

Obama is 'Fired Up' for Clinton As Democrats Seek to Unify Party

WASHINGTON - U.S. President Barack Obama formally endorsed Hillary Clinton's White House bid on Thursday and called for Democrats to unite behind her after a protracted battle with Bernie Sanders for the party nomination. U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts also backed Clinton on Thursday, telling MSNBC's "The Rachel Maddow Show" that presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump was "a genuine threat to the country." Clinton, the presumptive Democratic nominee, said it "means



the world" to her that Obama had her back in

a bruising campaign for the Nov. 8 election. Clinton also said she had the

"highest regard" for Warren, a fiery critic of Wall Street, and was "really

pleased to have her good ideas and support."

Vice President Joe Biden also waded into the campaign on Thursday. "Whoever the next president is, and God willing in my view it will be Secretary Clinton," Biden said in a speech at the American Constitution Society in Washington.

The Obama endorsement increases pressure on Sanders, a U.S. senator from Vermont, to bow out of the race and lend his support to Clinton so that the party can focus on defeating Trump. "It...(More on P4)...(26)

Russia Cuts Key Interest Rate First Time in 10 Months

MOSCOW - The Russian Central Bank on Friday lowered its key interest rate by 0.5 percent to 10.5 percent in a first rate cut since August 2015, citing stable inflation and imminent economic recovery. The bank said in a statement that it would consider the possibility of a further rate cut based on "estimates for inflation risks and the alignment of inflation decline with the forecast trajectory." The bank noted that Russia's annual inflation

stabilized at 7.3 percent in April, while monthly inflation in seasonally adjusted terms was about 5 percent, particularly due to a more favorable than expected global commodity markets. The improved economic situation allowed the bank to cut its inflation forecast for the end of 2016, to 5-6 percent, the statement added. Taking into account the decision just made and the retention of a moderately...(More on P4)...(27)

No Peace in Mideast without Iran: French Speaker

TEHRAN - French Parliament Speaker Claude Bartolone says the Middle East will see no lasting peace without Iran's participation. Bartolone made the remarks on Thursday in a phone conversation with Ali Larijani to congratulate him on his re-election as the Iranian parliament speaker. "I believe the most important issue today is the fight on terrorism which Iran should play its role in this regard," the French

speaker said. "Without Iran, the region will not witness a lasting peace," he added, according to Iran's state news agency IRNA. Iran is helping Syrian and Iraqi governments drive out foreign-backed terrorists from the two Arab countries. The Islamic Republic is one of the key partners to Syria peace talks which are currently suspended after a Saudi-led delegation abandoned the negotiations in Geneva.



Bilateral ties Bartolone said he will visit Tehran in "the near future," adding there are important issues for consultation between Iranian and French officials. Hassan Rouhani visited Paris in January, part of the...(More on P4)...(28)

German Gov't Expects Economic Growth to Slow in Q2

BERLIN - The German economy would slow down its growth in the second quarter of 2016 despite a positive kickoff as construction recovery was subdued and foreign trade environment remained difficult, said the Economy Ministry on Friday. Europe's biggest economy had a decent start into the second quarter, said the ministry in its monthly report. In April, industrial output increased by 0.8 percent month on month. Jobless rate fell to a new record low. The ministry

said private consumption would slow down its growth as the good situation in the labor market and the low inflation continued to boost consumer demand. However, the spring recovery in construction sector would be subdued after a mild winter and the external environment for the German economy remained tough. "After a positive start to 2016, growth in the German economy in the second quarter is expected to slow,"...(More on P4)...(29)

Over 1,000 more Mediterranean Migrant Deaths this Year: IOM

GENEVA - Some 2,856 migrants and refugees have drowned this year crossing the Mediterranean Sea to reach Europe, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) indicated on Friday. This figure stands at over 1,000 more fatalities compared to 2015's mid-year total, when 1,838 deaths were recorded through the first six months of the year. While the death toll is substantially higher this year, many more migrants have reached European shores in 2016 compared to a year



ago. IOM statistics show that 207,260 migrants have landed in Europe since January, up from 146,083 arrivals registered between Jan. 1 and June 30 last year.

