

Trump Poses Threat to Peace and Prosperity: Gabriel

BERLIN - German Vice Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel has criticized leading Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump as a right-wing populist whose political views pose a threat to peace and prosperity.

The comments by Gabriel, economy minister and leader of the Social Democrats, are the clearest sign yet that ruling politicians in Europe are increasingly worried about the outcome of the U.S. presidential elections.

"Whether Donald Trump, Marine le Pen or Geert Wilders - all these right-wing populists are not



only a threat to peace and social cohesion, but also to economic development," Gabriel told Welt am Sonntag newspaper in an interview published on Sunday.

Gabriel said that Trump and France's Le Pen were promising voters "a way back into a fairytale world" in which economic activity only happened within national borders but that history has shown such isolated economies have no chance to develop. "We have to make the effort to explain how we want to shape globalisation in a fair way," Gabriel said. (Reuters)

51 Killed in Suicide Truck Bombing Near Iraqi Capital

BAGHDAD - Up to 51 people were killed and some 70 others wounded on Sunday in a suicide truck bomb attack on a security checkpoint in the city of Hillah, capital of Iraq's central Babil province, a provincial security source told Xinhua. "The reports said that the casualties from the suicide truck bomb attack in Hillah security checkpoint rose to 51 people killed and 70 others wounded," the source said on condition of anonymity. The attack

occurred around noon when a suicide bomber drove an explosive-laden truck into the crowded al-Athar security checkpoint at the northern entrance of Hillah, some 100 km south of Baghdad, the source said. The massive blast destroyed the checkpoint buildings and left dozens of vehicles badly damaged, while many civilian cars were set ablaze, the source said, adding that most of the victims were civilians who were inside ... (More on P4)...(20)

Turkish PM Says no Bargaining on New Constitution

ISTANBUL - There will be no bargaining over a new constitution for Turkey and the ruling AK Party will seek the 330 votes it needs in parliament to put the matter to a referendum, Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu was quoted as saying on Sunday. In an interview with broadcaster A Haber, Davutoglu said his AK Party would have the full support of all of its 317 deputies for a new charter and that it would seek additional opposi-

tion backing to win the 330 votes needed for a referendum.

A cross-party commission charged with drafting a new constitution collapsed last month after the main opposition pulled out over attempts by the AKP to change Turkey from a parliamentary to a presidential system.

Senior AKP officials told Reuters last week that the party was working on its own proposals despite the opposition resistance,



plans which could hand President Tayyip Erdogan powers to draft legislation directly and pick ministers. The AKP has broad support for overhauling the constitution, which dates back to an era of military coups and has been repeatedly revised. But there are wide divergences over what a new charter should look like. (Reuters)

Greece to Seek Immediate Relocation of Refugees



IDOMENI - Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras says his country will seek an immediate relocation of migrants stranded on its soil at Monday's EU summit and will call for sanctions against EU members that do not "abide by common decisions." Tsipras said that in facing a potential flow of millions of mi-

grants, the EU is feeling the consequences of "unreasonable ... imperialistic interventions" in the Middle East that have destroyed organized states, an apparent reference to Iraq and Syria. Speaking at a session of the central committee of his leftist Syriza party, Tsipras said "the immediate ... (More on P4)...(21)

18 Refugees Drown off Turkey's Western Coast

ISTANBUL - At least 18 refugees drowned on Sunday when two boats capsized off Turkey's Aegean coast while attempting to reach a Greek Island, Turkish media reported. The ill-fated boaters, believed to be Syrians, departed from Didim in Turkey's western province of Aydin with two separate boats, the Hurriyet daily reported.

