

British PM Slams Brexit as “Gamble of the Century”

LONDON - British Prime Minister David Cameron on Sunday slammed Britain's likely exit from the European Union (EU) as a “gamble of the century,” warning the risks of leaving Europe to the country's trade, jobs and security.

“It's simply not good enough to assert everything will be all right when jobs and our country's future are at stake,” Cameron wrote in an article published by the Sunday Telegraph newspaper. In the article, he urged Eurosceptics to set out a vision outside the EU, describing



the offer of Brexit as “a leap in the dark.”

The prime minister asked those who want to leave

the EU to sort out what relationship Britain would have with Europe in terms of trade, jobs, security and

Britain's role in the world. Cameron said the reconstructing a new relationship after Brexit would

face “huge amounts of uncertainty” and would have an impact on investment and trade as well as

on jobs and family finances. On security, he argued that Britain currently has a whole set of arrangements with its European neighbors, and asked the “out” campaign to spell out “how they intend to keep people safe.”

In the article, he also demanded that Eurosceptics to answer “the bigger question about our role in the world” outside the EU. Cameron insisted European countries have to work together to deal with international threats, including the migration crisis, extremism and terrorism. (Xinhua)

Egypt Migrant Departures Stir New Concern in Europe

BRUSSELS - The European Union fears Mediterranean migrant smuggling gangs are reviving a route from Egypt, officials told Reuters, putting thousands of people to sea in recent months as they face problems in Libya and Turkey.

“It's an increasing issue,” an EU official said of increased activity after a quiet year among smugglers around Alexandria that has raised particular concerns in Europe about Islamist militants from

Sinai using the route to reach Greece or Italy. Departures from Egypt were a tiny part of the million people who arrived in Europe by sea last year; more than 80 percent came from Turkey to Greece and most others from Libya to Italy. Detailed figures on Egypt are not available.

But as security in anarchic Libya has worsened, EU officials say, more smugglers are choosing to bring African and Middle East refugees and migrants to



the Egyptian coast. Voyages from Egypt are long, but smugglers mainly count on people being res-

cued once in international shipping lanes. Brussels, engaged in delicate bar... (More on P4)...(25)

Britain's Ruling Conservatives Call for Truce in EU Campaign

LONDON - Senior ministers called on Sunday for a truce in a heated debate on Britain's membership of the European Union, saying the ruling Conservative Party must be civil if it wants to stay in power. The party is deeply split over whether Britain should vote to stay in the EU at a referendum on June 23, and several allies of Prime Minister David Cameron, who supports EU membership, are campaigning to leave the 28-member

bloc. Some lawmakers have criticized Cameron for accusing London Mayor Boris Johnson, a leading Conservative, of putting his own ambition above his beliefs by backing the “Out” campaign. They said the thinly veiled attack last week on Johnson, the most prominent party member in the “Out” camp, violated an unwritten rule that both sides respect each others' opinions. “There are different opinions in the... (More on P4)...(26)

Syrian Cease-Fire Interrupted by Sporadic Shelling

BEIJING - One day into the long-awaited cease-fire in Syria, truce was largely observed though sporadic shelling still took place, killing and wounding dozens. As main backers of the cease-fire, Russia and the United States have exchanged information as the two sides are consulting in Amman, Jordan, over how to uphold the truce. The Syrian government said it would obey the agreement, but would not stop fighting extremist groups such as the Islamic State (IS).

PEACE IN DAMASCUS DESPITE SHELLING According to Syrian me-

dia, the shelling mostly targeted the capital Damascus, Aleppo and Deir al-Zour. The Syrian Army General Command said rebels in Jobar and Douma neighborhoods in the suburbs of Damascus fired mortars into the city just hours after the cease-fire went into effect. It warned of consequences of such attacks and called on the people living in those neighborhoods to pressure the militants from breaking the truce. Despite the shelling, Damascenes' mood to savor the peace was not dampened, as Xinhua... (More on P4)...(27)

