

# G7 Ministers Pledge to Promote Education to Tackle Poverty, Promote Global Peace

TOKYO - Education ministers from the Group of Seven industrialized countries pledged on Sunday in Japan to cooperate through education on global issues including the ongoing refugee crisis and poverty, along with general issues of peace in the world. Following a two-day meeting concluding Sunday, which took place in Okayama Prefecture in western Japan, the ministers from Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United States and the European Union said that education underscores the future of peace in the world.



The G7 ministers vowed to promote core global values and laws to young people, which could help to battle religious radicalization and, through higher quality education, help the Syrian war-linked refugee crisis and the countries in Europe that are dealing

with the influx of those displaced. The ministers also concurred that young people throughout the world equally had the right to receive an education and that such opportunities should be made available regardless of financial circumstances or gender. The ministers at the two-day meeting, which was hosted by Japanese education minister, Hiroshi Hase, also said that subjects like mathematics and the sciences should also be better promoted and made available to all youngsters, including those in impoverished ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

## Neighbor News

### Beijing Goes "Spongier" to Save More Water



BEIJING - A total of 1,178 water-saving projects have been built in Beijing, saving up to 100 million cubic meters of water every year, the capital's water authorities said Sunday. Water permeable bricks, sunken green fields and rainwater recycling facilities have been widely adopted in the city, according to the authority chief Jin Shudong. Jin said the city recycled and utilized 162 million cubic meters of rainwater in 2015. Beijing has been listed as one of the pilot "sponge cities" in China. The city's urban planning authorities said more wetlands, filtration pools and permeable public spaces will be added to make the city "spongier." Beijing once relied heavily on groundwater, and excessive exploitation has led to decline of groundwater levels and subsequent subsidence. (Xinhua)

### Jordan, U.S. Discuss Cooperation in Fight Against Islamic State

AMMAN - Jordan and the United States on Sunday discussed cooperation and joint efforts to combat the Islamic State (IS), the state-run Petra news agency reported. Jordan's Minister of Foreign Affairs Nasser Judeh and U.S. President Barack Obama's envoy to the U.S.-led coalition against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria Brett McGurk discussed at a meeting in Amman the efforts to eradicate the terrorist group and other

terrorist organizations. They underlined the need for continued coordination with all the international community to uproot terrorism. "Jordan supports all efforts to fight terrorism and will always be at the forefront when it comes to these efforts. Jordan considers the war on terrorism as the war of all Muslims to defend Islam and defeat the outlaws," said the minister. The U.S. official stressed ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

### Kerry Holds Saudi Talks Ahead of Syria, Libya Meetings

JEDDAH - US Secretary of State John Kerry held talks in Saudi Arabia on Sunday to secure its support ahead of a potential showdown with Russia at talks on the Syrian conflict. After his Saudi meetings, Kerry was due to fly to Vienna which this week will host the international contact groups engaged in efforts to halt fighting in Syria and Libya. Riyadh is the key backer of rebels fighting to overthrow Syria's President

Bashar al-Assad, and Kerry is keen to keep the opposition on board with a shaky ceasefire in force since February. Saudi allies Egypt and the UAE are also major supporters of the administration in eastern Libya which is withholding its support from a UN-backed unity government in Tripoli. Kerry met Saudi Arabia's King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Nayef at the royal court in a palace in Jeddah.



"I want to thank you for the many things that Saudi Arabia is working out with us to great effect," he told King Salman as the pair sat down, before reporters were ushered out. "On Syria, the secretary provided an update of the situation on the ground following ...*(More on P4)...(19)*

### Albania to Host NATO Parliamentary Assembly

TIRANA - Albania will host for the first time the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Parliamentary Assembly later this month in Tirana, head of the Albanian delegation to the body said Saturday. Pandeli Majko, chairman of the Albanian delegation to the interparliamentary organ of the military alliance, said the three-day meeting, scheduled to open on May 27, will bring together about 700 participants from NATO member states,



partner countries and observer states. "Albania as a NATO member country has the honor to host the Parliamentary Assembly, which will discuss the

toughest challenges that our Alliance has to cope with in the near and distant future," said Majko. NATO Parliamentary Assembly, founded in 1955,

consists of 257 delegates from the 28 NATO member countries. Albania became a full-fledged NATO member on April 4, 2009. (Xinhua)

### French Minister Vows to Stop Protest Violence

PARIS - French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve on Sunday expressed full determination to stop escalating violence that tainted several protests against labor reform. "If the right to protest is sacred, there is no right to wreak havoc. The security forces are exposed to groups of extreme violence that are not there to express their demands, but who are there to wreak havoc, destroy, and express hatred towards the state and its institutions," Cazeneuve said. "This is

intolerable and it will not be tolerated," he stressed during a visit to Rennes, western France where several violent incidents overshadowed protests against labor reform over the weekend. Since the nationwide rallies against labor reform began three months ago, 1,300 people have been arrested, with 819 placed into custody and 51 convicted on charges of violent acts, according to Cazeneuve. New clashes were reported in Rennes on Friday after a ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

