

World Expects G20 Summit to Push for more Inclusive Economy

BERLIN - World leaders are expected to meet at an annual G20 summit held in Hamburg, Germany on the weekend, discussing issues such as economic growth, international trade and financial market regulations. The event, scheduled for July 7-8, is a major platform for global governance, during which heads of state and government are expected to send a clear message for shaping a strong, sustainable and inclusive world economy. The world economic recovery has gained momentum since last summer, with many countries witnessing a boost in investment,



manufacturing and trade. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) therefore updated its expectation of the world economic growth to 3.5 percent for 2017 and 3.6 percent for the next year. The World Bank predicted that the world economy will grow 2.7 percent this year and 2.9 percent next year, both higher than the 2.4-percent growth in 2016. However, economists pointed out that the current recovery is not strong, and the downside risks including structural problems and rising protectionism still cloud the medium-term outlook. (Xinhua)

France's Macron Vows to Support Syrian Opposition, Press through Political Solution

PARIS - French President Emmanuel Macron has voiced support for opponents of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, vowing more efforts to press through a diplomatic end of years-long civil war in Syria, according to a press release issued by Macron's office on Wednesday. Macron confirmed to Riad Hijab, Syria's opposition chief coordinator, "France's support for the Syrian opposition represented by the High Negotiation Committee (HNC) in the inter-Syrian talks

held under the aegis of the United Nations." "The president assured Mr. Hijab of his will to engage fully and personally to achieve an inclusive political solution in the Geneva framework," the Elysee said. Macron and Hijab also reiterated the necessity "to preserve Syria's unity and the need to fight against ...terrorist groups," it added. Talks with Saudi Arabia-based HNC chief is widely seen as a move to ease concerns of Syrian opposition following Macron's remarks saying



that he saw no legitimate successor to al-Assad. On June 21, French president told eight European newspapers in an interview "I have not stated

that Bashar al-Assad's departure is a pre-condition for everything because nobody has shown me a legitimate successor." (Xinhua)

Qatar Rivals Look to next Move in Cairo Talks

CAIRO - Arab states that have cut ties with Qatar held talks in Egypt on Wednesday to discuss their next move in the Gulf diplomatic crisis, as Doha called for dialogue to resolve the dispute. Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry welcomed his counterparts from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain for the talks at a ministry building in central Cairo, a month after the countries severed ties with Qatar, accusing Doha of supporting extremism. Earlier on Wednesday, the

Saudi foreign ministry said they had received Qatar's response to their demands - which include Doha ending support for the Muslim Brotherhood and closing broadcaster Al-Jazeera - and would respond "at the right time". Saudi Arabia and its allies have not said what steps they could take next, but there are fears of a wider embargo that would hurt the Qatari economy, with credit ratings agency Moody's announcing it was changing Qatar's outlook to negative over the crisis. (AFP)

Nieghbor News

It's Right Time for China, EU to Deepen Cooperation

BRUSSELS - With the 12th G20 summit on the horizon, it's the right time for China and the European Union (EU) to deepen ties, especially in promoting free trade and tackling climate change. The G20 summit, scheduled in the German city of Hamburg on July 7-8, is in the public gaze against the backdrop of widening cracks between the United States and the EU, as well as rising uncertainties globally. In the run up to the summit, the leaders of the EU and its member states met in Berlin on June 29 to coordinate their positions. At a press conference after the meeting, German Chancellor Angela Merkel reaffirmed Europe's backing of free trade and the Paris Accord, saying Germany was "more committed than ever" to making both a success. Days later, obviously sneering at U.S. President Donald Trump's catchphrase "make America great again," the European Commission said "we will work with all partners who share our conviction that the (Paris) Agreement is necessary to make our planet great again." "The Agreement is a key element for the modernization of the economy and industry worldwide. It is the cornerstone of global efforts to tackle climate change, and cannot be renegotiated," the commission stressed. Since taking office in January, the Trump administration has been wrangling with the EU over such issues as free trade, burden-sharing among NATO allies and climate change. (Xinhua)

