

Obama Legacy: One Million Green Cards to Migrants from Muslim-Majority Nations

The administration of President Barack Obama will have issued more than one million green cards to migrants from majority-Muslim countries by the end of the president's tenure, according to a report. The Senate Subcommittee on Immigration and the National Interest on June 17 reported that, in the first six fiscal years of Obama's presidency (FY2009 - FY2014), his administration issued 832,014 green cards to migrants from majority-Muslim countries, led by Pakistan (102,000), Iraq (102,000), Bangladesh (90,000), Iran (85,000), Egypt (56,000),



and Somalia (37,000). That total does not include migrants on temporary,

non-immigrant visas — temporarily for work, study and tourism. The Senate subcommittee also

their visas.

CIA Director John Brennan on June 16 warned that Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) is preparing more attacks, including by infiltrating refugees into Western nations.

"We judge that ISIL is training and attempting to deploy operatives for further attacks," he said. "ISIL has a large cadre of Western fighters who could potentially serve as operatives for attacks in the West. And the group is probably exploring a variety of means for infiltrating operatives into the West, including refugee ... (More on P4)...(25)

Syrian Army Advances into IS De Facto Capital

DAMASCUS - The Syrian army continued its advance into the northern province of Al-Raqqa, the de facto capital of the Islamic State (IS), a military source told Xinhua. On Sunday, government forces captured the Al-Thawra oilfield and stormed into housing units in western Al-Raqqa after battling IS militants, the source said on condition of anonymity. Military forces are now merely 10 km from the Al-Tabaqa airbase, locat-

ed in a town of the same name west of Al-Raqqa, the source added. On June 4, the Syrian army entered Al-Raqqa's administrative borders, days after unleashing a widescale offensive against the route between the town of Athriya in the central province of Hama, and the Al-Tabaqa town in Al-Raqqa countryside. Pan-Arab Al-Mayadeen TV said the aim of attacking Al-Raqqa is to recapture the town of Al-Tabaqa due to its strategic impor-



ance. The route would enable the Syrian army to sever key routes linking Al-Raqqa with the northern province of Aleppo,

where IS control some of the border towns near Turkey and from where it smuggles fighters and weapons. This ... (More on P4)...(26)

Suicide Bomber Kills 3 in Syria's Qamishli

DAMASCUS - At least three people were killed and five others wounded on Sunday when a suicide bomber detonated himself in Syria's northeastern city of Qamishli, state news SANA reported.

The bomber detonated his explosive belt in the al-Wastani neighborhood in the predominantly-Kurdish city of Qamishli in the northeastern province of Hasakah, said SANA. SANA spelled no further details about the bombing, but the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the bomber detonated

himself as the Patriarch of Antioch, Mor Ignatius Aphrem II, had just finished inaugurating a monument to commemorate the Armenian Genocide in the same neighborhood. The Observatory, which relies on a network of activists on ground, said several people were killed, spelling no details about the well-being of the patriarch.

No party has claimed responsibility, but the Islamic State (IS) group has a recorded history in carrying out bombings in ... (More on P4)...(27)

12 Killed in Lake Storm in Northwestern Russia

MOSCOW - Twelve people on a summer camp were found dead Sunday after being caught in a storm at Lake Syamozero a day earlier in the Republic of Karelia in northwestern Russia. "Eleven children and one adult died," said Vladimir Markin, a spokesman for the Russian Investigative Committee. A total of 47 children mostly aged from 12 to 14, and four adult instructors were on a lake voyage, when the boats turned over, the Tass news agency quoted Markin as saying. Local media reported that rescue workers are still

searching for the missing. The Karelia Republic has declared June 20 a day of mourning, while the Investigative Committee opened a criminal case and detained one of the instructors. Vice Chairperson of Russian lower parliament house, or State Duma, Sergey Zheleznyak urged efforts to check all children's vacation destinations. "The lack of due skills, non-professionalism, and sometimes negligence (of adults who take care of the children) result in tragedies like the one in Karelia," Zheleznyak added. (Xinhua)

