

Xi, Putin Meet on Promoting SCO's Regional Role

TASHKENT - Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin met here Thursday on enhancing bilateral ties and promoting the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)'s role in regional development and security.

The two heads of state met briefly late Thursday ahead of the 16th SCO summit in Tashkent and Putin's upcoming visit to China on Saturday.

Noting that this year marks the 15th anniversary of the signing of the China-Russia good-neighborly treaty of



friendship and cooperation and the 20th anniversary of the two countries' strategic partnership of coordination, Xi said Putin's state visit to China bears special significance. China is willing to join

hands with Russia to carry forward their friendship from generation to generation, consolidate political and strategic mutual trust, and beef up support to each other, Xi said.

The two countries should push for the alignment of the Belt and Road Initiative and the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), and carry out closer coordination in major international and regional affairs, Xi said.

China stands ready to make joint efforts with Russia to play a positive role in the SCO's steady ...*(More on P4)...(24)*

No Obstacles for Iran to Join SCO: Putin

MASCOW - Russian President Vladimir Putin says there are no obstacles left for Iran to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a regional security and economic cooperation body led by China and Russia.

"We believe that after Iran's nuclear problem was solved and United Nations sanctions lifted, there have been no obstacles left (for Iran's membership in the SCO)," Putin told an SCO summit in the Uzbek capital Tashkent on Friday. Earlier, reports from the summit said SCO mem-

bers had failed to initiate the accession process for Iran which expected to make it into the emerging power group after the lifting of sanctions.

"We failed to reach an agreement with our colleagues this time, but the work continues," special Russian envoy to the SCO Bakhtiyor Khakimov said.

He said there were no objections to the idea of Iran's full membership "in principle," but there were "technical nuances" related to the timing which he did not elaborate. "The Russian posi-



tion is clear in its support of initiating the SCO admission process [for Iran] without delays, if possible," Khakimov said. Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif arrived in Tashkent early

Friday to attend the summit. The country, which has an observer status on the SCO, had sent President Hassan Rouhani to the forum held in the Russian city of Ufa last year. ...*(More on P4)...(25)*

India Says Prepared to Deal With Impacts from Brexit

NEW DELHI - India said Friday it is well prepared for the impact to come from British decision to exit the European Union, saying it is working to deal with short term volatility in the market.

"The government and the Reserve Bank of India as well as other regulators are well prepared, and working closely together, to deal with any short term volatility. Our aim will be to smooth this volatility and minimize its impact on the economy in

the short term," said Indian Finance Minister Arun Jaitley.

"At the same time, for the medium term, we will steadfastly pursue our ambitious reform agenda, including early passage of goods and services tax (bill) that will help us realize our medium term growth potential of 8-9 per cent and help achieve our objective of development for all," said the minister.

The governor of the ...*(More on P4)...(26)*

G7 Countries Closely Monitor Market Developments Following Brexit

WASHINGTON - The Group of Seven financial ministers and central bankers said Thursday that they are closely monitoring market developments, after Britain voted to leave the European Union in a referendum on Thursday.

"We, G7 Ministers and Governors, respect the intention expressed today by the people of the United Kingdom to exit from the European Union. We are monitoring market developments following the outcome of the referendum on the UK's mem-

bership of the EU," said a statement released Thursday by the U.S. Treasury on behalf of the G7 ministers and central bankers. The British economy and financial sector remained resilient, and the British authorities were well-positioned to address the consequences of the referendum outcome, said the statement.

In order to guard against adverse implications for economic and financial stability following the referendum, the G7 central banks have taken steps to ...*(More on P4)...(27)*

Democratic Decision in Brexit Referendum Must Be Respected: Council of Europe

STRASBOURG - The President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), Pedro Agramunt, lamented here on Friday the repercussions on the European project that would arise from UK's leaving from the EU.

