

3 World Heritage Sites in Yemen, Iraq Listed as Endangered

BONN, Germany - The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) completed its annual update of the List of World Heritage in Danger here on Thursday and added three sites in conflicted areas in Yemen and Iraq into the list. UNESCO's World Heritage Committee, which started its 2015 annual meeting here on June 28, said all the three sites, the Old City of Sana'a and the Old Walled City of Shibam in Yemen and Hatra in Iraq, were listed as endangered due to damages or threat from the ongo-



ing armed conflicts in the two countries. According to the committee, the Old City of Sana'a

in Yemen sustained "serious damage" due to the conflicts. "The majority of the colorful, decorated doors and window panes characteristics of the city's domestic architecture have been shattered or damaged," it said. The Old City of Sana'a has been inhabited for more than 2,500 years and became a major center for the propagation of Islam in the 7th and 8th century. Its religious and political heritage can be seen in 103 mosques, 14 hammams and over 6,000 houses which were built before the 11th century. (Xinhua)

IAEA Closer to Enhancing Transparency of Iran's Nuclear Program

VIENNA - The UN nuclear watchdog chief said Friday he now has "a better understanding on some ways forward" over enhancing the transparency of Iran's controversial nuclear activities. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Yukiya Amano met with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and Ali Shamkhani, head of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, in Tehran on Thursday.



Amano visited Iran in the context of the IAEA's

continued engagement with Iran and EU+3 countries -- Britain, China, France, Germany,

Russia and the United States -- as they work toward a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

"I believe that both sides have a better understanding on some ways forward, though more work will be needed," Amano said.

It is believed that Amano's Iran visit aims to find a solution to the past so-called "possible military dimensions" of Iranian nuclear activities and to enhance the monitoring measures on Iran's current and future nuclear plan. (Xinhua)

U.S. Drone Attack Kills Senior Jihadist Abu Iyadh in Libya

TRIPOLI/TUNIS - A U.S. drone strike in Libya has killed senior jihadist leader Abu Iyadh, who was believed to be the mastermind of a series of terrorist plots inside and outside the North African country, including an attack on the U.S. Embassy in Tunisia, Libyan local media confirmed on Friday.

Iyadh, also known as Seifallah Ben Hassine, had been based in Libya since 2013, where he served as a senior militant leader in Islamist group Ansar al-Sharia, and organized training camps for ex-

tremist militants.. Libya's Al-Wasat paper quoted a Washington official as saying that Iyadh was neutralized during a U.S. raid on June 14, along with some other al-Qaida linked leaders. The source added that Iyadh's killing was announced after his body was identified through a DNA analysis.

Iyadh's death was hailed as an important victory against terrorism by Libya's neighboring Tunisia whose beach resort Sousse was attacked by Libya-trained extremists last Friday. (Xinhua)

Humanitarian Situation in Somalia Still Fragile Despite Progress: UN

NAIROBI - Though progress has been made in the reconstruction of Somalia after two decades of civil war, humanitarian situation in the country is still fragile, a United Nations (UN) official has said. Philippe Lazzarini, the outgoing UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, told reporters in the Kenyan capital Nairobi that

insecurity, natural disasters and the influx of refugees from Yemen could hamper efforts to stabilize the country. "Currently, an estimated 700,000 people in Somalia are trapped in an emergency crisis while an extra two million are teetering on the edge of food insecurity. Most of them are internally displaced," Lazzarini said.

He urged the international community to increase assistance towards interventions that could shield civilians from chronic hunger and disease. "The donor community will support national programs that address chronic vulnerability and a durable solution to the refugee crisis. We have a joint agreement with ... (More on P4)... (25)

Turkey's Pro-Kurdish Party Wants to Keep "Peace Process" Alive

ANKARA - While the Turkish political parties are negotiating a new government following last month's election, the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) said on Friday that it intends to carry on the Kurdish peace process regardless of how the coalition is going to be lined up. The HDP said in a written

statement that turning the "peace process" into the policy of the nation would be the only way to maintain its momentum, adding that it will hold large "peace meetings" across the country in an attempt to keep alive the "solution process" between the state and Kurdish militants, Anadolu Agency reported

