

Some European Countries Still under Terrorist Threat

BRUSSELS - Several European countries are still under terrorist threat, including most of all France and Belgium, then Britain, Germany, probably Italy, Spain and the Netherlands as well, a European intelligence expert has said.

"Even if the terrorist cell who attacked Paris and Brussels is almost destroyed ...IS (Islamic State) will try to refuel his human force in Europe in order to conduct other attacks," said Claude Monique, the former agent



of France's intelligence service in an interview with Xinhua. Since the beginning of 2015, and even

2014, a lot of terrorist attacks planned by IS failed in Europe, but unfortunately three of them suc-

ceeded, Monique said. The advantage is on the terrorists side because Europe is a very open

society where there is no registration even when people rent a flat, said the current director of the

Brussels-based European Strategic Intelligence and Security Center. When people are inside the Schengen zone, they can do what they want in a lot of countries, he added. Ten years ago, Monique noted, there were around 1,000 terrorists in Europe, while now about 5,000 to 6,000 people "are linked to the jihad in Syria," plus their sympathizers estimated at 10,000 and 20,000 in Europe. "It's just impossible to monitor them," Monique said. (Xinhua)

About 20 Mln People in East Africa Requires Food Aid: UN

NAIROBI - About 19.9 million people in Eastern Africa require humanitarian aid as food security situation in the countries affected are not expected to improve, the UN humanitarian agency said in its latest report received on Wednesday. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said an estimated 31.6 million people are already food insecure in Southern Africa.

"While the meagre April/May 2016 harvest will temporarily improve food access in parts of the region over the short term, food security is likely to begin deteriorating by July, reaching its peak between December 2016 and April 2017," OCHA said in its Regional Flood Update report.

Throughout the region, heavy rains that intensified in late April have resulted in excessive flooding, affecting more



than half a million people; damaging infrastructure and livelihoods and caused over 370 deaths. "Although the rains have

also brought relief to some areas that have been affected by the worst drought in decades, namely; parts ... (More on P4)...(20)

S. African Deputy President Warns Against Disruption of Parliament

CAPE TOWN - South African Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa warned on Wednesday that the efforts of a small minority of MPs to impose, through force and intimidation, their will on Parliament reflects a contempt for the principles of democracy. Refusal to adhere to the rules of the National Assembly undermines the integrity of the institution and demonstrates disdain for the will of the people, Ramaphosa said in a statement on current situ-

ation in Parliament. Parliamentary proceedings have been disrupted on a number of occasions in a manner that undermines the proper functioning of Parliament, Ramaphosa said. Of particular concern is the violent nature of some of these disruptions, Ramaphosa noted. He was referring to MPs of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) who repeatedly disrupted parliamentary sessions. In ... (More on P4)...(21)

Turkey Should Apologize, Compensate for Downed Russian Warplane: Kremlin

MOSCOW - The Kremlin expects an apology and compensation from Turkey for a Su-24 aircraft which was downed in November last year, as a first step to restore bilateral ties, a spokesman said Wednesday. "I don't think I'm in a position to recommend anything to a president of another country, which would be incorrect, but I feel it necessary to remind of the repeated declarations of the president of our country on this issue," Tass news agency quoted Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov as



saying. He recalled that shortly after the downing of the Russian Su-24 jet by the Turkish air force, Russian President Vladimir Putin said Moscow expected an apology, an explanation of the incident, compensation for

the downed aircraft and payment to the family of the killed pilot. The Kremlin regretted the fact that Ankara still had not taken any necessary steps to resolve the current crisis in bilateral relations, Peskov ... (More on P4)...(22)

UN Rapporteurs Call for Urgent Protection for Syrians Newly Circled By ISIL

GENEVA - Two United Nations (UN) rapporteurs urged immediate protection for thousands of civilians caught up in Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) offensives in the Aleppo region of northern Syria. In recent days, according to the UN in Syria, ISIL has rapidly seized a number of villages and advanced to within two kilometres of Azaz town, putting at risk those internally displaced living in camps near the Turkish border and other vul-



nerable communities. An estimated 9,500 people were also encircled by fighting around Mare'a city as ISIL advanced into areas held by other non-state armed groups on May 27, and