Power Struggle between NATO and Russia on Rise

ISTANBUL - Fear of destabilization is growing as tension is brewing between Russia and the U.S.-led NATO, whose building-up in the Baltics and the Black Sea has incurred vowed retaliatory actions from Moscow. Last month, the United States launched a ballistic missile shield in Romania against an alleged threat from Iran or some so-called "rogue state" in the Middle East. For Russia, the shield is aimed at rendering its own missile capability

ineffective and part of efforts to encircle it. Moscow underlined that it would take protective measures against the system, as NATO is building another in Poland. NATO has decided to deploy four combat-ready battalions -- with each having around 4,000 troops -- in Poland and the Baltic countries fearing Russian aggression, namely Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia. The military alliance is also mulling an offer by Romania to command a



multinational brigade as a deterrent, said NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg in the past week. The global rivalry between the U.S. and Russia is perhaps at its all-time

high since the end of the Cold War," observed Cahit Armagan Dilek, a security and foreign policy analyst. Stoltenberg also stated that his organization ... (More on P4)...(28)

Russia Denies Bombing Syrian Rebels that Participated in Cease-Fire

MOSCOW - Russian Defense Ministry on Sunday said its air forces deployed in Syria didn't bomb the areas of Syrian opposition forces that participated in the cease-fire regime. "The target bombed was situated more than 300 kilometers away from the territories declared by the U.S. as positions of opposition forces participating in the cessation of hostilities agreement," said Major General Igor Konashenkov, a ministry spokesman. Konashenkov recalled that Washington claimed Russian air forces on June 16 struck Syrian opposition groups in southern Syria.



"The Russian Aerospace Force acted in the framework of the agreed procedures, having notified in advance members of the U.S.-led coalition about the ground targets for the strikes," Konashenkov

stressed. He added that the United States didn't inform Russia of the locations of opposition under its control, lamenting that no progress was made regarding ... (More on P4)...(29)

Qatar Talks Fail to Reconcile Divisive Palestinian Fatah and Hamas

GAZA - The reconciliation talks held in Qatar between Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah Party and Hamas has failed to end Palestinian internal division, a spokesman for the Islamic movement said Saturday. Sami Abu Zuhri said in

an emailed press statement that Fatah movement "is the one who toppled the reconciliation talks held in Doha after its delegation withdrew from the second session of the dialogue." "Fatah is responsible for the failure of the dialogue after it retreated from

what had been agreed upon in previous sessions held in Qatar over the past few weeks," said Abu Zuhri from Gaza. Over the past two days, two delegations, representing rival Hamas and Fatah, held two sessions of dialogue in Doha to end ... (More on P4)...(30)

US Presidential Election: Warren Attacks Trump As 'Racist Bully' in Scathing Speech

MASSACHUSETTS - Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren continued to fill the role as attack dog Saturday, as she tore into presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump calling him a "thin-skinned racist bully" who shouldn't be allowed anywhere near the White House. Warren blasted Trump on several hot button issues over the

course of her speech and even openly boasted that she "could really do this all day." "Every day we learn more about him, and every day it becomes clearer that he is just a small, insecure moneygrubber who doesn't care about anyone or anything that doesn't have the Trump name splashed all over it," Warren declared speaking

before hundreds of fellow Democrats in New Hampshire. Warren delivered her scathing speech at the state party's annual convention, riling up the crowd as the general election begins in earnest. Warren stayed focused on Trump, barely mentioning the Democratic Party or speaking about Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders. (Fox News)

India not Opposed to Pakistan's Membership of Nuclear Suppliers Group: Swaraj

ISLAMABAD - Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj while addressing a press conference on Sunday said India will not protest Pakistan's entry to the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). "We are not opposed to any country's entrance

into NSG based on merit, including Pakistan," Swaraj said, according to Indian media. Swaraj also clarified that China is not opposed to India's membership of the NSG, amid reports of Indian Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar's 'unan-

nounced' visit to China last week to woo Beijing's support for entry to the NSG. According to The Hindustan Times, Swaraj said China is only discussing the criteria procedure. "I am hopeful we will be able ... (More on P4)...(31)

Nieghbor News

Saudi King, Iranian President Telephones Nawaz, Inquires about His Health

ISLAMABAD - Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani on Sunday telephoned Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and inquired about his health and also prayed for his complete recovery. During the telephonic conversation, King Salman bin Abdulaziz said that special

prayer will be offered in Makkah for Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's recovery. On the other hand, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani had expressed happiness at successful surgery of the prime minister. The two leaders also discussed brotherly relations between the two countries. (INP)

Iran MPs Pledge 'Unforgettable' Response to Nuclear Deal Breach

TEHRAN - Iranian lawmakers have pledged an "unforgettable" response to any violation of a nuclear agreement after Leader of the Islamic Revolution said Tehran would "set fire" to the deal if the US reneged on it.

