

Obama Greet Muslims on the Start of Holy Month of Ramadan

WASHINGTON - The US President Barack Obama has greeted Muslim across the world on the occasion of the start of the holy month of Ramadan and said that he stands committed to safeguarding the civil rights of all Americans no matter their religion or appearance. "As Muslim Americans celebrate the holy month, I am reminded that we are one American family. I stand firmly with Muslim American communities in rejection of the voices that

seek to divide us or limit our religious freedoms or civil rights," Obama said in a statement issued on Sunday on the occasion of Ramadan. Obama said he stood committed to safeguarding the civil rights of all Americans no matter their religion or appearance. "I stand in celebration of our common humanity and dedication to peace and justice for all," he said. In this month of reflection, one cannot forget the millions of lives that have



been displaced by conflict and struggle, across the world and in own backyards, he said.

"Far too many Muslims Ramadan from the comfort ... (More on P4)...(18)

Syrian and Russian Aircraft Step Up Bombing of Aleppo City: Monitor

AMMAN - Nearly 50 strikes hit rebel-held areas in and around the Syrian city of Aleppo on Sunday in some of the heaviest recent raids by Russian and Syrian government aircraft, residents and a monitor said. For their part, rebels hit government-held areas of Aleppo in what Syrian media said was an escalation in mortar attacks on the western districts. Aleppo, the country's



largest city before the war, has been divided for years between rebel and

government-held zones. It has seen many deadly bombardments that have

all but destroyed a February ceasefire agreement. Full ... (More on P4)...(19)

US Must take Concrete, Objective Steps on JCPOA: Iran FM

TEHRAN - Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif says the US should take more objective steps to guarantee international banking transactions with Iran under last year's nuclear agreement between Tehran and the P5+1 group of countries.

"In our view, the first step toward facilitating banking transactions has been taken, but the Americans must now resolutely and

seriously take objective steps [in this regard]," Zarif said in a meeting with Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian in Tehran on Sunday. He added that Iran is closely monitoring all the outcomes of the process. Iran and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council - the United States, France, Britain, China and Russia - plus Germany started ... (More on P4)...(20)

Iran, Austria must Counter Financing for Terrorism

TEHRAN - Iranian Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Ali Tayyeb-Nia says Iran and Austria need to enhance cooperation in the banking sector and work toward stopping the flow of financial aid to terrorists. In a meeting with Austrian Finance Minister Hans-Joerg Schelling in Vienna on Saturday, Tayyeb-Nia outlined Iran's steps to achieve economic development. He also discussed measures taken by Iran through legal channels to obstruct money laundering as well as the delivery of financial aid to terrorists, and called for the expansion of bilateral cooperation in such areas. Tayyeb-Nia proposed forming a special com-



mittee by Tehran and Vienna to accelerate the implementation of agreements reached between the two sides, removing certain problems caused as a result of international sanctions against Iran and helping Austrian companies in promoting cooperation with Tehran in the near future. Schell-

ing, for his part, welcomed the proposal and described it as an important measure to enhance economic cooperation between Tehran and Vienna. The Austrian minister also expressed his country's readiness to boost banking cooperation with Iran. ... (More on P4)...(21)

Kerry Discusses Ties with Mongolian Officials in Brief Visit

ULAN BATOR - U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry paid a brief official visit to Mongolia on Sunday, and the two sides discussed bilateral political and economic relations.

During the visit, Kerry held separate talks with Foreign Minister Lundeg Purevsuren and President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj. Purevsuren said although political and defense relations between the two countries are developing rapidly, economic cooperation lags behind, adding that there are opportunities for the two countries to cooperate in agriculture and the renewable energy sector.



