

Trump Signs Three Memorandums

WASHINGTON - U.S. President Donald Trump on Monday signed three memorandums, ordering the withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a freeze on federal hiring and a ban on financing pro-abortion programs abroad with U.S. federal funds.

"We've been talking about this for a long time," Trump said as he signed the paper ordering the exit from TPP. "Great thing for the American worker, what we just did," Trump said as he held up the signed document to the press.

The White House has yet to release the details of the executive order.



The TPP, a free trade pact between 12 Asia-Pacific countries, was formally

signed by ministers from these 12 countries in last February after more than

five years' negotiation. Trump's action on Monday was considered as a

symbolic move, as the U.S. Congress hasn't approved the deal yet. However,

the move indicated that the new administration is actually shifting trade policies from previous U.S. norms.

Trump has also said he would renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement with the Canadian and Mexican governments, seeking a better deal for the United States.

International institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have warned that the inward-looking policy and protectionism could be a threat to global growth. Trump then signed an order that put a freeze on hiring employees from federal agencies. (Xinhua)

Nieghbor News

China Committed to Asia-Pacific Economic Integration Process: FM Spokesperson

BEIJING - China said Tuesday that it was committed to the process of Asia-Pacific economic integration in a spirit of openness, inclusivity and transparency, despite the United States quitting the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

"China will forge ahead with the negotiation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the construction of the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) so as to add new impetus to regional and global economic development," said Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying at a daily press briefing.

U.S. President Donald Trump Monday signed a memorandum ordering withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

The TPP, a free trade pact

between 12 Asia-Pacific countries, was formally signed by ministers last February after more than five years of negotiation. China is not a member of the TPP.

Hua said that China had always called for an open, transparent and mutually beneficial regional free trade arrangement and believed trade rules should be made through negotiation with all parties on an equal footing.

"The Asia Pacific region should continue to exert its role as the engine of global economy under the current economic downturn and establish an open economy," said Hua.

The RCEP covers 16 countries, including 10 members of the Association of the South-east Asian Nations and their regional trading ... (More on P4)... (28)

Over 161,000 People Displaced in Iraq's Mosul Due to Clashes: UN

UNITED NATIONS - More than 161,000 people are internally displaced as a result of ongoing fighting in Iraq's Mosul city, UN Spokesperson Stephane Dujarric told a daily briefing on Monday.

Humanitarian partners delivered aid packages consisting of food, water supplies and hygiene materials to 4,500 people in an east Mosul city neighborhood on Sunday, said Dujarric.

Over last week, some 56,100 people living in east Mosul received aid packages from UN partners, he

noted. Iraqi security forces have been fighting fiercely to drive out the Islamic State (IS) militants from their last stronghold on the northern outskirts of the eastern side of Mosul, the city which has been under IS control since June 2014.

In October 2016, Iraqi troops kicked off operations to recapture Mosul, some 400 kilometers north of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad. Battles in Mosul slowed down in December as extremist militants started using civilians as ... (More on P4)... (21)

British SC Rules Gov't Consult Parliament to Start Brexit

LONDON - The British Supreme Court (SC) on Tuesday ruled that Prime Minister Theresa May must consult Parliament before triggering formal negotiations on Britain leaving the European Union (EU).

The British government lost its legal battle to have the right to trigger Britain's exit from the EU without first getting the approval of the British Parliament.

Judges in the Supreme Court in London ruled by 8-3 in favor of a group of individuals who challenged the government's

insistence it could trigger the article 50 process to leave the EU. Article 50 of the Lisbon treaty says: "Any member state may decide to withdraw from the union in accordance with its own constitutional requirements."

The decision is seen as a blow to the government as it says that it has the power to start the Brexit process, but opponents led by investment manager Gina Miller say it needs the parliament's approval to officially com-



mence the at least two-year negotiations.

MPs will now be given a vote in a parliamentary bill before the process can start. The court re-

jected claims that Britain's devolved assemblies in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales should give their assent before Brexit officially starts. (Xinhua)

Turkish Deputy PM Says Al-Bab Won't be Handed over to Assad Regime

ANKARA - Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Numan Kurtulmus on Tuesday denied claims that the northern Syrian city of al-Bab will be handed over to the Assad regime forces, the Anadolu news agency reported.

"We've said it from the beginning that Operation Euphrates Shield is an operation regarding Turkey's own national security," Kurtulmus said, adding that the operation focuses on clearing terror threat on the country's southern bor-

der with Syria. Kurtulmus criticized the U.S.-backed coalition for failing to give sufficient support to liberate the area from the Islamic State (IS) terrorists. He said Turkey hopes the U.S. under the Trump administration can change its stance and provide support for policies which will work in favor of the people in Iraq and Syria. The Turkish army is supporting Free Syrian Army (FSA) fighters in liberating al-Bab, a town of strategic ... (More on P4)... (22)

UN Secretary-General Approves Updated UN Whistleblower Policy

UNITED NATIONS - UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has made it a priority for the United Nations to have a whistleblower protection policy that meets the highest possible standards, a spokesman said here Monday.

Stephane Dujarric, spokesman for the Secretary-General, said at the daily news briefing that Guterres has just approved a policy to provide better protection for individuals who report possible misconduct or cooperate with duly authorized

audits or investigations. Staff and management both agreed on the policy, contained in a bulletin that was just issued, said Dujarric.

Major policy changes include that the Ethics Office and Office of Internal Oversight Services will now be able to take preventive action where a risk of retaliation has been identified, he said.