Most of this year's arrivals have entered Europe via Greek islands, where 157,119 migrants hailing mainly from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq have been documented. A further 48,761 migrants have reached Italy with the remaining 1,352 and 28 reaching Spain and Cyprus respectively. (Xinhua)

Turkey Says Airstrike Kill at Least 8 Terrorists in Hakkari Province

ANKARA - Turkish General Staff said Friday that an airstrike has killed at least eight terrorists in southeastern Turkish province of Hakkari. In an official statement, it said the army detected these terrorists in Daglica district of Hakkari and dispatched warplanes to wipe out the targets. Two village guards were killed Thursday in Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) militants attack in Semdinli district of Hakkari province, sources told Anadolu Agency. Also on Thursday, three suicide vests with plastic explosives were seized at road side in the Tarsus district of the southern province of Mersin. The country has recently seen a string of suicide bomb attacks on police targets. Six people were killed, including three police officers, and around 30 others were wounded in a car bomb attack against the police headquarters in Midyat district of Mardin on Wednesday. A day later, another car bomb strike killed 11 people in central Istanbul. The PKK and the Kurdistan Freedom Hawks (TAK), a splinter group of the PKK claimed responsibility for the two attacks. (Xinhua)

Medical Units now Viewed by Many in Syria as Danger Zones: UN Rapporteur

GENEVA - A UN rights expert on Friday warned that medical units were being viewed by many in Syria as areas of great danger with civilians choosing not to go near them due to fear for their safety. The UN Special Rapporteur on the right to health, Dainius Puras on Friday condemned the direct targeting and continued damage and destruction of medical units in the ongoing war in Syria. According to the expert, from the beginning of May 2016, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has documented incidents



involving at least eight medical units in Syria at which dozens of civilians were killed and injured. He added that just this week, on June 8, several attacks on medical units took place in the city of Aleppo, killing at least 15 civilians. "The sheer

number of such facilities being hit, as well as information relating to some of the incidents, suggests that some hospitals and other medical facilities may have been directly targeted," he noted. The latest UN figures show...(More on P4)...(30)

Thanks Giving Service Starts British Queen's 90th Birthday Celebration

LONDON - British Queen Elizabeth II attended a national service of thanksgiving Friday at St Paul's Cathedral in London, at the start of a three-day celebration to mark her 90th birthday. The Queen, accompanied with the Duke of Edinburgh, arrived at St Paul's and waved to well-wishers on the steps before they went in. The Duke of Edinburgh is also celebrating his 95th birthday today. More than 50 Royal Family members, including the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall, the Duke and Duchess of

Cambridge and Prince Harry, and political figures including Prime Minister David Cameron and his wife Samantha, Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne and Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, attended the service. David Ison, the Dean of St Paul's and Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury praised the Queen's work and reign to the country, and thanked her and Prince Philip's contribution to Britain and to the Commonwealth. Local media said more than 2,000 people attended the...(More on P4)...(31)

Kurdish Group Claims Istanbul Bomb Attack

ISTANBUL - A Kurdish group on Friday claimed responsibility for a car bomb attack that killed 11 people in central Istanbul on Tuesday, Turkish media reported. The Kurdistan Freedom Hawks (TAK), a Kurdish militant group linked to the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), announced on Twitter that it carried out the attack. A bomb-laden car was exploded in the morning rush hour on Tuesday as a riot police shuttle bus passed by in the neighborhood of Vezneciler in Istanbul's Fatih district, killing 11, including six police officers and injuring 36 others.

The TAK had previously claimed three suicide bombing attacks that hit Turkey's capital Ankara in February and March respectively and the northwestern city of Bursa in May. Turkish security forces and the PKK, which is branded as a terrorist organization by Turkey, the United States and the European Union, resumed fighting in July last year in the country's southeast, ending a peace process that had lasted for more than two years. On Thursday, the PKK claimed the car bomb attack that hit Turkey's southeastern province of Mardin on Wednesday and killed six. (Xinhua)

3 Killed in Small Plane Crash in Houston

HOUSTON - Three people were killed on Thursday afternoon when a small plane crashed near Houston's Hobby Airport. According to local TV station ABC13, the plane, a fixed wing single-engine one made by the Cirrus Design Group, crashed in the parking lot of a store, destroying a sedan, but no one on the ground was injured. Three people on board were dead in the crash. A witness said that it sounded like a "loud boom" when the plane, a Model - SR20, hit the ground. The area near the accident has been sealed off and the cause of the crash is under investigation. (Xinhua)