Friday. The solution process, which aims to end the 30-year conflict between Turkey and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) insurgents, was initiated in 2013, but was soon stalled with no real progress. The PKK is still listed as a terrorist group by Turkey, United States and the European Union. (Xinhua)

Putin to Meet Iran's President Rouhani at SCO Summit Next Week

MOSCOW - Russian President Vladimir Putin is expected to meet with his Iranian counterpart Hassan Rouhani at the forthcoming summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a Kremlin spokesman said Thursday.

"Actually, we are preparing (for) such meeting," Dmitry Peskov, the press spokesman for the President of Russia, told reporters.

The 15th meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the SCO is scheduled to be held in the Russian city of Ufa from July 9-10. The SCO now groups China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan as member states, with Afghanistan, India, Iran, Mongolia and Pakistan as observers and Belarus, Turkey and Sri Lanka as dialogue partners. (Xinhua)

UN Calls for Normalization of Lebanon's Institutions Work

BEIRUT - The United Nations (UN) Special Coordinator for Lebanon Sigrid Kaag stressed Thursday on the need for the constitutional institutions in Lebanon to work normally, which should start with the urgent need to elect a new president. Lebanon has been without a president since May 2014 when the six-year term of former President Michel Suleiman ended. The parliament has failed

in 25 consecutive times to elect a new president because of lack of the constitutionally required quorum of two thirds of the parliament seats. In a UN statement, Kaag stressed the need to elect a president of the republic for the regularity of the work of all constitutional institutions, adding that otherwise, Lebanon is at risk of losing lots of aids and international loans. (Xinhua)

Burundi's Legislative, Communal Polls Held in Unfavorable Climate: UN

BUJUMBURA - The UN Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi (MENUB) has said the country's legislative and communal polls held on Monday happened in an environment that was not conducive for free, credible and inclusive elections.

"Episodes of violence and explosions were reported before the polls and in some cases, violence continued on the election day, mostly in the capital Bujumbura," a statement from the UN Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi (MENUB) said Thursday.

The statement also stipulated that the legislative and communal electoral process took place in a "tense" political crisis, and a climate of "widespread fear and intimidat-

ion" in parts of the country. "Fundamental freedoms of participation, assembly, expression, opinion and information have suffered increasing restrictions during the campaign period and as the day of the election drew nearer," said the statement.

The MENUB however commended the work of the Burundian National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) for conducting "adequate" voter registration and candidate nomination processes. "Preparations and arrangements for the day of the election were largely sufficient, and polling activities took place regularly in the observed polling places," said the statement. (Xinhua)

German Finmin Puts Damper on New Quick Aid for Greece

BERLIN - German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble said Friday in an interview that he did not expect that Greece would quickly get further financial assistance after Sunday's referendum.

"The proposal on which the (Greek) government is letting people vote is no longer on the table," Schaeuble told Germany's Bild newspaper. "We have to see how the government in Athens deals with the results and what consequences this would have. And only

then can Greece submit an application for the opening of negotiations," the minister added. Schaeuble expected "very difficult negotiations" with Greece after the second bailout program for the country expired on June 30, saying "the situation in Greece has deteriorated dramatically in recent weeks." He stressed that support could only be provided in return for "real efforts," and called on the Greek government to put forward reform plans. (Xinhua)

Saudi-Led Air Strikes on Yemen Cities Kill 16: Houthis

SANAA - Warplanes from a Saudi-led coalition bombed targets in Yemen on Friday, residents said, and sources in the country's dominant Houthi militia reported at least 16 people were killed.

The coalition has been bombarding Iran-allied Houthi forces and allied army units since March in a campaign to restore exiled President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi to power. Houthi sources said six people including a woman and a child were killed and six wounded in a dawn air strike on the al Jaraf neighborhood of the capital Sanaa. The Houthi-controlled Saba news agency re-

ported 10 people were killed by Saudi-led aerial attacks on a building in Bayt al-Faqih city in the southwestern province of al Hodeida.