"A bit of the European ideal has disappeared today following the British vote in favor of leaving the Union," declared Agramunt. "The vote will have repercussions not only for the British people but also for all the European peo-



ples. It will have a negative impact not only on the European Union but also on all the international

organizations, such as the Council of Europe and its Parliamentary Assembly," declared the PACE presi-

dent to the representatives of the 47 member states of the CoE on the closing day of ...*(More on P4)...(28)*

U.N. Says Looking Forward to Continuing Work with Britain, EU after Brexit Vote

GENEVA - U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said Friday that the world body looks forward to continuing its work with the United Kingdom and the European Union (EU) after Britain voted to leave the EU in a historic referendum.

"The vote to leave the European Union came at the end of intensive deliberations and rich discussions, not just in the United Kingdom, but across Europe," said Ban in a statement. Ban said that he trusts in "Europe's well-proven history of pragmatism and common



responsibility in the interest of European citizens" as Britain and other EU member states begin the process of "charting a way forward." "At the U.N., we look forward to continuing our work with the United Kingdom and the European Union -- both important partners," said

Ban. Ban expects the EU to continue to be "a solid partner" on development and humanitarian issues, as well as peace and security, including migration. He also expressed the hope that Britain will continue to exercise its leadership in development and other areas. (Xinhua)

Putin Lauds SCO as Attractive, Authoritative Int'l Organization

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia - The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has become a platform for its members to carry out diverse cooperation and also a popular, attractive and authoritative international institution, Russian President Vladimir

Putin told Xinhua. The SCO was originally set up with rather low-key aims, which were to solve all kinds of border cooperation problems both difficult and easy, he said in an hour-long exclusive interview here with Xinhua President Cai Mingzhao

ahead of his Saturday state visit to China.

Now the mechanism has been used to settle other problems and evolved into a platform for its six members to carry out cooperation in multiple areas, including political affairs ...*(More on P4)...(29)*

Second Independence Referendum "Highly Likely": Scottish First Minister

EDINBURGH - Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said here Friday a second independence referendum was "highly likely" after Britain voted to leave the EU.

It was "democratically unacceptable" that Scotland faced the prospect of being taken out of the EU

against its will, Sturgeon said at a press conference held inside the First Minister's official residence. Britain voted on Thursday in a historic referendum to leave the EU after 43 years in the bloc. The Leave campaign received about 52 percent of the votes, against 48 percent

for the Remain side.

However, Scotland voted 62 percent in favor of remaining in the EU, with the majority in each council of its 32 local authority areas voting to remain. The Brexit vote would lead to a "significant and material change" to Britain's ...*(More on P4)...(30)*

Peace Deal between Colombian Government, FARC Wins Worldwide Praise

HAVANA - The ceasefire deal signed between the Colombian government and the largest rebel group of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) won worldwide praise on Thursday, as it brings the country's half-century civil war closer to an end. The Colombian government and FARC Thurs-

day signed a historic ceasefire deal at a ceremony in Havana which was attended by world dignitaries including Latin American heads of state and United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Before the signing of the deal, the Colombian government and the rebel guerrilla group held

more than three years of fraught talks in Cuba.

"Today is a historic day for Colombia after more than 50 years of deaths and confrontations," said Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos. The agreement sets up mechanisms for FARC to disarm and its transition toward the status of a ...*(More on P4)...(33)*

Neighbor News

Terrorists Arrested in Iran Admit US, Saudi Backing: IRGC

TEHRAN - The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) says members of a terrorist group captured in southwest Iran last week have admitted to US and Saudi support.

"These people have admitted to the broad aspects of their crimes and the supportive role played by Saudi Arabia and the United States in the advancement of the cell's objectives," an IRGC commander said Thursday.

Brigadier General Mohammad Pakpour, the commander of the IRGC's Ground Forces, said details will be made public later.

The group was dismantled in the city of Khash in Iran's Sistan-and-Baluchestan Province last week.

Pakpour said one of the terrorists later died of injuries sustained during the arrest, while the other is in custody.

Washington and Riyadh, Pakpour said, are attempting to organize and reinforce terror groups and counter-revolutionary elements in Iran's geographical periphery, groups that he said have been weakened for years and confronted by Iranian

security forces in border areas.