The policy affords protection from retaliation to whistleblowers who report wrongdoing committed not only by staff but



also by contractors, non-UN peacekeepers and others, he said, citing another change which says "complainants will be notified of disciplinary measures

taken against staff members found to have retaliated against them." The Secretary General has also tasked an internal ... (More on P4)... (23)

Russia Helps Clear Mines in Aleppo, Offers Humanitarian Aid: Ministry

MOSCOW - Russian engineer troops have cleared mines in an area of nearly 70 hectares in the northern Syrian city of Aleppo during the past 24 hours, the Defense Ministry's Center for Syrian reconciliation said Tuesday.

In the past 24 hours, Russian servicemen from the International Mine Action Center have swept mines in an area of 69.8 hectares, 68 buildings and along 11.3-km roads, defused 686 explosive hazard-



ous objects including 479 improvised explosive devices, a statement from the ministry said. The reconciliation center

has also provided Aleppo residents with 4.4 tons of humanitarian aid including food, school kits and ... (More on P4)... (24)

Germany will Hold This Year's General Election on Sept. 24.

BERLIN - Germany's head of state says this year's general election will be held Sept. 24. German President Joachim Gauck on Tuesday announced he'd approved the Cabinet's proposed date, the last Sunday in September.

The vote is expected to see the nationalist Alternative for Germany, or AfD, enter the national parliament on a wave of anti-migrant sentiment. They're currently polling about 12 percent. Chancellor Angela Merkel will be running for a fourth term, although it is far from certain who would join her in a coalition government if AfD takes a significant share of votes away from other parties. Merkel's conservative bloc is currently atop the polls with about 36 percent support, followed by her current coalition partner Social Democrats with around 21 percent. (AP)

Japan Launches X-Band Defense Communications Satellite

TOKYO - Japan launched an X-band defense communications satellite on Tuesday for the Japanese Ministry of Defense. The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd. launched the X-band defense communications satellite-2 aboard the H-2A Launch Vehicle No.32 at 4:44 p.m. local time on Tuesday from JAXA's Tanegashima Space Center in Japan's southwestern Kagoshima prefecture.

The Kirameki-2 satellite is the first communication satellite for the Japanese Ministry of Defense, which shoulders the mission to upgrade the Self-Defense Forces' (SDF) communications network. The Kirameki-2 satellite, operating with X-band technology, is one of three defense communications satellites which will replace three civilian satellites used by the Self-Defense Forces at present.

The new satellites will facilitate direct communication among units of the Ground, Maritime and Air Self-Defense Forces through a high-speed and high-capacity network and serve as a communication infrastructure, local media quoted Defense Ministry officials as saying on Tuesday.

Germany Companies Voice Interest to Invest \$12bn in Iran's Oil Industry

TEHRAN - Several major oil and petrochemical companies from Germany have expressed their interest in investing in the Iranian oil sector. The companies including BASF say they are ready to invest a total of \$12 bn in Iran.

BASF has offered to invest in a six-billion-dollar project to establish petrochemical sites in southern parts of Iran. The company's managing director was a member of an official delegation that visited Iran in 2016 headed by German Economy Minister Sig-

mar Gabriel. Wintershall Holding GmbH, Germany's largest crude oil and natural gas producer and a wholly owned subsidiary of BASF, has already signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) to conduct research on four oil fields west of Iran. Iranian oil officials held a number of meetings with German companies last year. If finalized, the talks can lead to signing several contracts worth \$12 bn between the two sides. (Presstv)

Uzbekistan, Tajikistan Eyeing Creation of New Railway Route to Russia

TASHKENT - Tajik and Uzbek railway authorities are considering possibilities of the railway route to Russia through Uzbekistan and bypassing Turkmenistan, reports Avesta news agency.

According to Vice Chief of the Tajik Railway Company Usmon Kalandarov, this issue has been discussed at the meeting of the Tajik-Uzbek intergovernmental commission held in Dushanbe.

"We are considering creation of the railway route Dushanbe - Pahtaabad - Boisun - Karshi -

Toshguzar and then to Kazakhstan bypassing Turkmenistan," he said. According to him, if this route is created in future, the distance and time of transportation of goods and passengers will be reduced.

"Our colleagues are studying this issue, they will inform us about their decision," added Kalandarov. Tajikistan, according to him, proposed Uzbekistan to restore the rail movement through Amuzang - Khatlon and decrease tariffs for transit of goods. (AKI)

Trump, Sisi Discuss Terrorism in Phone Call

CAIRO - U.S. President Donald Trump discussed on Monday with his Egyptian counterpart Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi war against terrorism and extremism in a phone call, Sisi's spokesman said in a press statement.

"Sisi stressed to Trump Egypt's commitment in the fight against terrorism despite economic burdens faced by the Middle Eastern country in the past three years," the spokesman said.

Meanwhile, Trump reiterated his appreciation for the efforts Egypt has made in the fight against terrorism. The two leaders also stressed their beliefs in the strategic relations between Cairo and Washington. ... (More on P4)... (26)

Syrian Govt. Delegation Questions Legitimacy of Syrian Opposition Members in Peace Talks

ASTANA - The representatives of the Syrian opposition, who were gathering here for peace talks on Syria, can't be considered legitimate, the Syrian government delegation said on Monday.

"The opposition, represented at the peace talks in Astana, acts in contrary to formerly achieved agreements," said Bashar al-Ja'afari, head of the Syrian government delegation.

The Syrian opposition protected and supported terrorist group Jabhat al-Nusra, which once seized the drinking water source for Damascus and cut off the drink-

ing water supply for millions of people, al-Ja'afari told reporters at a break time of the talks.

"The representatives of the opposition are discussing a military operation conducted by Syrian army against terrorists who seized drinking water source for Damascus. Meanwhile, we are discussing about 7 million people, who don't have access to drinking water for 42 days," he said.

Jabhat al-Nusra hasn't joined the peace agreement, he emphasized, but the opposition didn't consider the group as a terrorist organization. ... (More on P4)... (27)