

It's a Sin if Fear Makes us Hostile to Migrants: Pope

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis has defined hostility and rejection of refugees and migrants as sin, encouraging people to overcome their "fully comprehensible" fears that these new arrivals might "disturb the established order" of local communities.

At his invitation, several thousand migrants, refugees and immigrants from 49 countries joined Francis at Mass in St. Peter's Basilica on Sunday, a day the Catholic Church dedicated to the issues and contributions of those who leave homelands in hope



of a better life. New arrivals must "know and respect the laws, the culture and the traditions of the countries that take them in," he said. Local communities must "open themselves without prejudices to their rich diversity, to understand the hopes and potential of the newly arrived as well as their fears and vulnerabilities."

"It is not easy to enter into another culture, to put oneself in the shoes of people so different from us, to understand their thoughts and their experiences," Francis said. (AP)

Macron Calls for Preserving Iranian Nuclear Deal

PARIS - French President Emmanuel Macron on Saturday recalled "the importance of preserving the Iranian nuclear agreement, and the necessary respect by all parties of their commitments under this agreement" in a telephone talk with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

This is according to a press release published by the French presidency on Saturday.

The French presidency added that Macron and Netanyahu "also referred to the subject of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process



in the continuity of their exchanges of Dec. 10." This phone talk came after an ultimatum issued by American President Donald Trump to the Europeans to tighten in the coming months the terms of the agreement reached in 2015 between Iran and the major powers, if they want to avoid Washington's withdrawal from the deal. (Xinhua)

U.S., Chinese Entrepreneurs Meet to Exchange Expertise on Latest Technology

SAN FRANCISCO - Hundreds of U.S. and Chinese representatives from hi-tech firms met Saturday to exchange expertise in state-of-the-art technology, at an annual forum held at Silicon Valley in San Francisco on the U.S. west coast.

The participants including scholars, researchers and entrepreneurs represented many leading hi-tech companies from the two countries that came to share their most recent achievements and investments.

The forum, entitled "The 2018 CONNECT Con-

ference," focused on the theme of "Intelligent System, Technology Meets Industry" which is devoted to the frontline technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) technology, cyber security, smart cars, deep learning, as well as AI chips and manufacturing.

At one of the seven panels of the yearly brain-storm forum, TuomasSandholm, developer of the AI robot Libratus that defeated the best human Poker players in several matches last year, delivered a keynote address on AI technol-



ogy and future application centering around super human AI for strategic reasoning.

The AI robot thrilled the world last year when it defeated the world's top-class human players in

several tournaments of Texas Poker in January 2017, with its extremely powerful algorithm that computes Poker strategy by its super machine learning capabilities. (Xinhua)

World Media Struggle to Translate Trump's Africa Insult



NAIROBI, Kenya — President Donald Trump's vulgar insult of Africa was a puzzle for many foreign media organizations, which didn't have a ready translation of his epithet

for their readers or listeners. Their answers ranged from "dirty" to, well, dirtier. While meeting with senators on immigration, Trump questioned why

the United States would accept more immigrants from Haiti and "shithole countries" in Africa, according to one participant and people briefed on the conversation.

His comments Thursday revived racism accusations against Trump, roiled immigration talks and set off international outrage that left some foreign journalists wondering how to express the offending word. "We have dozens of language services at the BBC which today are all discussing the right way to translate into their

own language the word 'shithole' for their millions of listeners," Paul Dana-har, the editor of the BBC's North America bureau, tweeted Friday.

In Africa, the continent that was the object of Trump's insult, Tanzania's Mwananchi newspaper translated his comment as "mataifachafu" — simply, "dirty countries."

Taifa Leo, a sister Swahili publication to Kenya's leading Daily Nation, chose "nchizakinyesi," a more or less exact translation but with a gentler word for excrement. (AP)

Merkel Could Join Macron in Davos for Epic Clash with Trump

BERLIN - German Chancellor Angela Merkel is considering joining French President Emmanuel Macron at the World Economic Forum in Davos next week in what could turn into an epic clash of competing world views with U.S. President Donald Trump. Merkel, who has been struggling to put together a government since a German election in September, had been expected to skip the annual gathering of leaders, CEOs, bankers and celebrities in the Swiss Alps for a third straight year. But

after clinching a preliminary coalition agreement with the center-left Social Democrats (SPD) on Friday, German officials said Merkel could travel to Davos after all, possibly setting up a major confrontation with Trump, who is expected to speak on the final day of the forum. An appearance would signal Merkel's return to the world stage after months of political limbo in which she has avoided the limelight and been dismissed by some in the German and international media as a spent force. (Reuters)

Russia Strongly Opposes U.S. Attempt to Renegotiate Iran Nuclear Deal

MOSCOW - Moscow has a critical attitude toward the latest U.S. statement on reviewing the Iran nuclear deal and will do all it can to resist any attempt to scrap the deal, Russian authorities said Saturday.