Over the past several days, a number of terrorist activities were thwarted on the border and within the country, he said. "These groups had meant to attack the people of the area and a number of central cities using powerful ammunition," the general said. Pakpour also warned that the enemy is seeking to cause ethnic conflict among Iranians as a means of dividing them. In earlier remarks, Pakpour had said that the IRGC forces had engaged in clashes with two terrorist groups in the country's northwest near the border with Iraq, killing a number of terrorists.

After thwarting a Takfiri-Wahhabi plot to stage attacks in Tehran, Iran's Intelligence Ministry released a video on Wednesday showing the security forces raiding the hideout of the terrorists in the capital. A day earlier, Intelligence Minister Mahmoud Alavi had briefed reporters on the recent swoop, saying that as many as 10 terrorists had been apprehended from June 14 to 20 ...*(More on P4)...(34)*

Chinese, Tajik Foreign Ministers Meet on Ties

TASHKENT - Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi held talks here Monday with his Tajik counterpart, Sirojiddin Aslov, on relations between their two countries and other major issues of common concern.

During their talks, Wang said since China and Tajikistan established a strategic partnership in 2013, the two countries have cooperated smoothly in various areas and maintained close contacts over international and regional affairs.

China is willing to work with Tajikistan under the principles of extensive consultation, joint contributions and shared benefits in continuously

deepening cooperation in the joint construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt, promoting interconnectivity and production capacity cooperation, and discussing the establishment of a free trade area, he said.

Wang suggested the two sides strengthen security cooperation and join forces in combating the "three evil forces" of terrorism, separatism and extremism.

He also voiced support for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)'s Tashkent summit so as to instill new momentum into the development of the SCO. For his part, Aslov expressed appreciation for ...*(More on P4)...(35)*

China, Uzbekistan Agree to Focus on Belt and Road Development

TASHKENT - China and Uzbekistan agreed on Wednesday to focus on jointly promoting the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative.

During the talks between visiting Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Uzbek counterpart, Islam Karimov, the two sides pledged to seek synergy between their respective development strategies and fully tap into the potential of their economic and trade cooperation on the principles of consultation, joint development and sharing.

The two leaders said they will actively boost industrial capacity cooperation and build the Jiz-zakh Industrial Park into an important platform in this regard.

Cooperation in infrastructure construction and energy will be expanded and deepened, and new highlights will be created in agricultural cooperation. The two heads of state

also vowed to increase financial support for major cooperation projects between the two countries.

"We should comprehensively deepen our practical cooperation in all fields ... to push for the common development of our two countries and enrich the meaning of our comprehensive strategic partnership with more cooperation outcomes," Xi told Karimov.

The Belt and Road Initiative, proposed by Xi in 2013, refers to the building of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road. It is aimed at building a trade and infrastructure network connecting Asia with Europe and Africa along the ancient trade routes. Xi arrived in the Central Asian country on Tuesday for a state visit, the second in three years. He will also attend a summit of the Shanghai ...*(More on P4)...(36)*

At Least 20 IS Militants Killed in Northern Syria

ANKARA - At least 20 Islamic State (IS) militants were killed on Thursday in a shelling in northern Syria by the Turkish army and air operations from the U.S.-led coalition, the Turkish General Staff said on Friday.

According to the statement, Turkish artillery units shelled the IS targets as coalition warplanes conducted air operations in the region hitting 34 targets of the militant group.

Reports show that at least 20 IS militants were killed and two buildings used by the IS destroyed. Turkey is set to install new air defense systems in the ...*(More on P4)...(31)*

U.S. Says to Support Kenya in Repatriation of Somali Refugees

NAIROBI - The U.S. has said it will work with Kenya in the planned repatriation of Somalis in Dadaab, the world's largest refugee camp.

Kenya last month announced it would close the Dadaab camp and repatriate the more than 300,000 Somalis living in it, citing environmental and security concerns.

U.S. President Barack Obama pledged the support in the repatriation in a phone call with Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta on Friday. "The president ...*(More on P4)...(32)*