

U.S. Defense Chief in Saudi Arabia to Reassure after Iran Deal

JEDDAH - U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter flew into Saudi Arabia for meetings on Wednesday with King Salman and his security leadership to reassure the kingdom of America's support after Washington struck a nuclear deal with its arch-rival Iran.

Carter said ahead of his trip that he aimed to discuss American strategy to counter "Iranian aggression" in the region, as well as the fight against Islamic State.

Officials say the talks



will cover cooperation with Saudi Arabia in areas like missile defense and cyber and maritime security, although no new arms deals are expected.

The conservative, mainly Sunni Muslim kingdom is engaged in a contest for power with Shi'ite Iran stretching across the region. It fears the nuclear deal will free Tehran from international pressure and sanctions, giving it more room to back allies in proxy wars, from ...*(More on P4)...(19)*

China Plays Important Role in Iran Nuclear Talks: UN Chief

BEIJING - UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said Wednesday that China had played an important role during the Iranian nuclear talks that resulted in a landmark comprehensive accord.

The UN Security Council on Monday adopted a resolution to endorse the newly-reached Iranian nuclear deal, Ban noted during a telephone conversation with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang



Yi. Ban said he believed that the Chinese side would continue provid-

ing strong support to the implementation of the comprehensive deal and the UN resolution.

Wang, for his part, said that the agreement will safeguard the global nuclear non-proliferation system and lower the risk of war in the Middle East region.

The agreement could serve as a positive reference for the handling of other international and ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

UN Envoy Discusses Syria Crisis with Iranian Authorities

UNITED NATIONS - The UN special envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura on Tuesday visited Iran where he discussed Syria crisis with senior Iranian officials in a bid to seek a Syrian-led political solution to the long-standing conflict, Farhan Haq, the deputy UN spokesman, told reporters here.

While in Tehran, the Iranian capital, de Mistura met with the Iranian Foreign Minister Mohamad Javad Zarif and the

Deputy Foreign Minister Hussein Amir Abdollahian, Haq said at a daily news briefing here.

"During his meetings, Mr. de Mistura stressed the urgency of a Syrian-led political solution to the conflict and exchanged views on how to proceed with a political process, with the support of the Security Council," Haq said. "He also underscored the absence of a military solution to this ...*(More on P4)...(21)*

EU Disburses Euro 600mln Assistance to Ukraine

BRUSSELS - The European Commission, or the executive body of the European Union (EU), disbursed on Wednesday a loan of 600 million euros (654 million U.S. dollars) to Ukraine. According to a press release issued by the Commission, this loan corresponds to the first instalment under the new EU Macro-Financial Assistance (MFA) program for Ukraine, which

amounts to a total of 1.8 billion euros. Through this program, the EU aims to cover the urgent financing needs faced by Ukraine, while supporting the country's economic stabilization. In addition, the EU's MFA package will assist the Ukrainian authorities in implementing important reforms in the areas of public finance management, governance and

transparency, the energy sector, social safety nets, the business environment and the financial sector, said the press release. Valdis Dombrovskis, the European Commission Vice-President responsible for the Euro and Social Dialogue, said the disbursement reflected the EU's "unfailing determination to stand by Ukraine in these challenging times." (Xinhua)

Israeli PM Continues to Attack Iran Deal, Charging it "Risks The World"

JERUSALEM - Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu met Tuesday in Jerusalem with his Italian counterpart Matteo Renzi, continuing his criticism on the nuclear deal between the world powers and Tehran.

Speaking at a joint press conference, Netanyahu said the "deal with Iran poses serious risks to Israel, the Middle East, Europe and the entire world."



