

# Macron, Le Pen Exchange May Day Blows Across Paris

PARIS - Centrist presidential frontrunner Emmanuel Macron and his far-right rival Marine Le Pen traded campaign blows across Paris on May Day, as France's most crucial election in decades entered its final week.

Macron sought for a third successive day to paint National Front (FN) candidate Le Pen as an extremist, while she portrayed him as a clone of unpopular outgoing Socialist President Francois Hollande, under whom he served as economy minister from 2014 to 2016. The latest opinion poll showed Macron leading Le Pen by 61 percent to 39 ahead of Sunday's election, which offers France a choice between his vision of



closer integration with a modernized European Union and her calls to cut immigration and take the country out of the euro. "I will fight up until the very last second not only against her program but also her idea of what constitutes democracy and the French Republic," said Macron, an independent backed by a new party, En Marche! (Onwards!), which he set up himself a year ago. He was speaking after paying tribute to a young Moroccan man who drowned in the River Seine in Paris 22 years ago after being pushed into the water by skinheads on the fringes of a May Day rally by the FN, then led by Le Pen's father Jean-Marie. (Reuters)

## UN Rights Chief 'Watching the US Very Closely' Under Trump

GENEVA - The United Nations human rights chief says his office is "watching the United States very closely" under President Donald Trump. U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad al-Husseini warned last year that Trump's election could be dangerous for the world. Speaking to reporters in Geneva on Monday, Zeid said he'd noticed a "change in some of the rhetoric" since Trump assumed office and ex-

pressed hope that the president's worrisome campaign trail rhetoric on issues like torture would "dissipate." Zeid, a Jordanian prince, says his office is waiting to see the possible effects from the Trump administration's plan to cut funding for the U.S. State Department and international organizations. In October, Zeid said Trump would be "dangerous from an international point of view" if elected. (AP)

## U.N. Rights Chief Questions Due Process in Turkey Purges

GENEVA - The U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights voiced deep concern on Monday at mass arrests and sackings of public employees in Turkey and the renewed state of emergency there, saying a "climate of fear" now reigned. Zeid Ra'ad al-Husseini told a news conference in Geneva that Ankara had to respond to violent attacks but must not violate human rights while doing so. Turkey expelled more than 3,900 people from the civil service and military as threats to national security on Saturday, in the second major purge since Presi-

dent Tayyip Erdogan won sweeping new powers in a referendum last month. Last Wednesday, more than 9,000 police were suspended and another 1,000 detained for alleged links to the network of the U.S.-based cleric Fethullah Gulen, whom Ankara blames for a coup attempt last July. He has denied any involvement. Erdogan has repeatedly said his government does not limit freedom of speech and that security measures are necessary given the gravity of the threats facing Turkey. (Reuters)

## Trump Says Being U.S. President 'Big Burden on the Family'

WASHINGTON - U.S. President Donald Trump said in an interview published Sunday that his position in White House has affected his family life, adding that his wife Melania Trump has been "terribly abused by the press."

"There is no question, it is a big burden on the family," Trump told The Washington Times. He said his wife is a high-quality person but "has been very highly abused by the press, which was very unfair." "In fact, her polls: She went up 29

points, did you see that?" he said, "And now people are starting to know her." Trump also talked about his son, Barron, who is living in New York with the first lady. The two are expected to move to the White House once Barron finishes up the school year. "I have a son who's a very young boy, he just turned 11," Trump said. "He'll be taken away from his school and be put into a brand new school. He likes playing on his soccer team in New York, they're



all of his friends, and you know he'll be taken away from that team. We didn't want to do it in the middle of a season." Last week, his elder daughter, Ivanka Trump,

was reportedly hissed and booed when she defended her father at a women's panel in Berlin, calling her father a "tremendous champion of supporting families." (Xinhua)

## Russia Registers 15 Ceasefire Breaches in Syria in Past 24 Hours

MOSCOW - Russia registered a total of 15 violations of ceasefire in Syria in the past 24 hours, the Russian Defense Ministry said. "Within last 24 hours, the Russian party of the Russia-Turkey Commission on violations of the Joint Agreement has registered 15 ceasefire violations in the provinces of Damascus (9), Latakia (3), Daraa (1) and Hama (2)." The ministry's center for Syrian reconciliation said in a daily bulletin published on its website.

