

# Russia Does not want to Enter Arms Race: Putin

MOSCOW - Russia's military modernization program doesn't mean that the nation intends to engage in an arms race, President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday. Speaking during a meeting with the top military officers and arms industry officials, Putin said that the ongoing military upgrade is a compensation for the years of insufficient funding that followed the Soviet collapse.

He added that "we have no intention to pull into some arms race, let alone try to catch up with or overtake some-



body. " Putin said that while

the Russian defense industries have succeeded

in increasing output, some production tar-

gets haven't been met. He also emphasized the

need to continue efforts to replace imported weapons components with locally-produced ones.

The gathering was the third meeting on military issues in as many days, reflecting the close attention the Russian leader was paying to the army's modernization amid tensions with the West over the crisis in Ukraine.

On Tuesday, Putin said that Russia would counter NATO's U.S.-led missile defense with new strike weapons capable of piercing the shield.(AP)

## Turkey Calls for Safe Zone Ahead of G20 Meeting

ANKARA - Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Wednesday called on world leaders to rally behind Turkey's plan for a safe zone inside Syrian territory, days before it hosts the G20 summit. Speaking to a group of businessmen in the capital Ankara, Erdogan said the Syrian conflict would be a "major topic" at the G20 summit in the Mediterranean resort of Antalya on Sunday and Monday. US President Barack Obama, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Saudi King Salman are among the world leaders attending the meeting. Erdogan has repeatedly pressed

for a safe zone inside Syria stretching down from Azaz and Jarabulus in the north, which could house some of the 2.2 million Syrian refugees currently hosted by Turkey and act as a buffer to protect Turkish territory. The idea has met with only a lukewarm response from world powers but there have been indications from Ankara in the last few days that the West is coming closer to its point of view. "More realistic steps need to be taken for a solution including our proposal in particular to establish a safe zone cleared of terror," Erdogan said. He implied ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

## WMD Risks to be Discussed at Asia-Pacific talks in New Zealand

WELLINGTON - Security and public safety officials from 25 Asian and Pacific countries will gather here next week for talks on preventing trafficking in Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs), an official said Wednesday.

Exercise Maru, a discussion-based exercise, will be held from Nov. 17 to 19 with an aim to improve capability to stop the trafficking of WMDs by testing counter-proliferation systems and capabilities, New Zealand Customs Minister Nicky Wagner said. The countries participating in the exercise included the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Singapore and the



Republic of Korea. "Exercise Maru is a great opportunity for countries to further discuss and learn how we can all work together to be prepared for an event involving the trafficking of weapons of mass destruction in our region," Wagner said in a statement. "While New

Zealand is not viewed as being at high risk, it could be seen as a potential transit point, or a place to send chemicals, technology, and components to be put together before sending them on to do harm elsewhere." Exercise Maru is the second in a series of annual, dedicated Prolif-

eration Security Initiative (PSI) exercises to be hosted on a rotating basis by the six participating countries. The PSI was launched in May 2003 by the United States in response to the threat posed to international security by the proliferation of WMDs. (Xinhua)

## Assad's Opponents Dismiss Russian Ideas for Solving Syria Crisis

BEIRUT - Syrian opposition figures and Gulf commentators dismissed on Wednesday a Russian draft proposal for a process to solve the Syrian crisis, saying Moscow's aim was to keep President Bashar al-Assad in power and marginalize dissenting voices. A draft document obtained by Reuters on Tuesday showed Moscow would like Damascus and unspecified opposition groups to agree on launching a constitutional reform process of up to 18 months, followed by early

presidential elections. Russia, which with Iran has been Assad's top ally during Syria's nearly five-year conflict, has denied any document is being prepared before a second round of international peace talks in Vienna this week. The text, obtained by Reuters, does not rule out Assad's participation in early presidential elections, something his enemies say is impossible if there is to be peace. "The Syrian people have never accepted the dictatorship of Assad and they will not



accept that it is reintroduced or reformulated in another way," said Monzer Akbik, member of the Western-backed Syrian National Coalition. "The Russians are now try-

ing to play the game they have been playing since Geneva," he told Reuters, referring to United Nations-led peace talks that collapsed in 2014. Russia ...*(More on P4)...(19)*