Iraqi Security Forces Repel IS Attack Near Baghdad

BAGHDAD - Iraqi security forces on Sunday repelled an attack by Islamic State (IS) militants on a military base in west of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, raising fears about possible push by the extremists into the capital, security sources said. Dozens of IS militants carried out a pre-dawn attack with three suicide car bombs on an army base and nearby grain silos in Hitawyeen area, just west of Baghdad's western suburb of Abu Ghraib, a local security

source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity. Reinforcement troops and allied paramilitary HashdShaabi units arrived at the scene and pushed back the attackers after several hours of heavy clashes, leaving dozens of IS militants killed, the source said without elaboration. Immediately after the attack, the security forces imposed curfew on Abu Ghraib area and blocked all the roads leading to Baghdad in order to prevent any possible infiltra-



tion of IS militants to the Iraqi capital, the source said. The news of IS attack in Abu Ghraib area raised fears among Baghdad population the IS militant could be closer to the residential areas in the capital, especially after rumors said that dozens of families... (More on P4)...(28)

Syrian Refugees See a Glimpse of Hope from Truce to End Misery

BEIRUT - Many Syrian refugees in Lebanon hoped the ongoing cessation of hostilities would bring back stability to their war-torn country. While other refugees expressed fear that it is only a cessation of hostilities for some opposition militias that would enable them gather their forces to relaunch aggression in the country.

Some of the Syrians who took refuge in Lebanon told Xinhua that “this was our dream for stability to be brought back to Syria



and we will be able to return home. We are extremely happy and hope that this would end our misery that started five years ago.” AmalAbout al-Ghoshi,

displaced from the devastated city of Aleppo, said “we had a strange feeling as we were following the progress of the truce in various parts of our coun... (More on P4)...(29)

Militiamen Clash with Guards at Yemen Presidential Palace: Official

ADEN - Yemeni militiamen clashed with soldiers guarding the presidential palace in the southern Yemeni city of Aden on Sunday, a local official and residents said, in a rare confrontation between the previously allied forces. The embattled Yemen government is based in Aden and has struggled to build up a national military and pay its bills, including to fighters who have fought on its behalf, as Al Qaeda and Islamic State militants have taken advantage of 10 months of civil war to expand their presence in the city. A local official said the attackers, affiliated with a local militia called the Popular Southern Resistance, sought an audience with top officials inside the palace over unpaid medical bills for guards wounded in an attack there last month. Six guards were killed and several were wounded... (More on P4)...(30)

France Prepared to Extend Life of Nuclear Reactors: Energy Minister

PARIS - The French government is willing to support a 10-year extension to the life of the country's nuclear reactors, operated by utility EDF, Energy Minister Segolene Royal told France 3 television on Sunday. Nuclear power provides about 75 percent of France's electricity, but the industry has come under the spotlight since the 2011 Fukushima disaster in Japan and France has pledged to reduce its reliance on nuclear to 50 percent by increasing renewable energy. Asked if she was ready to raise the limit on existing... (More on P4)...(31)

Germany wants N.African States to Takeback More Migrants

BERLIN - Germany wants North African countries to speed up repatriations of rejected asylum seekers, its interior minister said ahead of a visit from Sunday to the region. Thomas de Maiziere, who is to visit Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, said many applicants lacked travel documents or gave false names and other personal details, making it more difficult to send them back to their countries of origin. Modern technology such as biometric identity papers could help, he told AFP, adding that “we could imagine offering our support” in the area. “Our goal is to make the procedures more efficient and faster,” he said in written responses to AFP questions ahead of his departure for Morocco later Sunday. After taking in more than... (More on P4)...(34)

Turkey has Foiled 18 Suicide Attacks So Far this Year: Interior Minister

ISTANBUL - Turkish security forces have foiled 18 suicide attacks since the start of the year, three of them by intercepting vehicles planned for use as car bombs, Interior Minister EkanAla said in an interview with the Kanal 7 television station on Sunday. Ala said that one of the

three vehicles had been found this week at Istanbul's Bogazici University, parts of which were evacuated on Thursday in an apparent bomb scare. A car packed with explosives was detonated in Ankara this month next to military buses waiting at... (More on P4)...(32)