Russia is concerned over the U.S. announcement on holding negotiations with its European allies to revise the Iran nuclear deal, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov told reporters.

"These negotiations won't have any effect on our approach towards the nuclear deal and this whole situation ... We will be analyzing it in a most critical way and will continue to judge the events in an unflattering way," Ryabkov said.

He underlined that the deal that was signed in 2015 between Iran, and the P5+1 - Russia, France, China, Britain, the United States, plus Germany, cannot be amended and that Moscow will "oppose any attempts to hamper it." U.S. President Donald Trump on Friday said he will extend sanctions relief on Iran under the nuclear deal for the last time, threatening a U.S. withdrawal from the pact if the U.S. Congress and his European allies can not fix the alleged "disastrous flaws." Trump's latest move casts doubt on the future of the deal, a successful practice of solving a hotspot issue through political and diplomatic means.

Iran's Foreign Ministry said on Saturday that Iran will never renegotiate the 2015 nuclear deal, formally known as JCPOA, despite the U.S. pressures. Chairman of Russian Federation Council's Foreign Affairs Committee Konstantin Kosachyov also slammed the U.S. attempt to review the JCPOA as a dangerous violation of international law. (Xinhua)

Brexit Vote May be Reversed, Says British Campaigner Farage

LONDON - Brexit campaigner Nigel Farage said on Sunday he was increasingly concerned that a vote for Britain to leave the European Union could be overturned by a powerful group of the bloc's supporters.

In an interview with Britain's Observer newspaper, Farage, former head of the euroskeptic UK Independence Party, said a well-organized and funded group of campaigners that wants to remain in the EU was drowning out those who want to leave.

"The Remain side are

making all the running," said Farage. "They have a majority in parliament, and unless we get ourselves organized we could lose the historic victory that was Brexit."

Last week, Farage said he was warning to the idea of holding a second vote on Britain's membership of the EU to settle the argument - an idea written off by other Brexit campaigners who urged the government to press on with exit talks with the bloc.

In 2016, Britons voted 52 to 48 percent in favor of ending its membership

of the EU. Prime Minister Theresa May has ruled out a second referendum, saying her government was seeking an amicable divorce with the EU which will safeguard the economy and enable Britain to secure trade deals with other countries. But some Brexit campaigners fear her approach has led to the watering down of several of their demands, including the ability to reduce immigration and to reclaim sovereignty by leaving the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice. (Reuters)

Turkey Attempts to Mend Ties with EU Though Little Hope for Progress in Accession

ANKARA - At a time when Turkey's relations with Europe are believed to be at the lowest level, Ankara stepped up to restore its dialogue with European Union with a visit by the Turkish president to France hoping that there is a new opportunity to reverse this trend. Turkey's membership talks started more than a decade ago and have hit the rocks in the past few years as Europe has been critical of Ankara's security crackdown after 2016's failed coup, which saw tens of thousands removed from their jobs, and numerous arrests. It's been more than 17 months since the

coup attempt, and the Turkish parliament will approve extension of the state of emergency for the sixth time on Jan. 17. "Opening a new negotiation chapter is absolutely impossible with Turkey under the ongoing state of emergency," an EU official told Xinhua on condition of anonymity. EU leaders and Turkish politicians have been in exchange of accusations mostly due to domestic political consumption. The gap between Turkey and EU further increased after the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe reintroduced a monitoring process for the country last April. (Xinhua)

DPRK Urges South Korea to Work for Environment to Realize National Reunification

PYONGYANG - The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) on Sunday continued its public relations offensive on South Korea, calling on Seoul to work with the north in creating conditions for future national reunification.

The official daily RodongSinmun said in an article that to realize national reconciliation and unity is key for creating an environment for national reunification in the future.

"To the Korean nation that has undergone the tragedy of division for many years, it is a vital demand which can no longer be delayed to end the history of confrontation," said the official daily of the DPRK's ruling Workers' Party of Korea.

