

Hillary Clinton Appeals to Rival's Backers after Claiming Party Nomination

WASHINGTON - Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton on Tuesday appealed to rival Bernie Sanders' supporters for party unity after declaring herself the first woman to be nominated by a major U.S. political party.

"Let there be no mistake: Senator Sanders, his campaign and the vigorous debate that we've had about how to raise income, reduce inequality, increase upward mobility, have been very good

for the Democratic Party and for America," said Clinton at a rally in New York.

"It never feels good to put our heart into a cause or a candidate you believe in and come up short. I know that feeling well," said Clinton in an attempt to connect with Sanders' supporters using her loss in 2008 primary race to Barack Obama.

"But as we look ahead to the battle that awaits, let's remember all that unites us," she added.



Clinton hit the 2,383-delegate threshold to clinch the nomination on Monday night according to a survey by the Associated Press which showed that Clinton had garnered ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

Turkey President approves Bill Lifting Immunity for Lawmakers

ANKARA - Turkish President Recep Erdogan approved a bill which will lift lawmakers' immunity from prosecution, the press center of Presidential office said on Wednesday. The Turkish president approved the amendment on Turkish Constitution about the first paragraph of Article 89 and the A part of the second paragraph of the Article 104, the statement said. The Turkish parliament



ment approved the controversial constitutional amendment which would lift immunity of dozens of lawmakers against being prosecuted on May 20, and sent it to President Erdogan. The ...*(More on P4)...(21)*

Death Toll of France's Flood Reaches Five: Officials

PARIS - Heavy flood, which struck the French capital and central regions last week, have left five victims and injured many others, government officials said on Wednesday. In a note presented at a cabinet meeting, Prime Minister Manuel Valls and Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said the death toll of flood increased to five and 24 people were injured. The flood caused by torrential and prolonged rainfalls had caused "important damage" of infrastructure, agriculture activity and private properties that could cost the state "hundreds of millions of euros". Natural disaster was declared in 782 villages in 16 departments, they said, adding flash flood also prompted the creation of an emergency fund aimed to help the most affected people in the stricken zones. The fund would be managed by prefects in cooperation with local social services offices in concerned departments. (Xinhua)

Neighbor News

Iran Hosts Trilateral Meeting with Russia, Syria on Defense Cooperation

TEHRAN - Defense ministers of Iran, Russia and Syria will convene in Tehran on Thursday to explore the ways for further defense cooperation, semi-official Mehr news agency reported on Wednesday.

Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu and Syrian Defense Minister Fahd Jassem al-Frej will attend the trilateral meeting at the official invitation of their Iranian counterpart Brig. Gen. Hossein Dehqan.

The meeting is aimed at exchanging views on the latest regional developments and the ways to strengthen the fight against terrorism, according to the report.

The Islamic republic, along with Russia, have emerged as the major allies of the Syrian government in its struggle against the militant groups who are seeking the overthrow of the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's government. Since 2011, when the Syrian civil war began, more than 250,000 Syrians have been killed and millions of the Syrians have been displaced from their homes. (Xinhua)

Russian Defense Minister Visits Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan

MOSCOW - Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu is traveling to Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan this week to talk terrorism and regional security. It's not clear whether the visit was planned ahead or a reaction to recent flashes of violence in Kazakhstan and along the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan border, but the trip nonetheless underscores the extent of Russia's security interests in Central Asia.

Shoigu's first stop, according to Sputnik, was in Astana to meet with Imangali Tasmagambetov, the Kazakh defense minister. On Sunday, an unidentified group of men robbed a pair of gun stores and then stole a commuter bus, which they then rammed into the gates of a National Guard base (after unloading the driver and passengers) in the northwestern city of Ak-tobe. The latest reports say at least 19 people were killed: 13 attackers, three civilians, and three National Guard servicemen.

Monday, TASS published comments from Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov regarding the incident in Ak-tobe. "First, the situation is controlled by Kazakhstan's security forces rather efficiently. And there is hardly a reason for any reinforcement [in Russia close to border with Kazakhstan]," Peskov said (note, the bracketed clarification was included in the TASS quote). He went on to say, "No doubt, this is an absolutely internal affair of Kazakhstan." Since the Ukraine crisis erupted, in particular the Russian annexation of Crimea in March 2014, there has been ...*(More on P4)...(27)*

UN Chief Hails U.S.-Indian Joint Statement on Climate Change

UNITED NATIONS - UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Tuesday welcomed a joint statement by U.S. and Indian leaders to announce their support for the Paris Agreement to enter into force early.