Air Strike in Libya Hits Convoy outside IS Stronghold

TRIPOLI - A strike by an unidentified aircraft hit a convoy outside a Libyan stronghold of the Islamic State jihadist group on Sunday, officials said. “A convoy was hit by an air strike” outside the coastal city of Sirte, a colonel with the air force loyal to the Tripoli administration said. “It is believed that it was an IS convoy, but the target has not yet been identified,” he said. “This air strike was not coordinated with our govern-

ment,” he added. A member of the security committee of the city's municipal council said the convoy left Sirte and was then targeted “about 150 kilometres (95 miles) southwest of the city”. “It was completely destroyed,” he said. He had no immediate word on the death toll. On February 19, a US air strike near Sabratha, west of Tripoli, targeted a suspected IS training camp, killing... (More on P4)...(33)

Neighbor News

Iran's First Container Ship Heads to Europe

TEHRAN - An Iranian container ship is heading to Europe for the first time in five years, marking Tehran's return to international markets after the lifting of sanctions, an official says. Chairman of the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL) Mohammad Saeidi said he expects the ship, carrying a cargo of petrochemical products, to call at European ports in the “next few days.”

“This is a big event as we managed to revive shipping to Europe after five years, thanks to the efforts of our management and staff, and unlock the sea transportation lock to Europe,” he said, quoted by the Mehr news agency.

“Fortunately, with the

lifting of sanctions and implementation of the JCPOA (nuclear agreement) over the past five months...we managed to reopen the sea link and shipping routes to Europe,” he added.

IRISL has successfully lobbied with Germany and Italy to establish a joint shipping company to cover northern and southern Europe with their services, Saeidi added.

IRISL is also planning to establish a “regular” shipping link between Persian Gulf and Latin American ports as well as a “sustainable shipping route” running between Latin American and East Asian ports, Saeidi added. (PressTV)

PIA, Pakistan Steel Divestment Delayed Beyond this Fiscal Year

ISLAMABAD - The last of the Nuclear Security Summits (NSS), being held in Washington next month, will be succeeded by informal networks, while the participating states will voluntarily implement the commitments made by them.

As the process that emerged from US President Barack Obama's speech in Prague in 2009, in which he stressed securing all vulnerable nuclear material around the globe, concludes with the fourth and last of the summits, being held from March 31 to April 1, the focus has been on how this effort can be continued afterwards. Pakistan has consistently insisted that nuclear security is

fundamentally a national responsibility and fulfillment of commitments should be voluntary. This was reiterated by Pakistan's former ambassador to the UN in Geneva, ZamirAkram, during an in-house seminar at the Strategic Vision Institute (SVI) on ‘Nuclear Security Summits until 2016: An analytical review’.

“The 2016 Summit Declaration and the action plans for future work by the UN, International Atomic Energy Agency, Interpol and the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction are all measures that would be state owned, voluntary, with... (More on P4)...(35)

Turkmenistan's Resort City to Host Regional Workshop

ASHGABAT - The workshop entitled “Caspian Sea-Sustainable Development and Management” will be held in Turkmenistan's resort city Avaza March 7-18, the Turkmen government said. The purpose of the workshop is to further develop the cooperation of the Caspian Basin countries and cooperate in the field of environment and sustainable development of the region. The event will be held with the participation of representatives of relevant organizations of Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan and

Russia in collaboration with the International Ocean Institute (IOI) and the State Enterprise for the Caspian Sea under the president of Turkmenistan. The Turkmen foreign ministry and the State Enterprise for the Caspian Sea under the president of Turkmenistan will organize the workshop. The important international documents were worked out upon Ashgabat's initiative earlier. Among them are the agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological... (More on P4)...(36)

China and New Development Bank-BRICS Signed Agreements

BEIJING - China and the New Development Bank BRICS concluded the legal proceedings with the signing of agreements on the bank's head quarters before the start of operations, the local press reports today. The Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Wang Yi, and the bank's president, K.V. Kamath, signed an agreement in Shanghai, while the mayor of that city, Yang Xiong, and Kamath legalized a memorandum of understanding on the bank's headquarters. The documents regulate the establishment of the bank's headquarters in this city

and stimulate the immunities, privileges and other benefits for the financial entity. According to the Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs, the bank, in order to finance infrastructure projects and sustainable development, should strive to become a new type of multilateral development institution, operating in a professional, transparent and efficient manner. Meanwhile, Kamath said that he expects that the bank starts operating soon and that it contributes to the development of BRICS countries and other developing nations. (Prensa Latina)