

U.N. Environment Talks Pressed on Gender-Sensitive Global Economic Plan

NAIROBI - Women participants at the ongoing U.N. Environment Assembly (UNEA) talks in Nairobi have called for fresh economic reforms on a global scale to give women access to land for agriculture, improved healthcare and a bigger share of funds earned from mining activities.

Oyun Sanjaasuren, President of UNEA-1, said late on Tuesday that new policies to effectively handle the challenges facing the environment, most of which affect women the most, required scaling up of policies to save more



women and children who remain most vulnerable to climate change and other environmental risks. "Climate change and biodiversity loss has crossed

the limit," Oyun told participants at an event to discuss the gender links to the environment at the May 23-27 event. "Women are more vulnerable to the

environment and climate change. They need access to energy and safe water." Helen Hakena, gender activist from Papua New Guinea's Women Major

Group, who remembered witnessing fellow women die from child-birth, rape and the lack of basic healthcare for women during child-birth, said

it was the mandate of the UNEA talks to ensure the protection of children. "We would like to see UNEA II safeguard the lives of children. They must utilize this opportunity to rethink the global economic structure and ensure that money earned by governments is not used to purchase weapons of war in our country," Hakena told participants at the environment event. U.N. Environmental Programme (UNEP) Executive Director Achim Steiner reaffirmed the ministers attending the conference ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

Seven Dead, 500 Rescued in Shipwreck Near Libya: Italian Navy

ROME - The Italian Navy on Wednesday saved around 500 migrants and recovered seven bodies off the Libyan coast, a statement from the navy said. The navy's Bettica ship during its surveillance and security activities in the area pinpointed a boat in trouble with numerous migrants onboard, according to the statement.

"Shortly later, the boat capsized because of the overcrowding and instability due to the too high number of people onboard,"

the statement added.

The Italian Navy intervened with Bettica and another ship named Bergamini, launching life boats, sending a rescue helicopter and throwing life jackets into the water. Searches were continuing for other possible survivors, the statement also added.

Local newspaper Corriere della Sera said many of the migrants were unable to swim, and among them there were dozens of children and women. More than 3,000



migrants have landed in southern Italy over the past 48 hours, the report added. Wednesday's shipwreck was the latest in a series of migrant disasters which have occurred in the southern Mediterranean.

Italy is facing growing flows of sea migrants from African and Middle Eastern countries. The arrivals generally diminish with the bad weather and grow in the summer season. (Xinhua)

Obama to Asians Worried About U.S. Election: it's Going to Be OK

HO CHI MINH CITY - U.S. President Barack Obama sought on Wednesday to ease growing Asian worries about the raucous election campaign to succeed him which has been dominated by the incendiary rhetoric of mogul Donald Trump, now the Republican Party's nominee.

"I think other people sometimes look at our election system and say 'what a mess,'" Obama told a townhall meeting with young leaders in Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City, former-

ly Saigon.

"But usually we end up doing okay because the American people are good people ... Sometimes our politics doesn't express all the goodness of the people," he said, without referring specifically to any of the presidential candidates.

Obama made the comments just before ending a three-day trip to Vietnam, whose high point was an announcement that Washington's ban on sales ...*(More on P4)...(19)*

Majority of Germans in Favor of Admitting War Refugees into Germany: Survey

BERLIN - The majority of Germans are in favor of admitting war refugees into Germany, said a new survey on Wednesday.

The survey, conducted on behalf of the Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) study based at the German Institute for Economic Research, examined German attitudes, expectations, and fears as a barometer of public opinion on refugees. Results showed that most respondents supported the rights of



refugees to remain in the country in accordance with EU law and the Refugee Convention adopted in 1951. According to the survey, over 80 percent of respondents think it

is right to grant asylum to people fleeing armed conflict in their homeland. Two-thirds of respondents were in favor of admitting refugees. ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

Prisoner Swap with Ukraine May Help Solve Crisis: Putin

MOSCOW - Russia has swapped a Ukrainian female military pilot for its two alleged special service officials in the hope that it would help solve the Ukrainian crisis, Russian President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday.

"I want to express the hope that such decisions dictated primarily by considerations of humanity will reduce the conflict and confrontation in the well-known region and will help avoid unwanted losses," the Russian Rossiya 24 TV channel showed



Putin as saying. A plane carrying freed Ukrainian pilot Nadezhda Savchenko has landed in Kiev, while another plane brought Russian citizens Yevgeny Yerofeyev and

Alexander Alexandrov to Russia, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters in a statement. The spokesman said Putin had signed an order ...*(More on P4)...(21)*

European Commission Updates Audiovisual Rules

BRUSSELS - The European Commission proposed an update of the European Union (EU) audiovisual rules to create a fairer environment for all players, promote European films, protect children and tackle hate speech better on Wednesday. As part of its Digital Single Market strategy, the Commission presented an updated Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD); the common rules which have governed audiovisual media, ensured cultural diversity and the free circulation of content in the EU for almost 30 years. The Commission explained that nowadays viewers do not only watch video content via their TV channels but also increasingly via video-on-demand services and video-sharing platforms.

Therefore, the Commission wanted to achieve a better balance of the rules which today apply to traditional broadcasters, video-on-demand providers and video-sharing platforms, especially when it comes to protecting children.

The revised AVMSD would also strengthen the promotion of European cultural diversity, ensures the independence of audiovisual regulators and gives more flexibility to broadcasters over advertising, according to the Commission. In addition, the Commission noted that this proposal also reflects ...*(More on P4)...(23)*

Iraqi Forces Tighten Siege Around IS Stronghold in Fallujah

RAMADI - Iraqi security forces on Wednesday extended control on areas around the IS-held city of Fallujah in the province of Anbar, at the third day of an offensive aimed at flushing out the extremist militants from the city, a provincial security source said.