Ban "is further encouraged by the resolve of India and the United States to pursue low greenhouse gas emission development strategies and successful outcomes this year to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the Montreal Protocol, the International Civil Aviation Organization Assembly, and the G20," according to a statement issued by the secretary-general's spokesman.

Early on Tuesday, U.S.



President Barack Obama and visiting Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi discussed climate change, nuclear energy and economic cooperation during a meeting at the White House. "The United States and India recognize the urgency of the threat of climate change and are

therefore committed to bringing the Paris Agreement into force as quickly as possible," said a statement issued by the White House after Obama and Modi's meeting. The two nations' joint announcement, which follows the historic signing ceremony on April 22 for ...*(More on P4)...(22)*

US Lawmakers' Visa Request is a Publicity Stunt: Iran's Foreign Ministry

TEHRAN - The Iranian Foreign Ministry has issued a response to the visa requests of three US Republican lawmakers who had wanted to travel to Iran to monitor Tehran's compliance with last year's historic nuclear agreement.

"In sum, we consider your visa request to have been a publicity stunt and not an appropriate request to visit a sovereign country; and it has, and will continue to be, treated in that spirit," said a letter published by the office of Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on Tuesday.

In February, three US lawmakers, Mike



Pompeo, Lee Zeldin, and Frank LoBiondo, requested to visit Iran in order to inspect its nuclear sites. All three were vigorous opponents of the nuclear deal. "Despite what you seem to presume, mem-

bers of the US Congress do not get to dictate the policies of other countries. This clearly applies to Iranian visa policies. Bear in mind that as members of the US Congress you are not a global authority." The ...*(More on P4)...(23)*

Iraqi Security Forces Kill 45 IS Militants in Clashes in Mosul

MOSUL, Iraq - Iraqi security forces repelled Islamic State (IS) militant attacks against military posts in villages south of the IS-held city of Mosul, a military spokesperson said.

Mosul is the capital of Iraq's northern province of Nineveh. The attacks left at least 45 IS militants killed, said the spokesperson.

Dozens of IS militants, including suicide bombers and cars laden with bombs, attacked Iraqi army posts Tuesday in a cluster of villages near the militant-seized town of Qayyara, 50 km south of Mosul.

However, security forces and allied paramilitary Sunni tribal units repelled the IS attacks, said Brigadier General Firas Sabri, spokesperson of Liberation of Nineveh Operations Command.

"Our troops, backed by the U.S.-led coalition aircraft and heavy artillery shelling, battled the terrorists' attack following several hours of fierce clashes," Sabri told Xinhua.

The clashes resumed at dawn on Wednesday when the IS attacked military posts near the village of al-Naser in northeast Qayyara, with troops once more repelling the attacks, Sabri added.

The clashes resulted in the death of at least 45 IS militants, including three suicide bombers, the destruction of two cars laden with bombs as well as three IS vehicles carrying heavy machine guns, Sabri said, adding that five soldiers were ...*(More on P4)...(24)*

Havana Inaugurated as one of "Seven Wonder Cities"

HAVANA - Havana on Tuesday was officially inaugurated as one of the world's seven wonder cities by the Swiss foundation New7Wonders.

In steady rain, a monument and memorial plaque were unveiled at the entrance of Havana Bay in recognition of the city's efforts to preserve its historical sites.

The Caribbean city has experienced a tourist boom over the past two years, and the new status is widely expected to add steam to the trend.

Havana, the largest Cuban city known for its old architecture and beach scenes, was named a wonder city in 2014 out of a global poll arranged by New7Wonders.

"The Cuban people, the expats, lovers of this city



and tourists who love Cuba and Havana are those who voted very strongly," Bernard Weber, president and founder of the Swiss organization, told Xinhua. The other six cities are La Paz (Bolivia), Doha (Qatar), Durban (South Africa), Beirut (Lebanon), Vigan (the Philippines) and Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia). "We knew and had a deep conviction that the city is wonderful, but for other people to see it that way and reach consensus to consider it as such is really very important," said Eusebio Leal, a historian of the city. Leal, who leads the architectural and patrimonial conservation of the city's Old Town, said the award was a recognition of those who have worked hard to revitalize Havana's center. ...*(More on P4)...(25)*

3 Killed, 30 Wounded in Car Bomb Attack in SE Turkey

ANKARA - One police officer and two civilians were killed and around 30 wounded in a car bomb attack at police headquarters of Midyat district in southeastern province of Mardin on Wednesday, Turkish Prime Minister Binali Yildirim said.

The Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) was behind

the attack, Yildirim added. Many ambulances and security reinforcements were sent to the scene after the attack. The bomb-laden car, which arrived in Midyat from southeastern province of Batman carrying 500 kg of explosives, sought to enter the headquarters, but was stopped by the police. The

car exploded when police opened fire, Dogan News Agency reported. Some nearby buildings were also damaged in the blast. It was the second car bomb attack in two days in Turkey. On Tuesday, seven police and four civilians were killed in a bomb attack in central Istanbul. (Xinhua)

Iraqi Forces Push Further into Besieged City of Fallujah

FALLUJAH - Iraqi security forces on Wednesday pushed farther into the besieged city of Fallujah and seized part of a district in the city after fierce clashes with Islamic State (IS) militants, a military statement and a security source said.

"The counterterrorism forces have recaptured al-Shuhada district in south of Fallujah and raised the Iraqi flag over some buildings, as the troops' advance is continuing in the district," the statement said without elaboration.

A security source told Xinhua that the troops made a new progress in the morning when dozens of Humvees and armored vehicles entered part of al-Shuhada district in southern Fallujah, some 50 km west of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, amid fierce clashes with IS militants and air strikes of U.S.-led coalition aircraft.

The troops raised the Iraqi flags on some houses scattered on southern part of the district while artillery, mortar rounds and rockets were pounding deep into the district to clear the way for the troops to achieve further advance, the source said on condition of anonymity.

The latest advance came four days after the troops made another progress when they pushed into the adjacent district of al-Nuaimia and captured part of it.

The troops' push into Fallujah was slowed down during the past few days by heavy resistance from IS inside the city, in addition to hundreds of hidden bombs are believed to be planted by the militants.

The security forces also wanted to avoid heavy casualties among tens of thousands of civilians who are reportedly trapped inside Fallujah. Earlier, Brig. Gen. Yahya Rasoul, spokesman for the Joint Military Command, said that about 50,000 to 70,000 civilians are expected to remain in Fallujah.

Early in the month, the UN children fund warned that at least 20,000 Iraqi children remain trapped in the city of Fallujah where Iraqi security forces are fighting to drive out ...*(More on P4)...(26)*

Chinese Gov't Pledges Comprehensive Health Platform

BEIJING - The Chinese government will build a health and medical data platform across the country to better meet the growing demand for health and medical services.

The decision was made at this week's State Council executive meeting on Wednesday, chaired by Premier Li Keqiang.

"Enhancing the development of medical big data is a pressing task now. It is also an important project for public welfare, in the context of the growing need for health and medical services," Li said. "This goes hand in hand with the development of the country's new economy."

He mentioned that the big data platform is developing quite rapidly in the medical industry in some parts of China, referring to his recent trip to China's Guizhou Province.

Beijing plans to make medical and health data application part of the country's national big data strategy. The country-wide personal health information platform will be better connected with provincial and lower-level platforms.

Also, more efforts will be made to build a health information platform at different levels as well as to collect medical data, which will require efforts from multiple ...*(More on P4)...(28)*

Muslims must Shun Rifts, Close Ranks: Larijani

TEHRAN - Iranian parliament speaker Ali Larijani says all Muslim countries should strengthen their unity and solidarity, avoid rifts and fight terrorism.

"I strongly believe that seeing off the current difficult, complex and unfortunate crises in the Muslim world and achieving stability, security and sustainable peace depend on consolidating cooperation, coherence and solidarity among Muslim countries based on mutual understanding and respect," Larijani said on Tuesday.

The Iranian parliament speaker made the remarks in a message to his counterparts from Muslim states on the occasion of the beginning of the holy fasting month of Ramadan.

"The strategic interests of all Muslim countries hinge on the fight against insecurity, extremist Takfiri dogma, terrorist groups and avoidance of any kind of discord and division," he added.

Larijani described the holy month of Ramadan as a "great opportunity" for Muslims of any denomination and nationality to bolster solidarity, brotherhood and unity and shed all non-Islamic prejudice.

He said the Iranian parliament's diplomacy is based on strengthening close cooperation with parliaments of Muslim countries and building convergence among ...*(More on P4)...(29)*