Air strikes were also carried out on Faj Attan mountain overlooking Sanaa, home to a military base and a weapons depot that have been a frequent target of raids in the course of the three-month-old war in the Arabian Peninsula country. In the dawn attack, warplanes also hit the ministry of communications building, the Houthi-controlled Saba news agency reported, setting it on fire and destroying nearby buildings. (Reuters)

Neighbour News

China Opposes U.S. Playing Up China Threat: FM Spokesperson

BEIJING - China on Friday said it opposed the Pentagon's latest military report and urged the United States to give up cold-war attitudes. "We are dissatisfied with and oppose the U.S. report which has played up 'the China threat'," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said at a daily press briefing. Her comments came after release of the U.S. military report on Wednesday, which said "China's actions are adding tension to the Asia-Pacific region," referring to China's land reclamation in the South China Sea. "China has repeatedly

made clear its principle and position on the reclamation construction in the South China Sea," Hua said, urging the United States to give up cold-war mindset and take a correct view of China's strategic intention. She called on the United States to work in the same direction with China to observe the important consensus reached by the two presidents and in the spirit of no confrontation, no antagonism, mutual respect and win-win cooperation, continue to make efforts to build a new type of major-country relations. "That's also in the interest of the United States," she said. (Xinhua)

Rouhani Sends Chief of Staff to Vienna Talks

TEHRAN - Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has dispatched his Chief of Staff Mohammad Nahavandian to the Austrian capital of Vienna - where negotiations are underway between Iran and the P5+1 countries - on what some media reports say may be a special mission. Nahavandian earlier posted an image of an airplane on his Instagram page with a message asking for prayers. It is not yet known whether Nahavandian will personally participate in the talks between Iran and the P5+1.

Iran and the six other countries - the US, Germany, France, China, Russia, and the UK - have been negotiating to reach a deal on the Islamic Republic's civilian nuclear program. The two sides extended a previous June 30 deadline for a week in an effort to nail down the potential deal. As the negotiations continue in Vienna, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Yukiya Amano traveled to Iran to hold important talks with senior Iranian officials. (Agencies)

Tajikistan, Poland to boost parliamentary ties

DUSHANBE - Tajik Lower House Vice-Speaker Akramsho Feliev met here on Friday with a delegation of Poland's lower house of parliament (Sejm), led by the Deputy Speaker Jerzy Wenderlich. During the meeting the sides discussed cooperation between the parliaments of their countries. Feliev said that strengthening of parlia-

mentary ties between the two countries would promote expansion of economic cooperation between them. "To develop and strengthen relations between their parliaments, Tajikistan and Poland establish parliamentary friendship group in April this year, aiming to foster relations between the two countries", Feliev said. (Agencies)

Pakistani PM to Visit Norway on July 7

ISLAMABAD - Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif will pay a visit to Norway at the invitation of his Norwegian counterpart Erna Solberg on July 7 to participate in the Oslo Summit on Education for Development. This will be the first official visit by a Pakistani leader to Norway in over a decade, the Foreign Ministry said on Friday.

During this visit, the Prime Minister will be addressing the Educa-

tion Summit and interact with several world leaders. The Prime Minister will hold delegation level talks with his Norwegian counterpart. He will also meet HRH Haakon Magnus, Crown Prince of Norway. The visit will provide an opportunity to the Prime Minister to discuss bilateral as well as global and regional issues with the Norwegian leadership. (Xinhua)

EU to Give Expert Assistance to Uzbekistan in Joining to WTO

BISHKEK - The European Union will give an expert assistance to Uzbekistan on joining to the World Trade Organization (WTO), head of the EU delegation in Uzbekistan Yuri Sterk said. The assistance will be given within the joint council for trade-economic and investment cooperation expected

to launch by the end of the year, Sterk said, reports Podrobno.uz. He said that EU is ready to assist Uzbekistan in evaluation of the work needed to be done to prepare the country for WTO. "The proposal of expert assistance was made and received with an interest," he noted. (AKIpress)