Preliminary report said 15 refugees have been saved by the Turkish coast guard and many more are reported missing, the daily said. The



bodies and wounded refugees have been brought back to Didim, while the rescue operation is still going on. A special summit is slated for Monday in Brussels between Turkey and the EU countries to push forward a deal aimed at stemming the flow of migrants into Europe. (Xinhua)

Swiss Foreign Minister Sees EU Immigration Deal Near

ZURICH - Switzerland and the European Union could strike a deal on curbing immigration to the neutral Alpine country soon after Britons decide in June whether to quit the bloc, Swiss Foreign Minister Didier Burkhalter said. His unusually upbeat comments to the NZZ am Sonntag paper follow the cabinet's unveiling on Friday of tough draft legislation that envisages unilateral limits on EU immigrants, a red flag for Brussels, should negotiations fail. The talks are on hold until EU member Britain's June 23 referendum of whether to stay in the bloc. Brussels is unwilling to show any flexibility in the Swiss talks that could encourage the British 'Out' camp. Justice Minister Simonetta Sommaruga had said on Friday the two sides remained far apart, but Burkhalter said things could move quickly after the British decision. "The fact that the EU is interested in a joint solution ... (More on P4)...(22)

Truce as Silver Lining in Syria's Path to Peace

CAIRO - Shrouded by flames and blood for nearly five years, Syria now catches a break for a long-awaited truce, fragile but a silver lining in its path to peace. Ceaseless conflicts have battered the country, leaving over 250,000 people dead and half of its 23 million population away from home, which dragged its neighbors and the world into unprecedented predicament.

The Russia-U.S.-backed cessation of hostilities plan has gone into effect at midnight last Friday in all Syrian cities, the first step of the political solution. Syrian President



Bashar al-Assad on Tuesday described the truce as a glimmer of hope, adding that his troops have refrained from retaliating to the rebels breaches. Tranquility without roars of shells and blasts prevailed the capital Damascus and the surroundings,

the moment the truce came true. SPORADIC CLASHES AMID LONG-AWAITED TRUCE The government and nearly 130 rebel groups have agreed to the cease-fire, excluding the al-Qaida-linked Nusra Front and ... (More on P4)...(23)

Britain Faces 'Golden Opportunity' outside EU, Says London Mayor

LONDON - London's influential mayor on Sunday denied personal ambition was behind his decision to campaign for Britain to leave the European Union and said it was a "golden opportunity" for the country to forge its own trade deals with the world. Boris Johnson, whose backing for a so-called 'Brexit' has angered Prime Minister David Cameron and highlighted the deep splits within his Conservatives over

Europe, said he believed the risky option was to remain inside the 28-nation bloc when Britons vote in a June 23 referendum. His comments came as German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble warned Brexit would lead to years of tortuous negotiations and create insecurity that would be "poison" to the British, European and global economies. No country has pre ... (More on P4)...(25)

Myanmar Heads for Gov't Change

YANGON - Myanmar is in the transition process for forming a new government in accordance with the result of general election held on Nov. 8 last year. Presidential election is set to take place on next Thursday with the Union Parliament designating three groups of presidential elec-

toral college for nominating one candidate each for three vice presidents first and the one who wins the most number of votes, will take the presidency, while the remaining two be vice presidents in accordance with the constitution. The three groups respectively represent elected ... (More on P4)...(26)

Turkish PM: Iran a 'Hidden Treasure'

TEHRAN - Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu calls Iran a "hidden treasure," saying Tehran's release from the "shackles of sanctions" has ushered in a "golden age" in relations between the two neighbors. Davutoglu, on the second day of a visit to Iran at the head of a 160-strong delegation, made the remarks during a meeting of Iranian and Turkish traders and business owners in Tehran. "The geography and economic structures of Iran and Turkey are like the pieces of a puzzle which complete each other," the IRNA news agency quoted the Turkish premier as saying. "Iran and Turkey are friends and neighbors; if they cooperate with each other, they can turn to the strongest regional countries," he added. "Both our countries must think about a win-win ... (More on P4)...(24)

