

Denmark's New Plan to Deter Migrants: Seize their Valuables

COPENHAGEN - Hoping to diminish Denmark's appeal to migrants, the country's government plans to force asylum-seekers to hand over any valuables worth more than \$1,500 to help cover their housing and food costs while their cases are being processed. The center-right government's proposal is expected to be approved by Parliament this month despite outrage from human rights activists who say it's a cruel and degrading way to treat people who have fled war and misery. While noting the rules would be no different from those that apply to



Danes receiving welfare benefits, government of-

officials are candid about the grants to go somewhere else.

"Denmark must become significantly less attractive

for asylum-seekers," Immigration Minister Inger Stoejberg said Wednesday during the first of three readings of the bill in Parliament. She said fewer refugees would mean better opportunities to integrate immigrants who are already in Denmark. Compared with its neighbors, the nation of 5.6 million people wedged between Germany and Sweden received a small part of Europe's migrant flow last year. About 20,000 people applied for asylum in Denmark, while 1.1 million did so in Germany and 163,000 in Sweden. (AP)

Nieghbor News

GDP Growth Reaches 8% in Uzbekistan



BISHKEK - gdpThe gross domestic product in Uzbekistan in 2015 grew by 8%, President Islam Karimov said at the extended session of the government on January 15. Production output grew by 8%, agricultural output is almost 7% up, the President said. The budget was implemented with surplus at 0.1% of GDP. Inflation made 5.6%, that is within projected parameters, the President stressed. The Small and medium-sized businesses contributed 56.7% of the country's

GDP. More than 77% of population are employed by SMEs. They produce 1/3 of industrial and 98% of agricultural output. More than have of GDP growth was contributed by services, in which more than half of working population are employed. The total banking capital grew by 23.3% compared to 2014 and reached 7.8 trillion sums. The public debt of the country does not exceed 18.5% of GDP, the President said.(AKIpress)

Indian President Hails Modi's Start-Up Campaign

NEW DELHI - Indian President Pranab Mukherjee on Saturday hailed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "start-up" campaign and took responsibility for the delay in the campaign. "We have taken too long but nonetheless we have taken that decision. We have woken up," President Mukherjee said in the national capital late Friday evening. Mukherjee made the remarks to a delegation of CEOs from Silicon Valley, who are in India to participate in the "start-up" campaign launched

by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday. Regarding the delay on part of the previous Congress-led United Progressive Alliance government in creating a good environment for the small-scale entrepreneurs, he said he owned up the responsibility. "I cannot pass on the buck to anybody. I will have to take the buck to myself because I was in administration too long," President Mukherjee, who had served as the previous Finance Minister, said. (Xinhua)

600 British Jihadists Stopped from Entering Syria: Hammond

LONDON - Some 600 Britons have been stopped from going to Syria to try to join Islamic State and other jihadist groups, Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond said in comments reported Saturday. Meanwhile some 800 have made it through since 2012, with half of them still thought to be inside the war-torn country, he said, in comments reported in The Guardian and The Daily Telegraph newspapers. "Approximately 800 Brits have

been to Syria, of whom half are still there. But on top of that 800, we have stopped another 600," he said, on a visit to southern Turkey. The foreign secretary said the number of Britons stopped in Turkey had gone up in the past eight months due to Ankara reassessing the scale of the threat posed to Turkey by Islamic State (IS). He said greater coordination between London and Ankara had also played a part. Hammond said besides foreign airstrikes, the



interception of jihadists aiming to link up with IS was placing extra strain on the group in its Raqqa headquarters. (AFP)

N. Korea Says Peace Treaty, Halt to Exercises, Would end Nuclear Tests

SEOUL/TOKYO - North Korea on Saturday demanded the conclusion of a peace treaty with the United States and a halt to U.S. military exercises with South Korea to end its nuclear tests. But U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Pyongyang needed to demonstrate by its action that it was serious about denuclearization for any dialogues to start. "We now have unfortunately a decade during which North Korea has totally reversed



its obligations to international community, when it comes to missile and nuclear programs,"

Blinken told a news conference in Tokyo. "So it's very hard to take any of their overtures very seri-

ously, particularly in the wake of their fourth nuclear test," he said, after ... (More on P4)... (20)

U.S. Drone Strike Kills 3 Al-Qaida Members in Yemen

ADEN - A U.S. drone strike killed three al-Qaida members in southeastern Yemen overnight, a military official said on Saturday. The U.S. drone attack targeted a four-wheeled vehicle carrying mid-level commanders of the al-Qaida group in Rafadh area of the southeastern Shabwa province on Friday night, the local official told Xinhua. "All the al-Qaida travelers left charred inside the vehicle after the raid. They were three opera-

tives only," the source said on condition of anonymity. The slain militants' identities are still unknown, according to the official. Local tribal sources living near the scene said that a car belonging to the al-Qaida was completely destroyed and left burning for several hours after the U.S. air bombing. The Yemen-based affiliates of the al-Qaida and Islamic State (IS) groups and other armed groups are ... (More on P4)... (21)

