

Qatar, U.S. Vow to Cut Terrorism Financing

DOHA - Qatar reiterated its commitment to defeating terrorism by strengthening law to cut off terrorism financing from within the state, Qatar News Agency (QNA) reported on Tuesday.

A joint statement has been issued between the United States and Qatar during the visit of U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin, stating that both countries reaffirmed the joint efforts to defeat terrorism and its financing.

"We agreed to enhance our cooperation to counter the financing of terrorism in key areas of mutual concerns ... by substantially increasing the sharing of information on terrorist finan-



cers in the region," Mnuchin said. The U.S. official held a number of meetings during his visit to Doha, included with Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and Prime Minister Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al Thani.

In July, the United States and Qatar have signed an agreement aimed at combating the financing of terrorism. The move came after the Gulf crisis began on June 5 when the Arab quartet, namely Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt, decided to sever diplomatic ties with Qatar, accusing Doha of supporting and financing terrorism, which Doha denies. (Xinhua)

Turkey Says "Unacceptable" to Invite Kurdish PYD to Russia-Backed Astana Talks

ANKARA - Turkey cannot accept the Syrian Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) militia being invited by Russia to Syria talks in the Kazakh capital of Astana, Presidential spokesperson Ibrahim Kalin said on Wednesday.

"We do not see any problems in inviting other Syrian Kurdish groups, but PYD/YPG is a terrorist organization. We will not accept inclusion of a terrorist group into a platform like Astana [talks on Syria]," Kalin said on

his weekly press conference.

Kalin also said the problem had been "mostly solved" after Turkish officials' immediate intervention, adding that Ankara told Moscow "this kind of initiatives will not be welcomed."

According to local media, Russia has invited the Kurdish-led authorities in northern Syria to Astana talks on November 30-31, as Moscow seeks to launch a new initiative to end the 6-year-long Syrian conflict. (Xinhua)

Japan's Parliament Re-Elects Shinzo Abe as Prime Minister

TOKYO - Japan's lower house of parliament re-elected Shinzo Abe as prime minister on Wednesday after his party won a resounding victory in a snap election last month.

Abe, who has been Japan's leader since December 2012, easily won the balloting with 312 votes in the 465-seat lower house. He reappointed the same ministers to his Cabinet later in the day. They were officially sworn in at a palace ceremony.

Abe, 63, dissolved the lower house in late September to force an election. Political

analysts saw the move as an attempt to win a new public mandate and re-establish his hold on power after a plunge in approval ratings during the summer. His Liberal Democratic Party won a large majority in the Oct. 22 vote. Together with a junior coalition partner, the Komei Party, it retained a two-thirds ma-



majority in the lower house. The victory boosts Abe's chances of being re-elected as LDP leader next

September for another three-year term, potentially extending his premiership to 2021. (AP)

Tillerson, Russian Envoy Seek to Resolve Ukraine, Syria Conflicts



WASHINGTON - U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson met Russian Ambassador Anatoly Antonov here

on Tuesday, seeking solutions to Ukraine and Syria conflicts.

During their talk, Tillerson and Antonov exchanged

views on the need to restore Ukraine's territorial integrity and fully implement the Minsk peace agreements, U.S. State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said in a statement.

The two also talked about battles against the Islamic State group in Syria and the United States' continued commitment to the Geneva talks

as the best path toward a political solution to the six-year long conflict, according to the statement. The Minsk agreements, reached in September 2014 and February 2015 respectively, envisaged a series of security and political steps designed to peacefully end the conflict.

The agreements include a cease-fire, a withdrawal of heavy weaponry from the contact line, a prisoner exchange and local elections in Donbas in eastern Ukraine, among other measures. (Xinhua)

S. Korea to Take "Focusing on People" as Main Economic Policy Goal

SEOUL - South Korean President Moon Jae-in said Wednesday that he will take "focusing on people" as his administration's main economic policy goal for the rest of his single, five-year presidency as people suffered from inequalities and unfairness.

Moon said in his second address to the National Assembly that though the economy overcame the 1997 financial crisis with the help of people's hardship and efforts, people have since suffered from aftermaths such as pro-

longed low growth and unemployment.