In a statement issued on Sunday, as many as 237 MPs announced their "firm" support for Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei's recent remarks in an apparent refrain to US presidential candidates' threat to tear up the deal.

"In case the opposite side breaks its promise, we will teach the violators an unforgettable lesson, and make the arrogance regret its breach of promise," the letter said.

Presumptive Republican candidate Donald Trump said last August it would be hard to "rip up" the deal, but if elected president he would "police that contract so tough they don't have a chance."

"The Islamic Republic won't be the first to violate the nuclear deal. Staying faithful to a promise is a Qur'anic order," Ayatollah Khamenei said earlier this week. "But if the threat from the American presidential candidates to tear up the deal becomes operational, then the Islamic Republic will set fire to the deal," the Leader added. Iranian officials say the US has not changed its hostile ways with Tehran despite the agreement. Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani said in April that Iran had its "own means to make them (Americans) regret" their actions. His remarks came after the US Supreme Court ruled that some \$2 billion in Iranian assets frozen in an American bank account should be turned over to the families of those killed in a series of attacks. (Presstv)

China-Uzbekistan Ties Continue to Thrive, Cooperation Fruitful: Chinese Ambassador

TASHKENT - Relations between China and Uzbekistan have kept developing in a sustainable and deep-going way while fruitful results have been achieved in bilateral cooperation in all fields over recent years, Chinese Ambassador to Uzbekistan Sun Lijie has said.

The Chinese and Uzbek peoples, as good friends, good partners and good brothers on the Silk Road, have jointly created a glorious history of the Silk Road, Sun said in a recent interview with Xinhua prior to Chinese President Xi Jinping's state visit to Uzbekistan on June 21-24.

Today, the two countries continue to jointly push forward economic exchange and mutual reference in civilizations between the East and the West and promote common development of mankind, with pragmatic cooperation as a basis, with cultural cooperation as a bond, and with joint construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt as an opportunity, he said. During Xi's upcoming visit to Uzbekistan, the leaders of the two countries will have in-depth

discussions on further development of China-Uzbekistan relations and cooperation, Sun said. He believed that Xi's visit will surely give a new impetus to the development of China-Uzbekistan ties and open a new chapter for friendly cooperation between the two countries.

The Chinese ambassador said that the pragmatic cooperation between the two countries has now embarked on a "fast track," driven by joint construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt and bilateral production capacity cooperation.

Bilateral trade between the two countries has kept increasing and has been diversified, and the two countries are highly complementary to each other in terms of resources and essential factors of production, Sun said. China is powerful in funding resources and has a well-developed manufacturing industry and strong production capacity, while Uzbekistan has rich natural resources, abundant labor and a strong desire for industrial upgrade, Sun said. ... (More on P4)...(32)

Turkish Border Guards Kill 8 Syrians

DAMASCUS - At least eight people were killed by Turkish forces while trying to flee toward Turkey near Syria's northwestern province of Idlib, a monitor group reported Sunday. Four children under 18 and two women were among those killed when they were fired at in the town of Khirbet al-Jous in Idlib countryside by the Turkish forces, said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. The Observatory said the slain people were civilians fleeing the war in Syria. The UK-based watchdog group said the recent deaths were documented in the last 24 hours, bringing the overall number of people killed by Turkish police while attempting to reach a sanctuary in Turkey to 60 since January this year.

The monitor group, which says it relies on a network of activists on ground, urged the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) to practice pressure on the Turkish government to open safe passages for the Syrian refugees "so that they don't become a prey for the human traffickers." According to UN estimates, Turkey's Syrian refugee population was more than 1.7 million as of mid-March 2015, and the large unregistered refugee population may mean the true figure is even larger. Turkey was the main conduit for the Syrian refugees who were fleeing to Europe, and apparently the Turkish authorities have started imposing strict policy toward the Syrian refugees due to the refugee crisis in Europe. (Xinhua)