ISIL's swift takeover of Kiljibrin and KafrKalbein also left some 6,000 civilians stranded in the two towns and unable to access safety. "Despite some reported ... (More on P4)...(23)

German Vote on Armenia Killings May Harm Ties: Turkey

ANKARA - Turkey's relations with Germany will be harmed if the parliament in Berlin votes to describe the killings of Armenians last century as genocide, the Turkish prime minister said Wednesday. Binali Yildirim said, however, that Turkey wouldn't nix a key deal with the European Union on curbing migrant flows to Europe over the genocide issue. Historians estimate that up to 1.5 million Armenians were killed by Ottoman Turks around the time of World War I, an event viewed by many scholars as the first genocide of the 20th century. Turkey denies that the killings that started in 1915 were genocide and contends that those who died were victims of civil war and unrest. Turkey also insists the death toll has been inflated.

Germany's parliament will hold a vote on a motion describing the deaths as genocide on Thursday. "Of course relations with Germany will be harmed, there is no doubt about it," Yildirim said. "Turkey is not a country that engages in blackmail, threats, and makes counter-plans," Yildirim said in response to a question on how the German resolution would affect the Turkey-EU deal. "There can be no question of disregarding deals if this resolution is passed." The prime minister, who took office last week, also called the planned vote in German parliament "nonsense" and said the deaths were "ordinary" events occurring under war conditions. (AP)

867 Iraqis Killed in Violence and Conflicts in May: UN

BAGHDAD - The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) said Wednesday that 867 Iraqis were killed and 1,459 others wounded in terrorism, violence and armed conflicts in May across Iraq. The figures included 468 civilians killed and 1,041 others wounded, while 399 security members were killed and 418 others wounded, UNAMI said in a statement. UNAMI figures excluded the casualties in Iraq's western province of Anbar as it was extremely difficult to verify the casualties in the province where



fierce clashes are underway as the security forces have carried out major offensive to free the city of Fallujah, some 50 km west of Baghdad, and surrounding areas from the Islamic State (IS) militants. The statement said the

UN envoy to Iraq and the UNAMI chief Jan Kubis lamented the continuing loss of lives among terrorist attacks and armed clashes, urging the government of Iraq to take necessary and more effective measures to ... (More on P4)...(24)

World's Longest Railway Tunnel Opened in Switzerland

GENEVA - Measuring 57 km long and located in Switzerland's historic heartland, the Gotthard Base Tunnel officially opened on Wednesday after 17 years of work to bring the engineering feat to completion. With rock cover up to 2,300 meters in depth, the base tunnel is not only the deepest but also the longest and most expensive railway tunnel in the world, having cost CHF 12.2 billion (12.35 billion U.S. dollars) to bring the game-changing endeavor to life. Upon completion of the entire Gotthard axis in 2020, the project will not only cut by 45 minutes the time it takes to travel from Zurich to Lugano but will also greatly improve the transport of goods in the region. This is particularly important as Switzerland is located on one of Europe's main freight transport axes, with some 26 million tonnes of merchandise passing ... (More on P4)...(25)

Egypt Reopens Rafah Border Crossing with Gaza for Four Days

GAZA - The Egyptian authorities reopened on Wednesday the closed Rafah border crossing point in two ways for four days, according to Hamas-run interior office in Gaza. It is the second time in less than 20 days that the Egyptian authorities reopen the only key crossing point of Rafah on the borders between southern Gaza Strip and Egypt, which is the only window for Gaza populations to the world. The Hamas-run borders and crossings corporation said in an emailed press statement that the Egyptian authorities informed the Palestinian side late last night that it decided to reopen the crossing point of Rafah for four days. The Gaza Strip populations with around 2 million people have ... (More on P4)...(26)

AU Opens Military Training Facility to Boost Security in Somalia

MOGADISHU - The Africa Union peacekeeping mission in Somalia (AMISOM) has opened a new military training facility for the soldiers as part of efforts to stabilize the Horn of Africa nation. Francisco Madeira, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (SRCC) for Somalia, said the facility will be used to train the Somali National Army (SNA) on

urban warfare in Mogadishu. "The facility, whose construction began in December last year, consists of a collection of buildings that mimic an urban ... (More on P4)...(27)

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103 Boats Seized in First Year of EU Anti-Migrant Mission