## France Urges US Guarantees for Iran Trade

PARIS - French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius has urged the US to give concrete guarantees that it will not penalize European companies for trade with Iran after sanctions are lifted on Tehran. Secretary of State John Kerry has said European firms would not be subject to penalties when sanctions are lifted but European governments want assurances that any new trade would be safe if the measures were reimposed. The call for guarantees comes as

France and Italy gear up to receive Iranian President Hassan Rouhani next week for the first official visit of the Iranian chief executive to Europe in a decade. On Tuesday, the French presidency said France and Iran will sign several agreements, including in the air transport, health and agriculture, during the visit. French companies have a long history of commercial activities in Iran but they were slapped with heavy penalties by the ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

## Czechs to Represent Poland at EU Summit in Malta

ANKARA - The latest about the flow of people traveling across Europe in search of a better life. All times local. Polish and Czech officials say that the Czech Republic will represent Poland at an informal European Union summit on Thursday on migration, the result of domestic political infighting in Poland. Poland's outgoing centrist prime minister, Ewa Kopacz, cannot attend the EU summit because she and her government must resign the same day at the swearing-in of the newly elected parliament. Poland's conservative president, Andrzej Duda, set the day for parliament's first sitting for Thursday, preventing Kopacz from joining other heads of government and sparking accusations that Duda is trying to keep Poland from playing a constructive role in the talks on migration. Duda won the presidency in May, representing the populist and Euroskeptic Law and Justice party, which also won a parliamentary majority in an election Oct. 25. Austria's Interior Ministry says it expects a record number of 95,000 asylum applications this year. The forecast seen Wednesday on the ministry website exceeds ministry estimates of 80,000 for all of 2015 published just a few weeks ago and is more than double the previous high of 39,854 in 2002. Austria initially was mostly a transit country for those wanting to go to Germany, Sweden and other destinations further. But the new numbers reflect that it now is increasingly a final destination for many refugees seeking safety and a new life.(AP)

## Egypt President Makes Surprise Visit to Sharm El-Sheikh

CAIRO - Egypt's president made a surprise visit of the Sharm el-Sheikh airport on Wednesday, seeking to reassure tourists that the vacation destination is safe after the Oct. 31 crash of a Russian airliner that took off from the Red Sea resort. Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi was returning from an Arab-South American summit in Riyadh when he made the unannounced visit. "Our visit today aims to reassure people inside and outside Egypt," el-Sissi said after greeting some foreign tourists and wading through a packed terminal at the Red Sea resort in the Sinai Peninsula. "We want people who come here to be secure and safe and to live and go back safely to their countries," he told private Egyptian broadcaster CBC. All 224 people aboard the Metrojet Airbus A321 were killed in the crash in the Sinai Peninsula, which took place shortly after takeoff from Sharm el-Sheikh en route to St. Petersburg. Most of the passengers were Russian tourists returning home. El-Sissi also said that authorities have carried out regular checks on all airports over the past few months, and that other countries had been involved in the inspections. Earlier in the day, a Russian search and rescue team that was brought to Egypt after the crash left to fly home to Moscow. The team of 48 had been recovering bodies at the crash site in Sinai's Hassana area, some 70 kilometers (44 miles) south of the peninsula's city of el-Arish. (AP)

## Russia to Draft Anti-Recession Plan for 2016

VLADIVOSTOK - Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has said that the government will have to draft an anti-recession plan in case the economy deteriorates in 2016. "If conditions deteriorate - and as reasonable people who are responsible for the national economy, we must consider all scenarios, even worst-case ones - we'll have to draft an anti-recession plan for 2016," said Medvedev in an interview with Rossiyskaya Gazeta newspaper recently. He also noted that



one of the main objectives of the plan was supporting small companies and reducing taxes for small- and medium-sized ones. "For this we prepared a number of measures," he said.