Netanyahu, a fierce opponent of the deal, noted that this warning was at the focus of his meeting earlier today with the ...*(More on P4)...(22)*

27 Killed in Clashes, Air Strikes against IS Militants in Iraq



RAMADI, Iraq - A total of 27 people were killed and 14 wounded on Wednesday in the morning in air strikes and separate clashes against the Islamic State (IS) militants in Iraq's western province of Anbar, a provincial security source said. Heavy clashes erupted in the morning in Jubba area, just near the town of Haditha, some 200 km northwest of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, when Iraqi troops and allied paramilitary Sunni militiamen, covered by Iraqi helicopter gunships, attacked the positions of IS militants, leaving

at least 12 extremist militants killed and destroying five of their vehicles along with blowing up a booby-trapped Shovel truck, the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity. Also near Haditha, the security forces and allied militias known as Hashd Shaabi, or popular mobilization, carried out an attack on IS posts in Albu Haiyat area, just east of Haditha, but were confronted with stubborn resistance which left six troops and militiamen killed and nine others wounded, the source said. (Xinhua)

France Set to Back Reducing Reliance on Nuclear Power

PARIS - French lawmakers are set to approve a bill aimed at reducing the country's reliance on nuclear power and boost the usage of renewable energy instead. The bill is expected to be approved later Wednesday by the Socialist majority in France's lower house of parliament. The main measure aims at reduc-

ing France's dependency on nuclear power to 50 percent by 2025 from the current 75 percent, which is more than any other nation in the world. Another measure in the bill is the banning of plastic bags in all supermarkets from next year. Paris is hosting a U.N. conference on climate in December. (AP)

Sri Lanka Hails Resolution of Iran Nuclear Issue

COLOMBO - The Sri Lankan government has welcomed the resolution of the Iran nuclear issue, the country's foreign ministry said in a statement on Wednesday.

The foreign ministry said that Sri Lanka welcomes the successful conclusion of negotiations between Iran and the P5+1 group, Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States plus Germany, in Vienna last week.

"Sri Lanka has always supported efforts by the international community to resolve the Iran nuclear issue amicably, respecting Iran's right to peaceful

uses of nuclear energy and ensuring the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program," the statement added.

Sri Lanka said it welcomes the success of the countries concerned in resolving the issue peacefully, manifesting the efficacy of the multilateral approach for the promotion of international peace and security.

Under the deal, sanctions imposed by the United States, the European Union and the United Nations will be lifted in return for Iran to accept long-term cuts to its nuclear program. (Xinhua)

Al-Qaida Key Figure Killed in U.S. Airstrike: DoD



WASHINGTON - U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) on Tuesday said that Muhsin al-Fadhli, a longtime al-Qaida operative and the leader of the Khorasan Group, was killed in U.S. airstrike in northern Syria on July 8. Al-Fadhli, who had previously

been targeted and believed by some people in the U.S. to have been killed, was traveling in a vehicle near Sarmada, Syria, when he was hit by an air strike, said the DoD. The July 8 strike was the second attempt to kill Al-Fadhli. Al ...*(More on P4)...(23)*

Interpol Takes Deposed Ukraine Leader off Wanted List



Kiev - Ukraine vowed to fight on Wednesday to ensure the return and trial of its exiled Russian-backed president after his name was unexpectedly removed from Interpol's international most wanted list. The former Soviet state's leader Viktor Yanukovich was toppled by a wave of bloody protests and fled to Russia with the help of Kremlin security agents in February 2014. Yanukovich was originally accused by Kiev's

new pro-Western leaders of ordering police to open fire on the demonstrators in the waning hours of his rule. More than 100 people -- many of them unarmed -- died in the carnage. But Interpol in January placed Yanukovich on its "red notice" list for "misappropriation, embezzlement or conversion of property by malversation" in January because it lacked the criminal authority to open the more severe charges sought by Ukraine. (AFP)

Un Security Council Condemns Deadly Terrorist Attack in Turkey

UNITED NATIONS - The UN Security Council on Wednesday condemned "in the strongest terms" the terrorist attack of July 20 in Suruc, Turkey, which killed at least 31 and injured over 100 people, said a press statement of the council. The members of the Security Council extended their condolences to the families of the victims and their sympathy to all

those injured in this heinous attack, as well as to the people and the government of Turkey who lost its citizens in this attack, said the statement. The members of the Security Council wished a speedy recovery to those injured, and underlined the need to bring perpetrators of these reprehensible acts of terrorism to justice, it said. (Xinhua)

Neighbour News

Held US Citizens Discussed at Nuke Talks: Iranian Official

TEHRAN, Iran - Iran's deputy foreign minister said on Wednesday that Iranian diplomats discussed the case of Americans still held captive by Tehran. The issue was raised on the sidelines of negotiations in Vienna earlier this month that led to the landmark deal on curbing Iran's nuclear program.