The weak role of the government caused people's outcry over social irregularities and contradiction during the candlelit rallies on the streets under the past administration, the president said. Moon vowed to take a paradigm of people-focused economy as his government's main policy goal. Moon's national address followed the end of Tuesday of the parliamentary audit of government ministries that had lasted for about three weeks. (Xinhua)

May Says Takes Allegations of Russian Interference Seriously

LONDON - British Prime Minister Theresa May said on Wednesday she took reports of Russian interference in elections seriously, following an ongoing investigation in the United States over alleged Russian meddling in its 2016 presidential vote.

Earlier on Wednesday, Britain's electoral commission said it had opened an investigation into funding of the leave campaign in last year's Brexit referendum.

"We take very seriously issues of Russian intervention, or Russian attempts to intervene, in electoral processes or in the democratic processes of any country," May told parliament. (Reuters)

Japan PM to Fully Discuss North Korea with Trump

TOKYO - Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe says he hopes to fully discuss North Korea's development of nuclear weapons with President Donald Trump when the U.S. leader visits Tokyo next week. Abe, who was re-elected by parliament's lower house on Wednesday, described the security environment surrounding Japan as among the worst since World War II because of North Korea's growing nuclear and missile threat.

He said he hopes for ample time to discuss North Korea with Trump in order to step up cooperation between the U.S. and Japan. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, re-elected to the post in a lower house vote, has installed his Cabinet, reappointing the same ministers back to their posts before a snap election last month. (AP)

Returned IS Fighters Remain "Security Concern" in Australia: FM

CANBERRA - Dozens of returned foreign fighters remain a "significant security concern" to Australia even though the war against Islamic State (IS) in the Middle East was coming to a conclusion, Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said Wednesday. Bishop said the government holds concerns for about 40 returned fighters who have slipped back into the country, but quelled concerns by saying that those who had not been picked up by authorities at Australia's airports were being monitored closely. Speaking to News Corp, Bishop said the biggest concern held by authorities was that foreign



fighters would be keen to pass on information and terror techniques learned while supporting IS in the Middle East. "Around 40 people have returned to Australia after travelling to Syria and Iraq and joining groups involved in the conflict and some of these returnees remain a significant security concern," Bishop said. "Foreign fighters inspire and incite

terror, pass on skills and can attract more extremists to terror networks." Later, in a statement provided to the Nine Network, a spokesperson for the foreign minister confirmed that while concerns were held for a number of returned jihadis, most were in detention, while those who aren't were "being monitored." (Xinhua)

Russia Strikes Terrorists in Syria with Cruise Missiles

MOSCOW - The Russian Veliky Novgorod submarine launched three Kalibr cruise missiles from the Mediterranean Sea at facilities of Islamic State (IS) terrorist in the eastern Syrian province Deir el-Zour, the Russian Defense Ministry said Tuesday. The missiles destroyed command posts, a fortified area with a number of militants and armored vehicles, as well as a large

arsenal of weapons and ammunition of IS near the settlement of Abu Kamal, a ministry statement said. The destruction of all the targets was confirmed by objective control data, it said. In the last two months, the Veliky Novgorod submarine has conducted four launches with high-precision Kalibr cruise missiles against the terrorists from 350 to 700 kilometers range, the ministry said. (Xinhua)

U.S. House Republicans Delay Release of Tax Bill until Thursday

WASHINGTON - House Republicans have decided to delay the release of the long-awaited bill that would overhaul the U.S. tax code until Thursday, an influential Republican lawmaker said Tuesday night.

"Ways and Means Committee Members met tonight to discuss the work we are doing on pro-growth tax reform. In consultation with President Trump and our leadership team, we have decided to release the bill text on Thursday," the committee's chairman, Kevin Brady, said in a statement.

The powerful tax-writing committee had planned to release the tax bill on Wednesday. Analysts said the delay revealed the difficulties Republicans had in resolving how to raise enough money to pay for the massive corporate tax cuts.

According to estimates from the Tax Foundation, a Washington policy group, the corporate tax cut would cost 1.6 trillion U.S. dollars over a decade. Republican leaders are exploring measures to limit the tax bill's net revenue loss to 1.5 trillion dollars in a budget resolution that the House and Senate have approved.