Pakistan, Tajikistan to Expand Ties in Agriculture, Education Sectors

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan and Tajikistan Wednesday agreed on the need of exploring new avenues of cooperation in agriculture, education and culture sectors besides improving business-to-business and people-to-people ties. The Prime Minister who is in Tajikistan on a two-day official visit met his Tajik counterpart Qohir Rasulzoda here at the State Guest House and discussed a whole range of bilateral issues. He was accompanied by a high-level delegation including his Adviser on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz, Minister of Commerce Khurram Dastgir and Minister for Water & Power Khawaja Muhammad Asif. Prime Minister Sharif said both the sides were committed to further strengthening their relationship in diverse spheres so as to build into a multi-dimensional partnership. He said there was a tremendous potential to boost trade and hoped that the two countries would be able to achieve their target of US 500 million dollars soon. The two leaders noted the improvement in bilateral trade and called for identifying the weak areas and to take necessary measures to address these issues. They pointed the need to determine new traditional and non-traditional trading goods and services. In this regard, they directed the Joint Ministerial Commission to formulate a comprehensive framework. (APP)

Iran Supports Stable, United Iraq: Rouhani

TEHRAN - Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has warned of divisive plots against Iraq, saying Tehran backs unity, stability and integrity in its western neighbor. "Any move undermining Iraq's unity and integrity will not be beneficial to anybody and is unacceptable," Rouhani said in a meeting with the head of the Iraqi National Alliance (INA), Ammar al-Hakim, in Tehran on Tuesday. He emphasized that all Iraqis must avoid divisive issues and reinforce their unity. Iran's chief executive also hailed the recent gains made by the Iraqi government, army and popular forces in fighting terrorism and liberating the country's second largest city of Mosul from Daesh Takfiris. Rouhani said the prudence of Iraqi officials and enhanced unity among the country's ethnic groups would double the Iraqi nation's joy following Mosul's liberation. He expressed hope that victories achieved in Mosul and the defeat of terrorists in the city would further strengthen security, stability and unity across Iraq. "Undoubtedly, this stability and security will be beneficial to relations between the Iranian and Iraqi nations," the Iranian president added. (Presstv)

Tajikistan: Border Incidents Highlight Drug Trafficking Threat

DUSHANBE - Border guards in Tajikistan have said two drug traffickers were killed in an exchange of gunfire after they attempted to cross over from Afghanistan. The border service of the State Committee for National Security said that the incursion occurred at 11:30 p.m. on July 3 at the Hamadoni crossing, which lies south of the city of Kulob. Border guard spokesman Muhammad Ulughodzhaev told Asia-Plus news website that the traffickers retreated after meeting fire from government troops and that the bodies of two men, aged between 30 and 35, were found at the scene after the incident. Ulughodzhaev said they also found five kilograms of an unspecified narcotic substance and a hunting knife. Another clash occurred at the Panj bordering crossing, around 50 kilometers further west, north of the Afghan city of Kunduz, which has been repeatedly besieged by Taliban militants in recent months. (Agencies)

Take Two for Trump in Talks with Unnerved European Allies

WASHINGTON - U.S. President Donald Trump will get a chance to patch up trans-Atlantic ties this week when he meets with NATO allies still rattled by his failure on an earlier trip to embrace the principle that an attack against one member is an attack against all. Trump departed on Wednesday for Warsaw, Poland, where the White House said he would showcase his commitment to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in a speech and in meetings with a group of nations closest to Russia on

his way to the G20 summit in Germany on Friday and Saturday. "He will lay out a vision not only for America's future relationship with Europe, but the future of our trans-Atlantic alliance, and what that means for American security and American prosperity," Trump's national security adviser, H.R. McMaster, told reporters last week. He slammed Germany for its trade practices, and shortly after returning home, pulled out of the 2015 Paris climate deal, leaving his officials to try to smooth ruffled feelings. (Reuters)

Qatar Calls for 'Dialogue' to Resolve Gulf Crisis

LONDON - Qatar's foreign minister called for "dialogue" on Wednesday to resolve the Gulf diplomatic crisis, accusing Arab states that have cut ties with Qatar of trying to undermine the nation's sovereignty. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani was speaking at the Chatham House think tank in London, as the Arab states that have accused Qatar of supporting extremism met in Egypt to discuss their next move. "As the 48 hours extension is coming to an

end, Qatar continues to call for dialogue despite the violation of the international law... and despite the siege that is a clear aggression and an insult to all international treaties," he said. "We welcome any serious efforts to resolve our differences with our neighbours," he said, adding however that countries imposing a blockade on Qatar should make the first move to-



wards dialogue. "They should not expect from me a first step, I should expect from them a first step for engagement," he said, without disclosing the details of a response that Qatar has given to the Arab states' demands. (AFP)

