

Russian Airliner with 224 Aboard Crashes in Egypt's Sinai, all Killed

ISMAILIA - A Russian airliner carrying 224 passengers and crew crashed in Egypt's Sinai peninsula on Saturday after losing radar contact and plummeting from its cruising altitude, killing all aboard.

The Airbus A321, operated by Russian airline Kogalymavia under the brand name Metrojet, was flying from the Sinai Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh to St Petersburg in Russia when it went down in a desolate mountainous area of central Sinai soon after daybreak, the aviation ministry said.

A north Sinai security



source said initial examination showed the crash was due to a technical fault, but gave no detail.

The plane, he said, had landed in a "vertical fashion", explaining the scale of devastation and burn-

ing. The Russian Embassy in Cairo said it had been told by Egyptian officials the pilot had been trying

to make an emergency landing at El-Arish. "I now see a tragic scene," an Egyptian security of-

ficer at the site told Reuters by telephone. "A lot of dead on the ground and many who died whilst strapped to their seats."

"The plane split into two, a small part on the tail end that burned and a larger part that crashed into a rock. We have extracted at least 100 bodies and the rest are still inside," the officer, who requested anonymity, said. Sinai is the scene of an insurgency by militants close to Islamic State, who have killed hundreds of Egyptian soldiers and police and have also attacked Western targets in recent months.(Reuters)

Putin gives Order to take Urgent Measures on Russian Plane Crash in Egypt

MOSCOW - Russian President Vladimir Putin on Saturday ordered Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev to create a state commission in response to the crash of a Russian airliner in Egypt, according to the Kremlin.

Putin also ordered the Emergency Situations Ministry to send an aircraft to the crash site after coordinating with the Egyptian side. Meanwhile, Medvedev asked Transport Minister Maxim Sokolov to fly to Cairo, Egypt's capital, to organize all necessary work with regard to the plane crash.

Expressing "the deepest condolences to the victims' relatives," Putin

asked relevant ministries and government departments to provide necessary and urgent assistance to the relatives of the victims.

The Emergency Situations Ministry earlier held an urgent meeting of a government working group over the crash incident, said the ministry's press service.

"Due to the situation with the Russian airliner, the government commission's group on emergency management is urgently gathered for a meeting in the Emergency Situations Ministry," the press service said. According to the ministry, hotlines were ...*(More on P4)...(16)*

New U.S.-Backed Syrian Rebel Alliance Declares Offensive Against IS

BEIRUT - A U.S.-backed Syrian rebel alliance on Saturday announced a fresh offensive against Islamic State in the northeast province of Hasaka, a day after the United States said it would send special forces to advise insurgents fighting the jihadists.

It was the first declared operation by the Democratic Forces of Syria, which joins together a U.S.-backed Kurdish militia and several Syrian Arab rebel groups, since it announced its formation earlier this month. "We announce today the start of the first step in our military operations," a spokesman for the alliance's



general command said in Arabic in a video statement posted on Youtube. World powers and regional rivals are convening in Vienna today to seek a solution to the four-year conflict in Syria that has escalated since Russia intervened

a month ago with an intense air campaign. The video showed several dozen men in fatigues standing outdoors with yellow flags and banners carrying the name of the Democratic Forces of Syria in Arabic and Kurdish.

The Kurdish YPG has been working closely with the U.S.-led anti-IS coalition since early this year, and has to date proved Washington's most effective partner on the ground against IS in Syria. (Reuters)

UN Draft Resolution asks UN to Refer North Korea to ICC

UNITED NATIONS - The European Union and Japan circulated a draft U.N. resolution Friday that condemns "gross" human rights violations in North Korea and encourages the U.N. Security Council to refer the reclusive Asian nation to the International Criminal Court.

The draft General Assembly resolution encourages the council to consider targeted sanctions against those "who appear to be most responsible" for acts that a groundbreaking U.N. commission of inquiry report early last year said "may constitute crimes against humanity." Marzuki Darusman, the



special rapporteur on human rights in North Korea, put the spotlight on forced labor in North Korea as a human rights violation in a report to the General Assembly Wednesday that also cited summary executions, arbitrary de-

tention, torture, massive ill-treatment of individuals in political prison camps and severe discrimination based on social class.

The draft resolution, obtained by The Associated Press, strongly urges the North Korean government

to immediately end human rights violations, close prison camps and tackle the root causes leading to people fleeing the country. The 193-member General Assembly is expected to vote on the resolution in ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

IS Claims Responsibility for Russian Plane Crash in Egypt



CAIRO - The Islamic State claimed responsibility for the crash of a Russian plane on Saturday in Egypt's Sinai, which killed more than 200 people on board, in a statement posted online.

The Sinai-based group "Sinai State" that had announced loyalty to the IS said in a statement posted on Twitter

its militants managed to target the Russian plane and killed all passengers.

It said the attack was in revenge for Russia's military operations in Syria. A video released by the group showed that a plane was suddenly caught on fire and fell down, but the video cannot be verified for the moment.(Xinhua)

German U.N. Official Set to take up Libya Post

UNITED NATIONS - The United Nations Security Council on Friday approved the appointment of German U.N. official Martin Kobler as the new U.N. special envoy to Libya, said diplomats, though it was unclear when he would take over mediating stalled peace talks.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon notified the 15-member council in a letter, seen by Reuters, of his intention to replace the current envoy Bernardino Leon with Kobler. But the letter did not specify when Kobler would take up the role.