Earlier, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry had said that U.S. officials raised the issue of captive Americans with Iran every day during the recent nuclear talks, but did not make it part of the negotiations because they feared it would scuttle any deal.

In the Iranian capital, Tehran, Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told reporters on Wednesday that cases of "imprisoned citizens" were discussed with their American counterparts during the nuclear talks.

He said "humanitarian" reasons had motivated the discussion but did not elaborate.

It was the first confirmation by the Iranians of any talks that may have involved the fate of former U.S. Marine Amir Hekmati, Christian pastor Saeed Abedini, Washington Post reporter Jason Rezaian, and retired FBI agent Robert Levinson. (AP)

China's Climate Goals to Boost Opportunities in Clean Energy: UN Official

BEIJING - China's climate change targets for the next couple of decades will provide investment opportunities worth 2.5 trillion U.S. dollars in the non-fossil energy sector, an official from the United Nations (UN) said on Wednesday.

Rae Kwon Chung, principal advisor on climate change of the UN Secretary-General, made the estimate during the China Summit on Caring for Climate hosted by the UN Global Compact Network China. He expects Chinese enterprises will vigorously join the battle against climate change.

In an action plan submitted to the UN at the end of June, China promised to cut carbon dioxide emissions per unit of gross domestic product (GDP) by 60 percent to 65 percent from the 2005 level by 2030 and expand the share of non-fossil fuels in its primary energy consumption to

around 20 percent from the 11.2-percent ratio in 2014.

During the summit, UN officials applauded China's strong will and efforts in fighting climate change and urged all countries in the world to take action.

"The targets are ambitious, impressive and of high standard," Chung said. "China has shown strong political will and commitment on climate change, which many countries do not have." Chung said China has made substantial contribution as it has a track record of over-achieving targets for energy efficiency and carbon intensity improvement.

Echoing his words, Gavin Power, deputy executive director at the UN Global Compact, said the country is showing tremendous leadership in the issue and businesses are also making tremendous efforts to complement government actions. (Xinhua)

Pakistani PM Visits Flood-Hit Northern District

ISLAMABAD - Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif Wednesday flew to the flood-affected northern Chitral district where officials say heavy rains and floods have displaced nearly 300,000 people. Several bridges and roads have been washed away by flood water over the past few days. At least three people have been confirmed dead and dozens of others injured in the rains-related incidents, officials said. The prime minister visited Chitral "to oversee the relief and rescue activities in progress" by the country's National Disaster Management Authority and other concerned departments.

The prime minister, who also took an aerial view of flood-affected areas throughout the Chitral District, landed from the helicopter at the town of Kuragh, and assured the affected people including women that the government will provide all support in this difficult time.

Sharif was briefed by senior officials about the measures so far undertaken to provide relief and further plans of recovery and assistance to improve the conditions out of calamity. He directed the concerned departments to employ all resources on emergency basis and make appropriate arrangements for the affected people. (Xinhua)

Tajik FM, Chinese Ambassador Discuss Upcoming Visit to China

BISHKEK - Minister of the Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan Sirojiddin Aslov received Chinese Ambassador to Tajikistan Fan Syanzhun on Monday, reported Foreign Ministry of Tajikistan. The sides discussed issues of the forthcoming visit of Tajik Foreign Minister to China during the meeting, says the source.

In addition, they exchanged views on key areas of bilateral cooperation and further development of the legal base of Tajik-Chinese cooperation in various areas. The Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang said that Foreign Minister of Tajikistan will arrive in China on official visit earlier on Monday. (AKIpress)