Russia's Nuclear Submarine Test-Fires Cruise Missile Successfully in Barents Sea

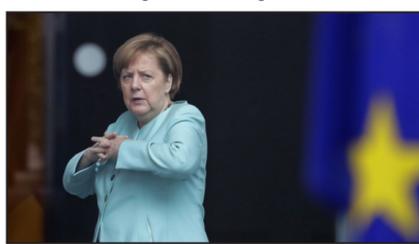
MOSCOW - Russia's Project 949A submarine Smolensk has carried out a test launch of a cruise missile and successfully hit its designated target during combat drills scheduled in the Barents Sea, the Northern Fleet's press service said Wednesday. "A Granit missile was fired against a marine target at depths of about 400 kilometers in the sea. According to the flight recorder's data, the target was hit successfully," said Northern Fleet's spokesman and Captain Vadim Serga. Built in 1990, Russia's submarine Project 949A Antey (also known as the Oscar II class submarine) displaces 24,000 tons and has an underwater speed of 32 knots with a crew of 107. They are armed with 24 launchers of Granit cruise missiles with a range of about 500 km and six torpedo tubes. (Xinhua)

Chinese Vice Premier Calls for more Education Cooperation among BRICS Countries

BEIJING - Chinese Vice Premier Liu Yangdong Wednesday called for BRICS countries to deepen pragmatic cooperation in education. Liu made the remarks when meeting with heads of foreign delegations attending a meeting of BRICS ministers of education. As an important part of people-to-people exchanges, education cooperation has achieved fruitful results in joint scientific research by colleges and universities, as well as personnel training in recent years, Liu said. People-to-people exchanges are also very important to strengthen the partnership between BRICS countries, he said. (Xinhua)

Merkel Stands by Suggestion Europe can't Rely Fully on US

BERLIN - German Chancellor Angela Merkel stood by her suggestion that Europe can no longer entirely rely on the U.S. and declared Wednesday that Germany and China can work together to help calm the world's problems. Merkel is hosting the Group of 20 summit Friday and Saturday in Hamburg. The gathering should make for a challenging combination of world leaders, with President Donald Trump, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Turkish



President Recep Tayyip Erdogan among those attending. Welcoming Chinese President Xi Jinping to Berlin on Wednesday, Merkel said their pre-summit meeting was "a good opportunity to expand and broaden our exten-

sive strategic relations." "It is a great pleasure for us to welcome you here today at a time of turmoil in the world, when China and Germany can make a contribution to calming down this turmoil somewhat," Merkel said. (AP)

EU, Japan Have 'Agreement in Principle' on Free Trade Deal

BRUSSELS - The European Union and Japan have agreed "in principle" on a free trade deal that will affect an overwhelming majority of commerce between the two economic giants and will be officially endorsed at a summit of their leaders Thursday. EU Council President Donald Tusk and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will meet Thursday and will be able to shake hands on the landmark deal, which took four years of negotiations. EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom said in a Tweet that "We've reached political agreement" and "now recommend to leaders to confirm this" at their short summit.

The timing of the announcement is important, coming just before a summit of world leaders in Hamburg, Germany. U.S. President Donald Trump is expected to express his discontent with free trade and his desire to renegotiate some deals. Both the EU and Japan have stressed that their pact is intended as a rejection of the kind of protectionism Trump advocates. For Abe, it shows Japan remains an important partner in global trade, especially after Trump pulled the plug on a trade deal with Pacific nations. For the EU, it shows that it remains a champion of free trade even if free trade negotiations with the United States are in a rut. (AP)

UK PM May Backs Hospital Caring for Critically Ill Charlie Gard

LONDON - British Prime Minister Theresa May said on Wednesday she was confident the London hospital caring for a critically ill baby would consider any offers of help after his case attracted the attention of U.S. President Donald Trump and the pope. The case of 10-month-old Charlie Gard, who has a form of mitochondrial disease - a rare genetic condition that causes progressive muscle weakness and brain damage - has gained global interest after his parents lost a long legal battle to give him experimental therapy in the United States. Trump tweeted an offer of help on Monday, a day after Pope Francis offered prayers for Gard and his family. The Vatican-owned pediatric hospital in Rome has also said it is ready to offer to take over the care of the baby. "I am confident that Great Ormond Street hospital have and always will consider any offers or new information that has come forward with consideration of the well-being of a desperately ill child," May told parliament. Gard's parents wanted him to undergo a U.S. therapy trial but specialists at the London hospital where he is being cared for said the treatment was experimental and would not help. Britain's Supreme Court ruled last month that going to the United States for treatment would prolong the baby's suffering without any realistic prospect of helping him. (Reuters)