Despite of big differences over tax reform among Republicans, U.S. President Donald Trump said on Tuesday that he wanted to sign a tax bill by Christmas, setting an ambitious timetable for Republican-controlled Congress. (Xinhua)

Neighbor News

Chinese, Russian PMs Meet in Beijing on Ties

BEIJING - Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and his Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev met here on Tuesday, agreeing on closer cooperation and stronger ties.

Medvedev is the first foreign leader to visit China after the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC). "This has shown the closeness and high level of China-Russia ties," Li said.

China is ready to consolidate trust, expand cooperation and exchanges with Russia, to bring cooperation visions into reality through Prime Ministers' Regular Meeting as well as other cooperation mechanisms, Li said. Under the new circumstances, China will further deepen reform and

opening-up, nurture new driving forces, and share development opportunities with countries around the world, said the Chinese premier.

Li also briefed Medvedev on the 19th CPC National Congress.

Medvedev congratulated on the success of the congress. Hailing Russia-China comprehensive strategic partnership of coordination as "high-level" and "future-oriented", he said Russia expects joint efforts with China for greater progress of cooperation.

Medvedev is on an official China visit from Tuesday to Thursday. Li and Medvedev will hold the 22nd China-Russia Prime Ministers' Regular Meeting on Wednesday. (Xinhua)

Putin Visits Tehran for Talks on Syria, Nuclear Deal

TEHRAN - Russian President Vladimir Putin met Iran's leadership Wednesday in Tehran as the two Damascus allies push a Syria peace plan and the Kremlin offers its backing for a landmark nuclear deal facing US opposition.

Putin - on his first visit to Tehran since 2015 - held talks with President Hassan Rouhani, before he was due to meet supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The Kremlin strongman will also take part in a three-way summit with Rouhani and the leader of ex-Soviet Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev aimed at bolstering economic ties between their energy-rich nations.

Moscow said Syria will be a focus of Putin's visit, which comes after

Russia, Iran and Turkey pledged after negotiations in Kazakhstan on Tuesday to bring the Syrian regime and its opponents together for a "congress" to push peace efforts.

Russia and Iran, key military supporters of President Bashar al-Assad, and Turkey, which backs Syrian rebels, have organized a series of peace talks in the Kazakh capital Astana this year, agreeing on the establishment of "de-escalation" zones in various parts of the war-torn country.

Wednesday's talks will also focus on the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, which saw sanctions lifted in exchange for limits on Tehran's atomic programme and which is under pressure from US President Donald Trump. (AFP)

Some Foreign Elements Trying to Halt CPEC, Progress in Country: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan's Federal Minister for Interior Ahsan Iqbal has said that some foreign elements were trying to halt China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and progress in the country.

The negative propaganda launched against the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N), government could not disturb the vote bank of this popular party of the country, he said while talking to a private news channel. The present government had made efforts for energy projects, economy and restoration of peace in Karachi.

Some hidden hands or foreign elements wanted to destabilize the country and creating unrest for halting development, he said. To a question he said that Nawaz Sharif visited London due to ailment of his spouse. He added that former prime minister would return to Pakistan on November 2. (Monitoring Desk)

Turkmenistan Introduces New Tariffs for Gas, Electricity, Other Services

ASHGABAT - New tariffs for gas, electricity, road transport and communications services have been introduced in Turkmenistan, the country's State News Agency reported.

It was earlier reported that in order to continue the development of free market relations in the economy of Turkmenistan, as well as to regulate the cost of services rendered to the population, Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov signed a corresponding decree. In accordance with the document, the following gas tariffs have been introduced by taking into account the value-added

tax:
- for foreign citizens who have a document issued in line with the legislation of Turkmenistan that gives the right to reside in the country, as well as for stateless persons and refugees - 20 manats (\$5.71 as of Nov. 1) per 1,000 cubic meters of used natural gas;
- for the share of foreign investors in companies participating in foreign investments, as well as construction companies that are contractors carrying out construction and installation work in Turkmenistan under contracts in foreign currency - \$50 per 1,000 cubic meters of used natural gas and etc. (Trend)