The Turkish party has registered 12 cases of ceasefire violations in five provin-



es, which the Russian side has not confirmed, the document added. Both Russia and Turkey are guarantors of a nationwide Syrian

ceasefire regime that came into force on December 30, 2016.

In addition, 2 ceasefire agreements have been

signed within the past 24 hours, the bulletin said. So far, a total of 1,475 inhabited areas have signed ... (More on P4)... (14)

## US-Led Strike on IS Kills at Least 352 Civilians: Pentagon

WASHINGTON - The Pentagon said on Sunday at least 352 civilians were killed as a result of U.S.-led campaign against the Islamic State (IS) in Iraq and Syria from August 2014 to March 2017. In its monthly report of assessment of civilian casualties, the Pentagon said it was still assessing 42 reports of civilian deaths. According to the Pentagon, 45 civilians were killed between November 2016 and March 2017. In addition, the U.S. military reported 80 civilian deaths from August 2014 to the



present which were not previously announced. "Although the coalition takes extraordinary efforts to strike military targets in a manner that minimizes the risk of civilian casualties, in some incidents casualties are unavoidable,"

said the Pentagon. The Pentagon's figures contradict the assessment by London-based Amnesty International, which estimated that about 300 civilians have been killed in 11 coalition airstrikes in Syria alone. (Xinhua)

## British MPs Call for Relaxed Rules on 'Wonky Veg' to Reduce Food Waste

LONDON - The all-party Environment, Food and Rural Affairs committee of the House of Commons has called for relaxed rules on "wonky vegetables" in a bid to help reduce food waste.

The MPs say: "It's ridiculous that perfectly good vegetables are wasted simply because they're a funny shape. Farmers supplying fruits and vegetables to British supermarkets currently get their produce rejected on the grounds that it fails to meet cosmetic quality standards set by the big retailers." "Knobbly carrots and parsnips don't cook or taste any different. It's high time we saved them from the supermarket reject bins," say the MPs. According to an official government report on Sunday, wasted food is costing every person in Britain hundreds of dollars a year. The ... (More on P4)... (15)

## Obama under Fire for 400K Dollars Speech to Wall Street

WASHINGTON - U.S. former President Barack Obama has been under fire from the progressive wing within the Democratic Party after he was reportedly to be paid 400,000 U.S. dollars for speaking at a Wall Street company's healthcare conference in September.

"At a time when people are so frustrated with the power of Wall Street and the big-money interests, I think it is unfortunate that President Obama is doing this," U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders, the strongest rival for Hillary Clinton during last year's Democratic primaries, said last week. "I was troubled by that," Elizabeth Warren, the Massachusetts senator and a leading role in the Democratic Party, has said, expressing her disdain for "the influence of money" in Washington swamp.

However, Obama's spokesman has rejected that Wall Street would sway the former president, citing the financial reforms implemented when Obama was in office.

"With regard to this or any speech involving Wall Street sponsors, I'd just point out that in 2008, Barack Obama raised more money from Wall Street than any candidate in history," Eric Schultz said in a statement.

During a 90-minute event last week, Obama was interviewed by presidential historian Doris Kearns Goodwin about what he missed most about the White House and how he dealt with frustrating moments during his presidency. (Xinhua)

## Saudi, Germany Sign Agreements to Boost Cooperation

RIYADH - Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saudi and visiting Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel signed here on Sunday a number of agreements, Saudi Press Agency reported. The agreements involve sustainable industrial development through the utilization of technology and digital transformation in Saudi industrial sector, police-related cooperation and technical and military training. The agreements are part of the kingdom's serious steps to achieve its 2030 economic vision which aims primarily to create diverse sources of income and improve the skills of local manpower. (Xinhua)

## CIA Chief Visits South Korea Amid Heightened Tension

SEOUL, South Korea - America's CIA director is making an unannounced visit to South Korea, the U.S. Embassy in Seoul confirmed Monday, amid heightened tensions on the Korean Peninsula. An embassy official said Mike Pompeo and his wife were in the South Korean capital on Monday, but wouldn't say for how long. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

South Korean media reports said the CIA chief arrived in South Korea over the weekend for meetings with the head of South Korea's National Intelligence Service and high-level officials in the presi-

dential office. The U.S. official, however, wouldn't confirm any meetings beyond ones with officials at U.S. Forces in Korea and the U.S. Embassy.