Security forces, together with Shiite and Sunni paramilitary units, known as Hashd Shaabi, made

a significant progress in west of Fallujah, some 50 km west of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, when the troops backed by Iraqi aircraft cleared the vast areas of Albu Bali and Albu Ubied after heavy clashes with IS militants, the source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity. The battles in west of Fallujah left at least 1715 militants killed and ...*(More on P4)...(22)*

Gen. Raheel 'Seriously Concerned' over Violation of Sovereignty by US

RAWALPINDI - Pakistani Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Raheel Sharif in a meeting with United States (US) Ambassador to Pakistan David Hale on Wednesday expressed serious concerns over the US drone strike in Balochistan in which Afghan Taliban chief Mullah Akhtar Mansour was reportedly killed.

The Army chief said the drone attack, which was a violation of

sovereignty, was detrimental to Pak-US ties and regional stability and damaged peace efforts, an Inter-Services Public Relations statement said.

The COAS said Pakistan's efforts, successes and sacrifices in the fight against terrorism are unparalleled. The US drone strike was the first-ever in Balochistan, which has long been a 'red line' for Pakistan. While ...*(More on P4)...(24)*

New Delhi Seeks to Run Operations of Iranian Oil Field

TEHRAN - A new report says India's largest oil company seeks to operate an Iranian oil field in the Persian Gulf. According to the Economic Times, Indian Oil Corp (IOC), has made a bid to operate and produce crude oil from the Iranian field as part of India's efforts to boost energy ties with Iran. The report said another Indian firm, ONGC Videsh Ltd which is the overseas arm of state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC), has also offered to develop a couple of oil fields in the Persian Gulf. It said the fields are part of 16 oil discoveries in the region. The OVL is already said to be in talks to further develop Iran's Farzad-B offshore field. The Indian company discovered the Farzad-B field in the Persian Gulf in 2008. The field holds 12.5 trillion cubic feet of recoverable reserves. Sources said India has also expressed interest in investing in chemicals, petrochemicals and fertilizer plants in Iran. It also is looking at setting up an ammonia/urea plant in Chabahar Free Trade Zone. India on Monday sealed a deal with Iran to develop the country's southeastern port - a project expected to eventually create a regional trade, investment and transportation hub with links from the Indian Ocean to Central Asia. (PressTV)

Neighbor News

World Bank to Award Loans to Iran's Smes

TEHRAN - Iran said that it has started preliminary talks to obtain loans worth a total of at least \$1.5 billion from the World Bank for the country's small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Mohsen Jalalpour, the president of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Mines, has been quoted by the media as saying that a team from the World Bank had visited the Chamber to discuss providing loans to Iranian SMEs. Jalalpour said the visiting team had been briefed on the capabilities of Iranian businesses, adding that follow-up discussions will be held when another senior delegation from the World Bank visits the

Islamic Republic in the future. The official further emphasized that the value of the loans could increase to a collective of maximum \$2 billion.

The move could be a major breakthrough for Iran. This is because the World Bank had already indicated reluctance to reengage in a country it had already stopped all new projects since 2005 in compliance with the sanctions. The return of the World Bank to Iran could also motivate global financial enterprises to approach the country - what they had been refusing to do so far over fears that they would fall afoul of the remaining primary US sanctions. (PressTV)

US Senate Okays Reimbursement Fund for Pakistan

WASHINGTON - The US Senate Armed Services Committee has approved a proposal to set up a new fund to reimburse Pakistan for its efforts in the war against terror. The new fund also delinks the country from Afghanistan.

The committee's chairman, Senator John McCain, introduced the bill, which sets aside up to \$800 million for reimbursing Pakistan and the proposal is included in the Senate version of the National Defence Authorisation Act, 2017, passed on May 18.

Under the current arrangement, Pakistan is reimbursed from the Coalition Support Fund (CSF) and has received a total of \$3.1 billion since 2013. The CSF expires in the 2016 financial year, which ends in October. The bill, however, requires Pakistan to keep open ground communication lines to Afghanistan for receiving reimbursements from this fund. And \$300m is linked to taking action against the Haqqani network.

Another bill, passed by ...*(More on P4)...(25)*

China, EU to Jointly Ensure Success of Upcoming G20 Summit

BEIJING - China and the European Union (EU) will strengthen coordination and communication so as to make the 2016 Group of 20 (G20) summit a success, senior officials said Wednesday. In a phone conversation with EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini, Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi voiced the hope that the two sides make full use of various mechanisms, including leaders' meetings, to push forward their relations. Yang not-

ed that the G20 is a major forum for international economic cooperation and plays an irreplaceable role in global economic governance.

It is the common wish of all parties that the upcoming G20 summit in China's eastern city of Hangzhou be a success and yield great results, said Yang. China stands ready to enhance coordination and communication with the EU so that the summit could achieve ...*(More on P4)...(26)*

Tajikistan-Germany Political Consultations Held in Dushanbe

DUSHANBE - Presided over by Muzaffar Huseinzoda, Deputy Foreign Minister of Tajikistan, and Andreas Peschke, Director for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia at the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, Tajikistan-Germany political consultations took place in Dushanbe on May 24. According to the Tajik MFA information department, the meeting

participants discussed state and prospects of further expansion of bilateral political, economic, cultural and educational cooperation between Tajikistan and Germany. They also exchanged views on cooperation between the two countries in the frameworks of the European Union (EU)'s programs for Central Asia and the key priorities of the ...*(More on P4)...(27)*