BERLIN - The German government says the European Union's anti-migrant smuggling operation in the Mediterranean sea has intercepted and destroyed 103 boats in its

first year of operation. In a reply to parliament, the Foreign Ministry said ships that make up the Operation Sophia mission have seized 85 rubber boats and 18 wooden

boats, the dpa news agency reported Wednesday. A total of 69 smugglers have also been charged since the operation started in May 2015. ... (More on P4)...(28)

Neighbor News

Iran, Russia in Talks over Electricity Exchange

TEHRAN - A new report says Iran and Russia are in final talks over electricity exchange during high seasons. Payam Baqeri, head of Export Committee of the Iranian Power Industry Union, has told the Azerbaijan Press Agency (APA) that Iran and Russia have for long been negotiating over electricity swap during summer and winter. Accordingly, Iran will export electricity to Russia during winter and Russia will power up Iranian electricity grid during summer time when the local heat up power consumption. The report said a sig-

nificant issue for the two sides has been a route to pick for the transfer. It said currently two routes were available; one from Iran to Armenia and then Georgia before reaching Russia and the other from Iran to Azerbaijan and then Russia via Georgia again. The official reportedly said that given the existing conditions for power exchange, the swap was likely set to take place through Azerbaijan. He said the two neighbors have already synchronized their power grids. Moscow and Tehran ... (More on P4)...(29)

OSCE Consulting Turkmenistan on Countering Terrorism Threats

ASHGABAT - The OSCE organized a training course in Ashgabat where Turkmen law-enforcement and military officials discussed practices of responding to terrorism threats to large public events. Representatives from the Turkmen Ministries of Defence and National Security, Interior Ministry, as well as the State Border Service, State Migration Service and

the General Prosecutor's Office discussed ensuring the security of public events, including facility security, resistance, emergency power, medical emergency and fire precaution, the OSCE said June 1. International experts from Turkey introduced participants to the philosophy and models of crisis/hostage negotiations, practices of ... (More on P4)...(30)

WB Participation in Development of Communication Lines in Tajikistan Discussed

DUSHANBE - Participation of the World Bank in development of communication lines in Tajikistan has reportedly been discussed in Dushanbe on Wednesday. According to the Finance Ministry Secretariat, this issue was discussed at a meeting of Finance Minister Abdul-salom Qurboniyon with Ms. Patricia Veevers-Carter, the World Bank Country Manager for Tajikistan. The sides reportedly pointed out Tajikistan's key role in development

of communication lines in the Central Asian region. They, in particular, stressed implementation of those projects and programs will promote expansion of co-operation in the region, the Secretariat said. Particular attention was paid to implementation of transport development projects in Sughd and Khatlon provinces as well as issues related to supporting passenger and cargo traffic at the Dushanbe airport. (Asia-Plus)

US Drone Strikes Regrettable, Must Stop: Gen. Raheel

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif said on Wednesday US drone strikes are regrettable and must stop as they are a threat to the sovereignty and security of the country. Speaking informally to the media at a reception after attending President Mamnoon Hussain's address to a joint session of Parliament, the chief added that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is a national project and must be completed at any cost. "The security situation in Karachi and Balochistan

is improving," said the army chief. The COAS further said border management with Afghanistan is also improving, and now the responsibility lies with Afghanistan as there are fewer checkpoints on the other side. "Operation Zarb-i-Azb is underway across the country and failure is not an option for us," said Sharif, adding that the successes gained so far in the operation would be consolidated. "We have to maintain the victories of Operation Zarb-i-Azb. Terrorists ... (More on P4)...(31)

Chinese Gov't Provides More Aid to Children in Need

BEIJING - China's State Council carried out new measures to better protect vulnerable children on Wednesday, International Children's Day. A new document on the measures was discussed during the State Council's executive meeting, presided over by Premier Li Keqiang. "Children living in extremely difficult circumstances need special care and protection," Li said at the meeting. "The government should work to build a safety net to

better protect these children." Li was referring to children who endure harsh living conditions because of family poverty, health problems, and lack of parental custody, as well as those who were abducted. Major problems faced by these children include severe poverty, and lack of medical treatment and education. The newly released document introduced specific requirements for central ministries and local ... (More on P4)...(32)