"The north and south should be aware of their responsibility and duty before the times and history," it said, adding that the "future orientation of the inter-Korean relations depends on South Korean authorities' efforts." The daily called on Seoul to "lend an ear to the voices of the people," "remove all walls of confrontation," and "sincerely come out to the road" to better relations with the north.

The DPRK has not yet announced its proposal to hold the second round of inter-Korean talks within one week at the truce village of Panmunjom next Monday, which is scheduled to discuss the DPRK's dispatch of its art troupe to the PyeongChang Winter Olympics hosted by South Korea. (Xinhua)

Neighbor News

CPC's Strict Self-Governance Presents Model to World

BELGRADE - The Communist Party of China (CPC) presents a model to the world in terms of strict self-governance, said a Serbian expert in a recent interview with Xinhua.

IvonaLadjevac, a senior researcher at the Institute of International Politics and Economics (IIPE) in Belgrade, spoke to Xinhua on the second plenary session of the 19th Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI) of the CPC held in Beijing.

As the head of IIPE Regional Center "Belt and Road," Ladjevac said she has been impressed with the CPC's anti-corruption campaign since

2012, which has been attracting the attention of the Serbian people.

"The Party leadership has been insisting on this strict governance, which is applied in multi-layers, not only those high-ranking party members but also those at lower levels, no matter during their communication with ordinary people, but also between themselves, during their meetings and in their lives," Ladjevac said.

The CPC's fight against both "flies" and "tigers" sends a good message to ordinary people that no one is protected because of his wealth or high-ranking position, according to Ladjevac. (Xinhua)

Political Instability May Damage Process of Prosperity: Ahsan

LAHORE - Interior Minister AhsanIqbal has said political instability and mistrust in democracy will eventually hamper the process of progress and prosperity in the country. Talking to media on Sunday, he said recent 'political game', orchestrated in Balochistan, will not certainly bring out positive developments for the province and the country. "Is there any precedent in the world that a member having support of five MPAs only, ever have become chief minister?" he questioned.

He said Balochistan had been facing host of administrative and political issues and 'upheaval' in provincial assembly would somehow embolden some elements who were working against Balochistan interests. To a question, the minister said statement of Indian army chief was

entirely irresponsible which did create doubts about India and it was a question mark on India. "Nuclear powers always show responsible attitude," he added. He said such statements were indeed an attempt to bring the country under pressure, adding in such circumstances, internal unity and cohesion was fully required. He said protests and sit-ins at this stage would also add to the problems. Ahsan said it was an era of financial and economic development but the country was facing sit-ins and protests, adding financial progress needed peace and stability in the country.

He said today's Pakistan was far better than the Pakistan in 2013. "What is the need of protests when just five months are left in elections?" he questioned the opposition parties. (Monitoring Desk)

Iran's Rouhani Says U.S. Has Failed to Undermine Nuclear Deal

ANKARA - Iran's president said on Sunday the United States had failed to undermine a nuclear deal between Tehran and major powers, and hailed the accord as a "long-lasting victory" for Iran, state television reported.

U.S. President Donald Trump on Friday delivered an ultimatum to European signatories of the deal to fix the "terrible flaws" of the agreement with Iran, or the United States would pull out.

"The American administration has failed to undermine the nuclear deal ... Trump, despite his repeated efforts, has failed to undermine the accord

... The deal is a long-lasting victory for Iran," President Hassan Rouhani said in a speech, broadcast live on state TV.

On Friday, Trump agreed to waive sanctions against Iran for the last time to give the United States and European allies a final chance to amend the pact. Iran says the nuclear deal is not renegotiable and it will stick to the accord as long as the other signatories respect it but will "shred" the deal if Washington pulls out.

Under the deal, Iran agreed to curb its nuclear program, in exchange for lifting of most sanctions. (Reuters)

Uzbekistan to Construct New Mining and Metallurgical Complex

TASHKENT - Uzbek President ShavkatMirziyoyev has approved the plan of measures in connection with the construction of a mining and metallurgical complex based on the Tebinbulak deposit.

The new complex will be built by 2024. Its capacity will be up to one million tons of steel products per year.

The country's government approved a preliminary feasibility study of the Tebinbulak development project in March 2017. It envisages the use of non-domain technology for the production

of cast iron and steel. The president instructed the Uzbekistan Railways company to create a directorate for the construction of the complex until mid-February and make proposals on specific sources of funding till April 1, 2018.

Moreover, the company must submit a final feasibility study for the approval of the government until December 30, 2018. A special working commission, which will resolve the construction issues, has been also created upon the president's decree. (Trend)