

Turkey Closes Airspace from which Anti-IS Airstrikes Launched: Pentagon

WASHINGTON - The Pentagon said on Saturday Turkish officials had closed the airspace around a Turkish air base from which the U.S.-led coalition launched airstrikes against the Islamic State (IS).

"Turkish officials have stopped all flights into and out of Incirlik Air Base in the southwestern part of the nation. U.S. and coalition aircraft fly missions against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant from the base," said Pentagon



spokesman Peter Cook in a statement.

"U.S. officials are working with the Turks to resume air operations there as soon as possible," said Cook,

adding that all U.S. military personnel and civil-

ians there were "safe and secure."

Turkey is a NATO ally for the United States and part of the U.S.-led coalition to fight IS. Meanwhile, U.S. President Barack Obama on Saturday reiterated the U.S. "unwavering support" for the democratically-elected civilian government of Turkey in the aftermath of a coup attempt.

Obama made the remarks at a White House meeting with his national security ...*(More on P4)...(26)*

Turkey President Urges Obama to Extradite Leader of Opposition Movement

ISTANBUL - Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Saturday reiterated a call for his U.S. counterpart Barack Obama to hand over the leader of an opposition movement accused of being behind the coup attempt in Turkey.

"Please meet our request if we are strategic partners," Erdogan said in remarks delivered in Istanbul. The Turkish leader has blamed the movement led by Fethullah Gulen, a Turkish Islamic scholar living in the U.S. state of Penn-



sylvania, for the unsuccessful coup that started on Friday night. "I asked you previously either to deport him or surrender him

to Turkey," Erdogan said, referring to Obama. "I told you that he is considering the coup d'etat, but you didn't listen." Ankara has been

accusing the Gulen Movement of running a parallel state and trying to topple the Turkish government. (Xinhua)

Putin, Erdogan Reaffirm Intention to Meet in Person Soon: Kremlin

MOSCOW - Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan, in a phone conversation, reaffirmed their intention to meet in person soon, the Kremlin said Sunday.

The Kremlin said that the two leaders talked over phone earlier in the day, during which Putin offered condolences to Erdogan over the victims in Friday's coup attempt, which killed at least 161 people and injured 1,440 others. Putin said Russia deemed the actions "categorically un-

acceptable." Putin also expressed concerns about the safety of Russian tourists travelling in Turkey, the number of which has significantly increased after Russia lifted the restrictive measures against Ankara, and Erdogan vowed to take all necessary steps in that regard, according to the Kremlin press service.

Earlier on Saturday, Turkish authorities announced that they had regained control of the country after thwarting the coup attempt by a military faction late Friday night. (Xinhua)

Turkey Confirms 3 Top Commanders Held Hostage Saved and Sound

ANKARA - Three top commanders who were held hostage by the Gulenist coup attempters were saved on July 16, Defense Minister Fikri Isik announced on Saturday night.

"Our commander of air staff, naval staff and the second chief of general staff were saved from the Akinci Base where they were held and are in good condition," Isik told reporters in the capital Ankara, adding that it was early to say that the coup danger was completely over, while urging caution.

Meanwhile, the commander of gendarmerie

forces Gen. Galip Mendi was also saved later. In addition, a total of 72 coup plotters were detained during police operation at the Akinci Base in the capital Ankara.

Turkish President Recep Erdogan made a "thank you call" to parliament speaker and leaders of the two opposition parties on July 16.

The president thanked Republican People's Party (CHP) leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu and National Movement Party (MHP) leader Devlet Bahceli for not giving credit to the July 15 coup attempt during a phone conversation. (Xinhua)

Republican Donald Trump Calls His VP Pick a Party Unifier

WASHINGTON - U.S. Presumptive Republican Presidential nominee Donald Trump said on Saturday he chose Indiana Governor Mike Pence as his running mate to boost party unity.

"One of the biggest reasons I've chosen Mike, one of the reasons is party unity, I have to be honest," said Trump at a rally in New York.

Calling Pence his "first choice" as the running mate, Trump also touted Pence's job-creating credentials.