A senior U.N. diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Leon was currently due to leave on Nov. 6, but that could be extended if there was a sudden breakthrough in his mediation efforts. Libya has fallen into turmoil with its internationally recognized government and elected parliament on one side and a self-styled administration holding Tripoli on the other, each backed by regional, tribal or Islamist armed factions.

After months of negotiations, Leon has presented Libya's rival factions with a proposed national unity government, but hardliners on both sides have resisted the power-sharing deal and talks are at a standstill. The conflict has pushed the North African ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

More Ambitious EU Border Management Policy Needed: Official

ROTTERDAM - Fabrice Leggeri, executive director of Frontex, called for more ambitious EU border management policy here in a recent interview with Xinhua. With difficult years ahead for the Mediterranean as asylum seekers from war-torn Syria and economically deprived African countries keep pushing their way into Europe, EU member states must work for a more ambitious European border management policy, with strengthened border control, better detection before entry and higher repatriation rates, said Leggeri. "In the next five years I am ready to face very tough situations on EU's external borders," said Leggeri. The 47-year-old Frenchman took over Frontex,



the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the EU Member States, for a five-year term since last January. He attended a conference organized by the World Customs Organization in Rotterdam earlier this week. Frontex has registered more than 800,000 illegal border crossings since the beginning of the year, more than half coming

through the eastern route from Turkey to Greece, according to the head of the agency. Established in 2004, Frontex helps border authorities from different EU countries work together. It has launched many operations to detect and stop illegal immigration, human trafficking and terrorist infiltration. The top nationalities of immigrants crossing ...*(More on P4)...(19)*

US Smooths Kyrgyzstan Ties after Rights Row

BISHKEK - US Secretary of State John Kerry carefully negotiated a delicate first day of his Central Asia tour on Saturday, patching up a human rights row with Kyrgyzstan.

The senior US diplomat's visit to all five "Stans", the landlocked former Soviet republics in Russia's Asian back yard, began in one of the most suspicious of US influence.

In an incident emblematic of this mistrust, Kyrgyzstan was outraged in July when Kerry's State Department gave jailed activist Azimjon Askarov a human rights award.

Askarov has been hailed by human rights defenders for his work exposing torture in Kyrgyz jails and violence against ethnic Uzbeks, but his home government jailed him for life.

He has been convicted of organising violent protests and accused of involvement in the death of a policeman. The United States has deep concerns about human rights in Kyrgyzstan but Kerry, keen to move past the row, tried to explain away the offence the award caused his hosts.

At a news conference after talks with President Almazbek Atambayev and Foreign ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

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Democracy is Future of Pakistan: Sharif

ISLAMABAD - Democracy is the future of Pakistan and I have firm belief in it, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said today. Pakistan came into being through a democratic process, Radio Pakistan quoted Mr Sharif as saying while voting in civic elections in Lahore.

Mr Sharif said the massive participation in the democratic process is proof of the Pakistan Muslim League-N's (PML-N) belief in the constitution and law. He said there is no other road to progress and development but adherence to democratic values.(Agencies)

Xi's Visit to Map out Blueprint for China-Vietnam Ties

HANOI - Chinese President Xi Jinping's upcoming state visit to Vietnam will guide the future development of China-Vietnam relations in the new era, Chinese Ambassador Hong Xiaoyong said.

"President Xi is expected to draw up a blueprint together with Vietnamese leaders for the development of China-Vietnam ties in the new era from a strategic and long-term perspective," Ambassador Hong told Xinhua in an interview. This year marks the 65th anniversary of diplomatic ties between China and Vietnam and both countries have maintained a good momentum in the development of their relations, he said.

The Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Communist Party of Vietnam, and two countries have witnessed frequent high-level ex-

changes of visits, as well as close inter-party relations and cooperation between defense, law enforcement, economic and trade departments and local authorities.

"It has given a strong impetus to bilateral relations in all fields," the ambassador added.

Xi's visit on Nov. 5-6 will be the first by a Chinese president to Vietnam after the 18th National Congress of the CPC in November 2012. "The visit is of great significance in promoting the comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership and will be a milestone in China-Vietnam bilateral ties," Hong said.

The upcoming visit highlighted the importance that leaders of the two parties and two countries attach to the development of bilateral relations, according to the ambassador. (Xinhua)

No one should Dictate own Decisions, Views to Syrian People: Zarif

TEHRAN - Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif says no one should "dictate" its own decisions and views to Syrian people, who have been suffering from a foreign-backed militancy for over four years, Press TV reports.

Zarif made the remark on Friday after the conclusion of the international negotiations aimed at resolving the ongoing crisis in Syria in the Austrian capital city of Vienna.

"The future of Syria can only be determined by the people of Syria. People here are not here to dictate," he said, adding that those who want "to help in the future of

Syria have to facilitate political dialog between the Syrian people."

The Iranian foreign minister also said all sides involved in the conflict should recognize that terrorism and extremism cannot be used even as temporary assets, urging a collective effort in the fight against extremist groups operating in the Middle East.

"There won't be a possibility to take advantage of terrorists however temporary, and they all need to realize that the security in this region requires everybody to work together in order to fight terrorism and extremism," Zarif noted. (PressTV)

PMs of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan Discuss Border Issues in Dushanbe



BISHKEK - Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan Temir Sariyev and Prime Minister of Tajikistan Kokhir Rasulzoda have discussed a wide range of bilateral cooperation including border issues at the meeting of heads of CIS governments in Dushanbe. The sides praised the

level of cooperation of two countries and expressed readiness to expand cooperation in trade, economic, transport, communication, energy fields. Sariyev arrived in Dushanbe on Thursday evening to attend the meeting of heads of CIS governments. (AKIpress)