Medvedev said that living under an anti-recession plan was simple, because you had a certain amount of money and couldn't expect more. He added that if ...*(More on P4)...(21)*

## Moon Calls on Lifting Obstruction on India-Nepal Border Without any Delay

KATHMANDU - United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on Wednesday called on all sides to lift the obstruction on the India-Nepal border without further delay on Wednesday. "The Secretary-General underlines Nepal's rights of free transit as a landlocked nation as well as for humanitarian reasons, and calls on all sides to lift the obstructions without further delay," Stephane Dujarric, the spokesman for the UN Secretary General said at a daily press briefing in New York. The UN Secretary General's remark has come at a time when Nepal has been reeling under acute shortage of fuel and essential commodities

due to blockade at the India-Nepal border subsequently after the Himalayan nation adopted a new constitution on Sept. 20. According to the UN Secretary General spokesperson, Ban has reiterated his concern over the obstruction of essential supplies on the Nepal-India border. Deputy Prime Minister of Nepal, who is also Foreign Minister, had expressed deep concern last week that ongoing fuel shortage due to obstruction at the India-Nepal border points may cause a humanitarian crisis in the country very soon. "As we are seeking to address political problem through dialogue, ...*(More on P4)...(22)*

## Nieghbor News

### APEC not Venue for South China Sea Discussion: China

BEIJING - China said on Wednesday that the upcoming Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit is not an appropriate place to discuss the South China Sea issue, after the U.S. State Department claimed the topic would come up during the gathering. A State Department spokesperson reportedly said the United States and its allies would discuss regional disputes over sovereignty in the South China Sea on the sidelines of the APEC summit, though it is not on the formal agenda of the event, which is scheduled on Nov. 17 to 19 in Manila. As the most important

economic and trade forum in the Asia-Pacific region, APEC has avoided talk of political and security issues, as agreed by most of its members, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said at a regular news briefing. Not discussing sensitive issues is a fundamental precondition for APEC's existence and development, said Hong, stressing that "APEC is not an appropriate place to discuss the South China Sea issue." "As host of the APEC summit, the Philippines has said no political or security issues will be, or should be, on the agenda," he added. (Xinhua)

### Iran Progressed Despite Western Restrictions: Khamenei

TEHRAN - Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei says conditions set by Western countries for supplying Iran with nuclear fuel prompted the country's young scientists to produce the fuel on Iran's soil. Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks in a meeting with heads of Iranian universities and higher education centers in the capital, Tehran, on Wednesday.

"In the case of selling 20-percent [nuclear] fuel [to Iran], Western [countries] set humiliating conditions. Of course, this ended in our favor and

our youths made effort and produced it [inside the country]," the Leader added. Ayatollah Khamenei stated that the success of the Iranian youths in producing nuclear fuel inside the country put Western countries "on edge." The Leader noted that according to the latest figures, Iran has gone down two notches in terms of the pace of its scientific progress.

"This is bad. With this pace of scientific progress we are way behind. We have been kept behind for many long years," the Leader added. (PressTV)

### Nawaz Reposes Trust in Navy's Operational Capabilities

KARACHI - Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif reposed complete trust and confidence in the operational capabilities of Pakistan Navy and urged that "the challenges at hand necessitate eternal vigilance to safeguard against external and internal threats". Nawaz was speaking at the culminating event of Pakistan Navy's maritime exercise 'Sea Spark 2015' on Wednesday. The event was aimed to showcase the combat readiness of navy, where the premier witnessed the wide ranging maneuvers by an array of naval combat platforms in North Arabian Sea. The naval forces dem-

onstrated a range of naval warfare operations against traditional and non-traditional threats including counter terrorism and anti-piracy drills, live weapons firings and fly past by naval aviation units. Earlier on his arrival on-board Pakistan Navy Ship (PNS) Nasr, Nawaz was received by Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Zakaullah. The Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Operations) gave a detailed briefing to the prime minister on conduct of the exercise and navy's salient contributions towards maritime sector, coastal development and Humanitarian Assistance operations. (Agencies)

### OSCE/ODIHR Criticizes US for Sending Three Guantanamo Prisoners to Tajikistan

DUSHANBE - The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) has criticized the United States Government for sending three Guantanamo prisoners to Tajikistan despite the Tajik government allegedly threatening those individuals during visits to Guantanamo in 2002 and 2003. The OSCE/ODIHR Report Human Rights Situation of Detainees at Guantanamo, in particular, notes that the US sent three detainees, Rukniddin Sharipov, Sobit Vohidov and Mazhariddin Fayzullo,

to Tajikistan despite the Tajik government allegedly threatening those individuals during visits to Guantanamo in 2002 and 2003. At the time of their transfer, the United States Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor's 2006 report explained that Tajikistan's security officials engaged in "systematic beatings, sexual abuse, and electric shock to extort confessions during interrogations" and that courts regularly allowed confessions induced from torture and beatings. It also reported that members of extremist ...*(More on P4)...(23)*