"This is the primary reason I wanted Mike -- other than that he looks very good, other than he's got



an incredible family, and incredible wife," said Trump.

The pick of Pence as running mate came as Trump was scrambling to solidify the Republican base and win support from social

conservatives. Pence, 57, was a Republican lawmaker for 12 years and the third-highest-ranking member of the GOP in the House before becoming the governor of Indiana in 2013.

During his stint in Congress, he was assigned to the Foreign Affairs Committee, a credential which could make up for Trump's lack of foreign affairs experience in a com ...*(More on P4)...(27)*

AIDS 2016 to Focus on Progress, Challenges in Finding Cure

DURBAN - The prospects of developing safe, effective, and globally scalable approaches to curing or achieving sustained remission of HIV infection take centre stage at the upcoming 21st International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2016), organizers said on Saturday.

"HIV cure research has the potential to alter the future of this epidemic," said Nobel Laureate Françoise Barré-Sinoussi, co-chair of the International AIDS Society (IAS) Towards an HIV Cure Initiative.

At AIDS 2016 scheduled for July 18-22, 18,000 scientists, policymakers, advocates and people living with HIV will meet to highlight the latest accomplishments and challenges in a rapidly expanding area of scientific inquiry that few could have imagined at the historic 13th International AIDS Conference in Durban 16 years ago, which inspired a new paradigm for HIV treatment access that helped change the trajectory of the global AIDS epidemic. "With 37 million people currently living with HIV



worldwide, and another 2 million newly infected each year, an effective approach to curing or achieving sustained remission of HIV infection would be a groundbreaking advance in global health," said Barre-Sinoussi. Research to achieve such cures is

in a formative stage, but significant advances are being made and will be explored in Durban at the fifth annual Towards and HIV Cure Symposium, and with the release of the IAS Global Scientific Strategy: Towards an HIV Cure 2016. (Xinhua)

Syrian Forces Fully Besiege Rebel-Held Areas in Aleppo

DAMASCUS - The Syrian army completely cut off the last remaining rebel-supply route in Syria's northern province of Aleppo, besieging thus the rebel-held areas inside the city, a monitor group reported on Sunday.

The Syrian forces backed by the Lebanese Hezbollah group severed the Castillo road in the northern countryside of Aleppo, which was the last rebel supply route linking northern Aleppo with rebel-held areas inside the city itself.

Now, the rebel-controlled districts in the eastern part of Aleppo city have become completely besieged, said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

The Syrian forces have been on an offensive to close off Castillo since late last month.

The aim was to isolate rebel-held towns in the northern countryside of Aleppo from rebel-held areas inside Aleppo city.

Throughout the first two weeks of July, the rebels, ...*(More on P4)...(28)*

U.S. Sanctions against Sudan Impacts Negatively on Women and Children: AU Official

KIGALI - The sanctions imposed against the Sudanese government by the United States are impacting negatively against women and youths, an African Union (AU) official has said.

Dr. Joseph Chilengi, the Presiding Officer of Economic Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC), an advisory organ of the AU, said on Saturday that the sanctions have denied women and youths' medi-

cine and other basic requirements.

"More than 70 percent of Sudanese are youths who were born after the sanctions and were imposed, yet they continue to face the consequences that are not of their making," Chilengi said this during a media briefing on the sidelines of the ongoing African Union Summit in Kigali, Rwanda.

In October 1997, the U.S. ...*(More on P4)...(29)*

Nieghbor News

Air Quality of Chinese Cities Improves in First Half of 2016

BEIJING - The air quality in 338 Chinese cities showed improvements in the first half of this year, said the Ministry of Environmental Protection Sunday.

Beijing, Tianjin and 11 main cities in north China's Hebei Province, an industrial zone troubled by air pollution, saw cleaner skies with about 57.4 percent of the January-June period having "good air quality", 11 percentage points higher than the first half of 2015, said Luo Yi, head of the ministry's environment monitoring division.

In Beijing, the rate was 58.8 percent, an year-on-year increase of 10.2 percentage points, while the density of PM2.5, fine particulate matter causing smog,

stood at 64 micrograms on average, down 17.9 percent year on year.