Top Latam Leaders Reject Obama's Executive Order Against Venezuela

CARACAS - Top leaders of several Latin American countries on Saturday rejected U.S. President Barack Obama's renewed executive order that declares Venezuela as an "unusual and extraordinary threat" to his country. Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega said that the executive order was a measure that sought to hinder dialogues proposed by Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro so that the opposition could take control of the country. "They (the opposition) are underestimating the (Venezuelan) people and the strength of the Bolivarian Revolution. The (U.S.) empire is also underestimating as well as all those that are playing with conspiracies in Venezuela," ... (More on P4)...(27)

Neighbor News

US Moves to Finalise F-16 Deal with Pakistan

WASHINGTON - The US government has formally notified the intended sale of eight F-16 fighter jets to Pakistan, taking a major step towards finalising the deal.

"This proposed sale contributes to US foreign policy objectives and national security goals by helping to improve the security of a strategic partner in South Asia," said the notification published in the US Federal Register on Friday, along with a copy of the Feb 11 letter which the Defence Security Cooperation

Agency wrote to speaker of the House of Representatives, Paul Ryan.

"We are grateful to the US administration and members of Congress for their acknowledgment of Pakistan's decisive actions against extremists and terrorists and of the effective role the F-16a play in our counter-terrorism efforts," said Ambassador Jalil Abbas Jilani while commenting on the notification.

The notification estimates the total cost of the deal to be nearly \$700 million. (Agencies)

Iran to Witness Leap in Economic Growth: Rouhani

TEHRAN - Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said Sunday that the results of the recent Majlis (parliament) election showed that people voted in favor of moderation as the extension of the presidential vote in 2013. He put the economic growth of the country in the current Iranian calendar year, ending on March 20, at 3 percent and pledged that in the next year people will witness a leap in the economic growth.

In the recent election, people voted for moderates from every party and group, and this means that they favor moderation, Rouhani said in a press conference.

He said that people do not like to see power struggle between the parliament and government, and they want co-operation between these two institutions for the

improvement of their livelihood.

The Iranian president expressed hope that the next Majlis will cooperate with the government for the construction and progress of the country, for the economic bloom and for the good of society.

On Feb. 26, Iranians took part in two key elections of the parliament and Assembly of Experts. The results of the vote counts showed that moderates and the reformists gained the ground in the next parliament although they could not win the majority.

On March 1, Iranian Interior Ministry announced that in the first round of the elections held on Feb. 26, 221 out of the 290 seats were filled and the fate of 69 others will be decided in the run-off contests with 138 candidates. (Xinhua)

New Momentum will Promote Economic Growth: Li

BEIJING - Premier Li Keqiang called for new momentum to promote economic growth Sunday, saying China has the ability to meet its economic and social targets. Li made the remarks when joining a group of lawmakers from Shandong Province, on the second day of the national legislature's annual session. Talking about the government work report, which he delivered Saturday, Li said last year's economic and social achievements strengthened confidence that difficulties of any kind can be overcome. China seeks to maintain medium-high speed of growth and move to medium-high level of development. "Actively promoting new momentum and fostering new

economy are the path-way," Li said. "We will continue with structural reform, in particular supply-side structural reform, and implement the innovation-driven strategy." Reforms are key to creating new momentum for economic growth, Li said, adding that more coordinated platforms to link companies, universities, scientific research institutes and makers should be established.

Li stressed that the cutting of unnecessary administrative approvals and improving government services should both continue. Education, medical care, housing, social security and food safety are the focus of government work, Li said, as they relate to people's well-being. (Xinhua)

Emir to Visit Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan

ASHGABAT - Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani will head to Turkmenistan for a two-day state visit at the invitation of President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow. The Emir will then pay an official visit to Azerbaijan at the invitation of President Ilham Aliyev. During the visits,

HH the Emir will hold talks with leaders of the two countries and senior officials on ways to enhance and promote bilateral relations in all areas, as well as regional and international issues of mutual concern. The Emir will be accompanied by an official delegation. (Agencies)