring

Festival holiday, a joyous occasion also characterized by fireworks, mass celebrations and heavy traffic. The Ministry of Public Security told police to step up fire safety management and emergency response as the holiday season means an increase in fires and other accidents. Vice Minister Li Wei urged police departments at all levels to analyze and evaluate fire risks, increase enforcement of fire codes and improve emergency responses, keeping a closer eye on firecrackers, large-scale gatherings, galas and other mass activities. (Xinhua)

Pak Army Seeks Funds to Raise New Security Division

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan Army has sought additional funds from the finance ministry to raise a new security division and an additional 28 security battalions, it emerged on Sunday. A statement released by the ministry of finance said senior officials from the army had a meeting with Finance Minister Ishaq Dar at his ministry in Islamabad, where the demand for "financing and the release of funds" was made by military officials. The statement quoted Dar as saying that the "government attaches the highest importance to security

matters" and assured the "provision of funds for the new security division and additional battalions." Pakistan Army is currently spearheading a war against terrorism in Pakistan's northern tribal areas bordering Afghanistan, where terrorists from militant organizations are believed to have taken refuge. In June 2014, the army launched a comprehensive military operation - Zarb-i-Azb - against Taliban militants threatening the writ of the state by launching brazen attacks on government and military installations. (Agencies)

Iran Benefits from Integration of Trade Along Silk Road: Survey

DUBAI - The Islamic Republic of Iran is expected to gain the most from the growing integration of trades within the Asia continent, according to a survey published by Dubai-based consultancy Gulf Intelligence here on Sunday.

According to the survey, 34 percent of respondents to a Gulf Intelligence Industry Survey of 250 energy professionals operating in the Middle East said Iran will benefit the most from the greater integration of commodity-related trades in South Asia on the back of the China's One Belt and One Road initiative, a strategic development scheme to increase bilateral trade and infrastructure investments within Eurasia. The historic China-Iran trade relationship is also

regaining momentum following the lifting of sanctions, with the two countries signing a 10-year deal on January 24 to boost bilateral trade worth up to 600 billion U.S. dollars, said Gulf Intelligence.

The study said further the lifting of sanctions on Iran on January 17 will have a far-reaching impact on both political and energy dynamics within South Asia and the wider Silk Road, which stretches from Beijing to Lagos. "Iran is highly ambitious about its plans to utilize its vast oil and gas resources, with the Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zangeneh saying the country can bring as much as one million barrels a day of oil to the global market by the end of 2016," said the analysis. (Xinhua)

Turkmenistan Sees Increase of Macroeconomic Indicators for 2015

ASHGABAT - Turkmenistan's GDP growth amounted to 6.5 percent in 2015, said the message of the country's government. Macroeconomic indicators of Turkmenistan over the last year were clarified during a recent meeting of the country's Cabinet of Ministers. In 2015, the growth in the industry sphere amounted to 3.1 percent, construction - 8.1 percent, transport and communication sector - 9.8 percent, trade - 10.4 percent, agricul-

ture - 7.9 percent, service sector - 9.8 percent, according to the message. After hearing the report, Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov noted that the macro-economic indicators clearly show steady progressive development of the national economy and successful implementation of reforming programs. The president also stressed the importance of adoption of comprehensive measures to use ... (More on P4)...(27)

UAE Says Ready to Send Ground Troops to Syria

ABU DHABI - The United Arab Emirates (UAE) said on Sunday it was ready to send ground troops to Syria as part of an international coalition to fight against Islamic State. Asked if the UAE was ready to send troops if need be, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash said at a media briefing in the Emirati capital Abu

Dhabi: "This has been our position throughout." "We have been frustrated at the slow pace ... of confronting Daesh," he added, referring to Islamic State by its Arabic acronym. "We are not talking about thousands of troops but we are talking about troops on the ground that will lead the way ... that will support ... (More on P4)...(24)

Turkey Redefines Approach to Kurdish Problem Amid Skepticism

ANKARA - Turkish government's newly unveiled action plan to tackle terrorism is seen as redefinition of state policy toward decade-long Kurdish problem with some expressing skepticism, analysts here said. Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu has announced a 10-point action plan to eliminate terrorism in Turkey on Friday, saying that security, economic and political measures would

be all jointly administered to root out Turkey's longstanding Kurdish problem. "In a sense, the 'Master Plan' revealed by Davutoglu could be seen as redefining state's Kurdish politics," said Ali Bayramoglu, a long-time observer of Kurdish politics. He underlined that the revamped policy envisages Turkey to adopt unilateral actions to ease concerns in the ... (More on P4)...(25)