However, six out of the 10 cities with the worst air quality were still in Hebei.

The top 10 cities with the cleanest air were mostly along the south-east coast, except Lhasa in Tibet.

The 25 cities along the Yangtze River Delta recorded 72.9 percent of days with good air quality, an year-on-year increase of 3.8 percentage points, while the ratio in nine cities along the Pearl River Delta was 94.7 percent, an increase of 4.1 points.

Meanwhile, according to Luo, the country's surface water quality remained stable. (Xinhua)

Aziz Asked to Brief Senate on US Lawmakers' Remarks

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan's Senate Chairman Raza Rabbani through an official correspondence has asked Adviser to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz to attend the coming session of the house and make a statement on the remarks made by certain US lawmakers about Pakistan's role in the fight against terrorism.

"Such callous remarks on various occasions by the US lawmakers have become a routine," Mr

Rabbani says in his letter to the adviser, adding that Pakistan's "parliament cannot be a silent bystander to such attacks on our integrity, sovereignty and national security". Earlier, the Senate chairman in a statement had expressed displeasure over the US legislators' remarks and hoped that saner elements in the US Congress would take notice of such "irresponsible" statements. (Dawn)

Democracy, Only Solution to Regional Woes: Rouhani

TEHRAN - Iranian President Hassan Rouhani says the solution to regional problems does not lie in the use of force but rather in respecting democracy, adding that the era of military coups has come to a close.

Rouhani made the remarks in an address to a huge crowd of people in Iran's western city of Kermanshah on Sunday, a day after Turkey said it had largely crushed an attempted military coup against the government.

"We live in a region, where some still think that they can transfer power through coups or overthrow a government elected by people's votes with the use of military tanks, artillery, aircraft and helicopter," he said.

They "have failed to realize that the era of coup is over, and that

coups and tanks are not the solution. They must come to the understanding that the solution to problems is democracy and respecting the votes of the majority," he added.

Rouhani said, "Today is the day when issues can be settled at ballot boxes, and people can make their voice heard" through their votes.

The botched coup began late on Friday, when a section of the military blocked Istanbul's iconic Bosphorus Bridge and strafed the headquarters of Turkish intelligence and parliament in the capital, Ankara.

Tanks, helicopters and soldiers clashed with police and people on the streets of the two main Turkish cities while explosions and gunfire rang out. (Presstv)

Rappers Put Patriotism on Full Display in Tajikistan

DUSHANBEH - In January 2014, authorities in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, banned rap music from public buses.

As they explained at the time, many rap tracks were not only "immoral" but were also directed against the Central Asian country's government.

The country's Minister of Education supported the ban, suggesting that tunes that "do not conform to national culture" should not be allowed in public places. Some local rappers complained that the authori-

ties were intimidating them into censoring political lyrics.

That homegrown rap hit a raw nerve for officials made sense. Unlike musicians representing other genres, rappers did not shy away from addressing even the most politically sensitive subjects.

The message from above was clear: if rappers wanted to gain acceptance and possibly public approval, they had to find inspiration in "indigenous" musical genres and become more "patriotic". (Agencies)

Turkish Protesters Rally against Coup Attempt in Major Cities

ANKARA - Thousands of protesters gathered Saturday in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir to protest the coup attempt which killed at least 194 people and led to chaos in major cities in Turkey, Hurriyet News reported. Protesters waving flags gathered in Istanbul's Taksim Square on Sat-

urday night. The group also staged a march toward the central Istiklal Avenue.

Thousands gathered at the central Kizilay Square of capital Ankara on late Saturday to protest the coup attempt, chanting anti-coup slogans.

Prime Minister Binali Yildirim was due to ad-

dress the crowd but it was postponed later. The square was also closed to traffic. Protesters said they will stay until officials call them to return their homes.

In the Aegean province of Izmir, protesters gathered in the central Konak Square and chanted anti-coup slogans.

Following the coup attempt in the country on July 15, Turkish officials called on the nation to continue to protest the coup attempt in squares.

Defense Minister Fikri Isik said it was early to say that the coup danger was completely over, while urging caution in Turkey. (Xinhua)