Kerry said concrete measures should be taken to improve the two countries' economic cooperation. Purevsuren also asked the U.S. government to ease visa requirements for Mongolian citizens to visit the United States. Meeting Kerry at his residence, Elbegdorj said he

hopes the visit would further promote the cooperative relations between the two nations. According to official statistics, last year Mongolia's exports to the United States stood just above 18 million U.S. dollars in comparison with the import volume of 154 million. (Xinhua)

Nearly 60% of Qatar Population Live in 'Labour Camps'

DOHA - Almost 60 percent of Qatar's 2.4 million population live in what the government calls "labour camps", figures from an April 2015 census showed Sunday, highlighting the issue of the emirate's huge migrant workforce. The figures from the Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics (MDPS) revealed that 1.4 million people live in what the department officially designates as "labour camps". At the time of the survey, the official population was 2.4 million. That works out at just over 58 percent of the country's population. The overwhelming majority - 1.34 million - were male, the statistics found. Since the census, Qatar's population has grown further to just over 2.5 million. The accommodation of migrant labourers working on Qatar's numerous infrastructure projects has long been a contentious issue. Qatar, which will host the football World Cup in 2022, has been condemned by human rights groups, including Amnesty International, for providing "squalid and cramped accommodation" for its large migrant workforce. Last week, 11 people were killed and 12 injured when a fire ripped through a camp housing labourers working on a tourism project in the southwest of the country. Qatar has responded to the criticism by building new workers' housing complexes, including the \$825 million "Labour City" south of the ... (More on P4)...(24)

Turkish Warplanes Hits PKK Targets in Turkey, Iraq

ANKARA - Turkish warplanes hit the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) positions in southeastern Turkey and Northern Iraq, military sources said Sunday. Airstrikes killed at least 20 militants in the Yuksekova district, southeastern Hakkari province and destroyed several PKK positions in the Lice district of Diyarbakir province on Saturday, according to the sources.

In another operation in Northern Iraq, Turkish air force pounded PKK bases in the Avasin, Qandil and Gara areas. On Friday, air attacks killed 20 PKK op-



eratives in Hakkari's Semdinli district, the source added. Hakkari lies in Turkey's far southeast, bordered by Iraq and Iran. In neighboring province Sirnak, a PKK member was killed and a village guard wounded in fighting late Saturday. The

guard died in hospital Sunday. Turkey's military operation against the PKK intensified since last summer when the group declared an end to cease-fire with government and resumed attacks on security forces. ... (More on P4)...(22)

Saudi-Led Coalition Rejects UN Blacklisting Over Yemen

RIYADH - The Saudi-led coalition fighting Shiite rebels in Yemen rejected on Sunday a UN report that placed it on an annual blacklist over the deaths of hundreds of children in air strikes.

"The report is imbalanced and does not rely on credible statistics, nor does it serve the Yemeni people," coalition spokesman Brigadier General Ahmed Assiri told the official Saudi Press Agency. "It misleads the public with incorrect numbers and mostly relies on information from sources associated with the Huthi militia and the deposed (former Yemeni president Ali Abdullah) Saleh," he said. The report, released on Thursday by the office of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, said 785 children had been killed and 1,168 injured in Yemen last year, blaming the Saudi-led coalition for 60 percent of the toll. It blacklisted both the coalition and rebel forces for a "very large ... (More on P4)...(23)

WB approves \$213 Mln for Bangladesh Weather, Education Projects

DHAKA - The World Bank (WB) has approved 213 million U.S. dollars for two projects in Bangladesh to improve weather and climate information services and to strengthen college education provided through affiliates of the National University.