Nieghbor News

U.S. top Officials due in Pakistan amid Growing Mistrust

ISLAMABAD - A team of senior U.S. officials are scheduled to arrive in Pakistan on Friday for key talks at a time when a recent American drone strike in the sensitive Balochistan province has badly affected bilateral relations, officials said. The Obama endorsement increases pressure on Sanders, a U.S. senator from Vermont, to bow out of the race and lend his support to Clinton so that the party can focus on defeating Trump. "It...(More on P4)...(26)

mined the diplomatic efforts for peace process in Afghanistan. Official sources say that the U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard Olson and Senior Director for South Asian Affairs at the National Security Council Peter Lavoy are among the U.S. officials who will hold talks with senior Pakistani civil and military leaders. Both sides will hold talks later on Friday, Sartaj Aziz said. "Pakistan would record its protest over the drone strike in Balochistan during today's meeting...(More on P4)...(32)

Chinese Rescue Team Set Up 446 Tents for Sri Lankan Disaster Area

COLOMBO - One Chinese rescue team constructed 16 settlements for Sri Lankan during their 9-day-visit here to help local people affected by serious floods and landslides, an official of Chinese Red Cross relief and rescue team said here on Friday. After constructing 16 makeshift shelters with 446 tents in Kagalla and Dehiowita, the most serious landslide-affected by the recent flood and landslide, the rescue team fled back to China on early Friday morning, Mr. Yang Xusheng, the leader of Chinese Red Cross relief and rescue team told Xinhua. Heavy rain followed by floods and landslides in

Sri Lanka two weeks ago killed about 100 people with many more still missing. Over 500,000 people have been affected by the adverse weather. The international community including China has offered relief supplies and money assistance to Sri Lanka. Besides 1.5 million U.S. dollars of cash donation, China further handed over 1,000 tents and 3,000 folding beds to Sri Lanka for construction of settlements. The rescue team came with this batch of relief supplies to assist Sri Lanka in training soldiers on constructing settlements and setting up tents. The...(More on P4)...(35)

'Iran, Russia, Syria Resolute in Fighting Terror'

TEHRAN - Iran's top security chief says a trilateral meeting of defense ministers in Tehran indicates that Russia, Syria and Iran are determined in countering Takfiri terrorists. Secretary of Supreme National Security Council Ali Shamkhani met separately with Russian and Syrian Defense Ministers Sergei Shoigu and Fahad Jassem Freij in Tehran on Thursday. Shamkhani thanked "the courageous actions and policies of Russian President (Vladimir Putin) and his effective support in the comprehensive fight against terrorism in Syria."

The Iranian official said the way the US and its Western allies are dealing with the Syria conflict demonstrates their deep commitment to Israel's security and interests in the region. Shoigu said fighting terrorism is an international duty which all countries should work together to fulfill in order to have a more secure world. Shamkhani said the three countries, besides boosting their military coordination in their fight on Takfiri terrorists, will be "activating political capacities more than before to achieve an...(More on P4)...(33)

Turkmenistan Seeks Military Assistance from Russia to Preserve Border Security

ASHGABAT - Russian media announced that Moscow would provide financial assistance and weapons to Turkmenistan forces, according to EurasiaNet. Turkmenistan has remained neutral, but authorities grow increasingly worried over the growing instability in neighboring Afghanistan. President Gurbanguly Berdimukhamedov stated that he intends to upgrade the military and improve soldier training. Turkmenistan's outreach to Russia is a surprising move when considering the country's staunch resistance to foreign

military aid of any kind. Turkmenistan shares a tumultuous history with Russia that remains fresh on the minds of many Turkmen. Ashgabat is an isolationist in its geopolitical stance, but has sent mixed signals to the world regarding its independence. In the past, officials asked the U.S. for border assistance in order to combat the Taliban, but later refused American help. Further, Russia offered border security for Turkmenistan in early 2016, but Turkmen leaders refused the offer. The...(More on P4)...(34)