Malaysia Arrests Four Related to IS

KUALA LUMPUR - Malaysian police said Saturday that four individuals, including a married couple, were arrested for suspected link to the Islamic State (IS). One of the suspected IS member was arrested on Friday at a light rail train (LRT) station in downtown Kuala Lumpur, not far from the iconic Twin Towers, an area often gathers many foreigners, police chief Khalid Abu Bakar said in a statement. The 28-year-old admitted that he was planning a suicide attack after receiving other IS members in Syria, according to the statement. Police also believes that the man was responsible for putting up IS flags in several regions in Malaysia, intended to warn the authorities against taking actions on IS members. The other three suspects were arrested upon their arrival back in Malaysia after being repatriated by the Turkish Authorities. Police said the three had joined IS and were arrested in Gaziantep, Turkey when trying ... (More on P4)... (22)

Int'l Renewable Energy Assembly Looks to Implement Paris Climate Agreement

ABU DHABI - Ministers, government officials and representatives from over 150 countries and more than 140 international bodies gathered here on Saturday for the sixth Assembly of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) following the United Nations (UN) Climate Conference (COP21) in Paris last year. The two-day assembly follows the theme "from Negotiation to Action" after the COP21 climate conference in Paris where nearly 200 states participated. It aims to implement



concrete steps to accelerate the ongoing global energy transition. "The Paris Agreement set a long-term vision for the deep reduction of global emissions and the need to de-carbonize the energy sector," said IRENA Director-General Adnan

Z. Amin in his opening speech. He called on the IRENA Assembly to take now the next steps and establish a blueprint for action to meet global climate goals and set the world on a path to a sustainable energy future. ... (More on P4)... (23)

Russia Elects New Athletics Chief Amid Doping Scandal

MOSCOW - The Russian athletics federation elected a politically connected former coach as its new president Saturday as it tries to end the country's suspension from Olympic track and field. Dmitry Shlyakhtin, a regional sports minister in the Samara region of central Russia, was elected unanimously after his main rival withdrew as part of a deal brokered by senior Russian officials.

Shlyakhtin said his "task is simple, to return Russian athletics to the world level and to revive trust." Russia was suspended in November following the publication of a World Anti-Doping Agency report alleging a vast state-sponsored doping operation. Russian athletes are banned from competing in international track and field competitions, including the Olympics, and Shlyakhtin pledged to follow the recommendations set by the IAAF, track's global governing body, for Russia's reinstatement. Those recommendations include investigating past doping cases, cooperating with drug testing agencies and shutting out coaches and officials who were involved with doping. Shlyakhtin will head an "anti-crisis team" of new Russian track officials, said Gennady Alyoshin, Russia's chief negotiator with WADA and the IAAF during its suspension. Alyoshin said anyone involved in doping faced sporting sanctions and that any evidence of criminality would be reported. (AP)

Iran Frees 4 Dual Nationals, Including Washington Post Reporter

TEHRAN - Iran freed on Saturday four Iranian-U.S. citizens under a prisoner swap, according to Iran's state news agency ISNA. Iran said the four released prisoners included Washington Post re-

porter Jason Rezanian, and three other Iranian Americans. The announcement comes on the day when the Iran nuclear deal reached last July is about to be implemented. (Xinhua)

Pak PM, Army Chief to Visit Saudi Arabia, Iran to Ease Tension

ISLAMABAD - Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif will be embarking on a visit to Saudi Arabia and Iran from Monday January 18 to diffuse tension between the two countries that spiraled after the execution of Shia cleric Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr in Saudi Arabia. Official sources confirmed that the top civilian and military leaders would pay a day-long visit to Saudi Arabia on 18th January to meet Saudi King Salman and will discuss with him the latest

situation in the Middle East and the kingdom's relations with Iran. The sources added that after the trip to Saudi Arabia, the next stopover will be in Tehran where meetings will be held with the top Iranian leadership aimed at defusing tension with its arch rival KSA. Saudi Arabia and fellow-Sunni Bahrain cut ties with Iran, a few days after Iranian demonstrators stormed the Saudi embassy in Tehran in protest at Riyadh's execution of prominent cleric Sheikh Nimr. (Agencies)

Nepal Formally Begins Much Delayed Earthquake Reconstruction

BUNGMATI - Nepal officially launched the much-delayed reconstruction of about 1 million homes and buildings Saturday nearly nine months after they were damaged by devastating earthquake which killed 9,000 people. Prime Minister Khadga Prasad Oli unveiled plans

to rebuild Bungmati, an old town just south of Kathmandu, to initiate the reconstruction campaign that is expected to take years and cost billions of dollars. President Bidhya Devi Bhandari laid the foundation stones for rebuilding a temple and ... (More on P4)... (24)

Italy Deploys Fighter Jets in Sicily Amid Security Concerns

ROME - Italy has deployed four AMX attack aircraft at a base in Sicily, the Defense Ministry said in a statement late on Friday. According to the statement, "the decision was taken following the recent developments in the area of the countries of North Africa and the consequent deterioration of the security conditions." The decision, the statement added, was part of the Italian gov-

ernment's strategy in the Mediterranean to "protect national interests" and ensure "coherent levels of security." The fighter aircraft was deployed at Trapani, a city in northwestern Sicily. AMX is a ground attack aircraft effective in visual and marginal weather conditions, with primary roles in long range strike and air interdiction, ... (More on P4)... (25)