According to a statement of the bank received here on Sunday, the 113 million dollars Weather and Climate Services Regional Project will help Bangladesh provide reliable weather, water and climate forecasts and enable communities, especially farmers, to access weather information services easily. It said the 100 million dollars College Education Development Project will help improve the teaching and ... (More on P4)...(25)

Indian PM Visits Qatar to Talk Gas Supply, Workers' Rights

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates - India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi is paying his first official visit to gas-rich Qatar, where he met the Gulf country's leaders on Sunday to discuss economic ties. Qatar is one of the world's largest suppliers of liquefied natural gas. Qatari media says it supplies India with more than 85 percent of its gas needs. The Indian Embassy says bilateral trade reached \$15.7 billion in 2014-2015,



though just around \$1 billion of that constituted Indian exports to Qatar. Since 2010, India has been purchasing 7.5 million tons of LNG every year from Qatar. Modi and Qatar's ruler, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, who

visited India in March 2015, signed seven agreements to strengthen ties, according to the official Twitter account of India's Foreign Ministry spokesman, Vikas Swarup. Modi also met ... (More on P4)...(26)

Neighbor News

US Report Won't affect Iran's Support for Regional Nations: Official

TEHRAN - A senior Iranian official has criticized a recent US report which branded Tehran as a "sponsor of terrorism," saying the designation will not affect Iran's support for regional countries. Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ali Shamkhani made the remarks on Sunday in reaction to the US State Department's global terrorism report published on June 3. The report claimed that Iran was the top "state sponsor of terrorism" and labeled the Takfiri Daesh terrorist group as "the greatest threat globally."

Iran's policy of defending regional nations," he added. Daesh is wreaking havoc in Iraq and Syria with a number of Western countries and their regional allies believed to be supporting the militants fighting the government forces in the two Arab countries. On Sunday, the commander of the Iranian Army's Ground Force said the country's strategy is to dismantle Daesh outside national borders. Brigadier General Ahmad-Reza Pourdestan said Daesh has been created by those promoting Islamophobia. Takfiri terrorist groups, the commander said, are backed by the US and its allies, and are being used as tools to foment sectarian conflicts. The general said the US is seeking to get Iran involved in a sectarian war, adding armed forces should do their best to counter such plots. (Presstv)

Pakistan, US Negotiating New Mechanism for CSF Amount

ISLAMABAD - With expectation of receiving Rs170.7 billion from US on account of Coalition Support Fund (CSF) in the budget 2016-17, Pakistan and US are currently negotiating new mechanism for reimbursement of incurred expenditures in ongoing fight against militants continuously undertaken by Pakistan Army after expiry of existing mechanism from October this year. Pakistan is also asking US to provide F-16 planes as promised by Washington as Islamabad is insisting upon US authorities to fulfill their commitments on this front.

ple of reporters when asked him in this regard after post budget press conference here on Saturday. However, the minister declined to offer any further comments when asked more questions on this subject. However, the top official sources claimed that Pakistan's funding under CSF would be safe till June 2017 because US legislation forums considered and approved \$900 million for their next budget starting from October 1, 2016. When asked about remaining amount to receive inflows of \$1.66 billion for materialising total budgeting amount of Rs170 billion, the official said that there were pending amounts under CSF head and total obligated amount would enable Islamabad to receive its anticipated receipts without any shortfall. The CSF is amount which incurred by Pakistan Army to flush out militants in different parts of the country and then reconciled bills were dispatched to US which were paid back after lapse of several months. On average, Pakistan had received around \$1 billion as CSF reimbursement since 2002-3 ... (More on P4)...(27)

China-South Korea International Fair Delayed 'Due to Concern Over Security'

LIAONING - The China-South Korea International Fair of 2016, hosted by the Dandong in Northeast China's Liaoning Province, was "delayed" due to potential security risks, an employee of the organizing company told the Global Times on Sunday when contacted by telephone. The exhibition hall has been closed to remove the security issue, the person said, noting that most media organizations and participating companies had been informed. The 5-day international fair was originally scheduled to begin on Thursday. And accurate informa-

tion will be disclosed this week. The organizers invited 43 South Korean enterprises and 122 booths were reserved for South Korean companies, information on the Dandong government's website shows. Dandong Mayor Shi Jian urged relevant departments to "do their best" to make the event "a big success," according to the government website. On Friday, Yonhap News Agency cited various information sources and reported that the event was "cancelled" by the Dandong government. (Monitoring Desk)