### French-Arab Efforts for Mideast Peace Conference Go Fast: Official

RAMALLAH - The efforts of France and the Arab states on holding an international conference for peace in the Middle East to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict go fast and in the right direction, an aide to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas said Sunday. Nabil Abu Rdniah said in a press statement at the end of a meeting held on Sunday in Ramallah between President Abbas and France Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault that the talks between the two men focused on the efforts that France exerts for holding an international conference for

peace in the Middle East. "The aim is to get the peace process out of its current stalemate," Abu Rdniah said, adding that President Abbas expressed the Palestinians' gratitude to France for its deep concerns and commitment to hold the conference and halt the status of instability in Palestine and the entire region. Abu Rdniah also said that French FM Ayrault briefed President Abbas on the results of his earlier meeting held in Jerusalem with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Meanwhile, Palestinian Minister of Foreign Affairs Reyad al-Malki told

reporters after the meeting with Ayrault that Ayrault informed the Palestinian side that his country is going ahead in the preparations for holding the ministerial meeting that is scheduled to prepare for the peace conference. "The ministerial meeting might be postponed for a day or two for technical reasons related to guaranteeing the arrival all the foreign ministers, including United States Secretary of State John Kerry to the meeting," said al-Malki, adding that France insists on holding the ministerial meeting and the peace conference. (Xinhua)

### Death Toll of Yemen's Suicide Bombing Rises to 30

ADEN - The death toll in Sunday's suicide bombing attack that took place near the gate of a registration camp for police recruits in Yemen's southeastern province of Hadramout rose to 30, a provincial security source said. "The latest report concerning the casualties from today's suicide bombing attack that occurred near at the main gate of a police recruitment center in Mukalla mounted to

30 deaths and 70 wounded," the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity. The Yemen-based affiliate of the Islamic State (IS) group has officially claimed the suicide bombing that targeted police recruits in Hadramout. According to the short statements revealed by the IS accounts on Twitter "about 40 apostates were killed when an Islamic State fighter detonated his explosive belt inside their

military base in Mukalla." The bloody attack occurred as a suicide bomber mingled with a group of new recruits in a police base near the presidential compound in the coastal city of Mukalla, Hadramout's provincial capital, the official said on condition of anonymity. The toll could rise even higher as ambulances were evacuating the victims and dozens of critically injured people to ...*(More on P4)...(21)*

### Poland's Defense Minister Accused of Undermining Military

WARSAW - Several former Polish defense ministers are calling for the dismissal of the current minister, arguing that he is undermining the image of Poland's military within NATO and Polish society itself. The letter, made public Sunday, comes several days after Defense Minister Antoni Macierewicz accused his predecessors of leaving the country defenseless with mismanagement and allowing Russian agents to influence military training. The signatories say Macierewicz's claims aren't true. They said he has discredited the army, undermined the country's image with its allies and encouraged "aggressive activities against our country" by enemies. A spokesman ...*(More on P4)...(23)*

### Iraq Swamped in Deadly Attacks By IS Group

CAIRO - Peace seems unreachable in Iraq, where terror wave barely abated as the Islamic States (IS) militant group continued to plot deadly suicide bombing attacks. According to UN Assistance Mission for Iraq, the country has been witnessing some of the worst violence in years, turning many cities and towns into living hell. In the UN mission's latest estimate, 1,119 Iraqis were killed and 1,561 others wounded in acts of terrorism, violence and armed conflict across Iraq last month alone. The momentum continues in May, and the last week saw high casualties caused by suicide attacks and car bombing, mostly in northern and western Iraq that was seized by the IS since June 2014. On Saturday, five policemen were killed and 14 others wounded in three suicide bomb attacks by the IS group in Iraq's western province of Anbar. On Friday, three ...*(More on P4)...(24)*

### Iran Can Become Russia's Major Trade Partner in Absence of Turkey: Minister



TEHRAN - Iran's minister of Communications and Information Technology said Tehran can replace Turkey as Russia's major trade partner, official IRNA news agency reported on Sunday. Russia has downed its economic relations with Turkey due to some political problems and Moscow is willing to increase ties with Tehran, Mahmoud Vaezi said. The head of Iran-Russia Joint Economic Commission also said Turkey may lose 4.5 billion U.S. dollars each year due to the Russian sanctions. Following the nuclear deal, Iranian businessmen should seize the opportunity to compete with their foreign rivals and have active presence in the domestic and international markets, Vaezi added. Relations between Russia and Turkey have

soured after Turkish forces shot down a Russian Su-24 jet near the Turkish-Syrian border on Nov. 24, 2015 for alleged airspace violation. Russia has imposed a comprehensive set of sanctions against Turkey after the incident. The import of Turkish foodstuffs and other agricultural products to Russia have been curtailed. Charter flights in both directions have been halted, and the visa-free travel regime between the two countries has been suspended. Russian companies are also banned from hiring Turkish citizens, while companies owned by Turkey or Turkish citizens are prohibited from providing services for state and municipal needs in Russia or participating in such areas as construction, tourism, hotel and lumber business. (Xinhua)

### IS Attempts to Recapture Syria's Ancient City Palmyra

CAIRO - The Islamic State (IS) militant group launched attacks to recapture an ancient city in Syria after losing it to government forces several weeks ago, said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. The IS has cut off the only road leading to the

millennia-old oasis city of Palmyra in central Syria, threatening to besiege the UNESCO world heritage site, the UK-based monitoring group said. The Syrian army and allied groups are fighting to re-open the strategic route and secure its surroundings from the IS at-

tacks, it added. Seized by the IS last May, Palmyra, about 242 km northeast of the Syrian capital Damascus, was recovered by the government with the help of Russian airstrikes in March. The victory has enhanced ...*(More on P4)...(22)*