The visit comes after North Korea conducted another missile test on Saturday, and a U.S. aircraft carrier group was in nearby waters. A Japanese destroyer left port Monday, reportedly to escort U.S. naval ships as Japan increases its military role in the region.

The Japanese destroyer Izumo, a helicopter carrier, departed from Yokosuka port south of Tokyo in the morning. Japanese media reports said it will meet up with and escort ... (More on P4)... (16)

## Nieghbor News

### China Could Do More on North Korea: Pence

BEIJING - China is now doing more than it ever did before when dealing with North Korea, and President Donald Trump deserves the credit for that, but at the same time, China could be doing even more, Vice President Mike Pence said Monday. "You have a president in President Trump who is engaging directly with the president of China, and we are seeing China do more than they have done before," Pence told the "CBS This Morning" program. "The key here is for the United States and our allies in the region, working with China, to provide the diplomatic and economic

pressure that will result in the regime in Pyongyang ending permanently their nuclear ballistic missile ambitions." North Korea, he continued, represents the "most serious security threat in the world," said Pence, who traveled to South Korea last month to reaffirm the United States' commitment to South Korea and Japan. "For me, it was a chilling experience to look into a nation living under the kind of oppressive regime that the Kim family means," said Pence, speaking of North Korean President Kim Jong-un. (AP)

### Progressing Towards Enduring Peace, Stability: COAS

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa has on Monday said that the writ of the state has largely been restored and that we are progressing towards enduring peace and stability. This was stated by the army chief on Monday, while spending a day with troops deployed along Pak-Afghan border in Khyber Agency. According to the statement issued by DG ISPR Major General Asif Ghafoor, the army chief was briefed about operational preparedness and improved border security measures including employment of newly raised Frontier Corps KP Wings. General Bajwa appreciated effective border

security arrangements which have enhanced control on cross border terrorist movement. He also hailed exceptionally high morale of the troops and their undaunted determination to eliminate terrorism. Talking to soldiers, he said, "Our nation supports us due to our innumerable sacrifices we have made for defence and security of our motherland. Writ of the state has largely been restored and we are progressing towards enduring peace and stability."

Earlier, on arrival, the COAS was received by Commander Peshawar Corps Lieutenant General Nazir Ahmed Butt and IGFC Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. (Monitoring Desk)

### Iran: No Talks with US Outside Nuclear Accord

TEHRAN - Iran says there is no negotiation between Tehran and Washington outside the nuclear issue, but US officials have requested talks over the case of one or two prisoners in the Islamic Republic.

"As in the past, we have no mandate for dialog with America outside the JCPOA issue," Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said in Tehran Monday, citing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

The JCPOA refers to the nuclear accord which Iran reached with the US as well as France, Germany, Italy, Russia and China in 2015.

The accord saw Iran and the US hold high-level diplomatic parleys for the

first time since the 1979 Islamic Revolution but those exchanges did not go beyond the purview of the nuclear issue. Qassemi said, "Thus far, we have maintained the principle of no negotiations with America in the spheres beyond the JCPOA and continue with that."

"However, some dialog was held with the previous American government on humanitarian grounds about Iranian prisoners in the US, which had positive results," the spokesman added.

"Under this administration, the American side has apparently brought up the issue of one or two individuals held in Iranian prisons," according to Qassemi. (Presstv)

### Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan Intensify Co-Op

TASHKENT - Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and Uzbek Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Kamilov discussed issues of the development of bilateral relations within the agreements reached during the state visit of Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev to Turkmenistan in early March 2017, the press service of the Uzbek Foreign Ministry reported.

Kamilov arrived in Ashgabat city Apr. 30 to attend the sixth meeting of the foreign ministers of the countries participating in the Central Asia plus Japan Dialogue.

The sides stressed that thanks to the political will of the leadership of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, the relations between the two coun-

tries reached a qualitatively new level, which allowed to activate mutually beneficial cooperation in the political, trade and economic, investment, transport and communication, cultural and humanitarian, as well as other spheres.

It was also noted that Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan intensify cooperation within the framework of international and regional organizations, including the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea currently chaired by Turkmenistan.

Kamilov on behalf of Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev conveyed warm greetings and sincere respect, as well as good wishes to the Turkmen president and the Turkmen people. (Trend)