

Kerry Discusses Renewed Bombing in Aleppo with Russia

LIMA - U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said Thursday he discussed Ukraine and "all aspects" of Aleppo including renewed bombing in the Syrian city this week in a meeting with Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.

Speaking to reporters after their one-on-one talk during the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Peru, Lavrov denied that Russia's military was carrying out airstrikes in rebel-held Aleppo this week.

"Our air force and the Syrian airforce only work in the provinces of Idlib and Homs to prevent the ISIL who might be leaving Mosul from getting



to Syria," Lavrov said, referring to Islamic State militants in Iraq.

Air strikes and shelling in rebel-held Aleppo has killed dozens this week, according to a monitoring group. The bombardment restarted Tuesday after a four-week pause, part of a wider military escalation by the Syrian government and its allies, including Russia, against insurgents. Lavrov did not comment when asked about the future of the Iran nuclear agreement that Russia helped broker once Donald Trump, who has vowed to dismantle it, becomes president of the United States. (Reuters)

UK's May Tells Germany: Brexit Preparations are 'on Track'

BERLIN - Prime Minister Theresa May on Friday assured her German counterpart that preparations for Britain's exit from the European Union were on schedule, and that the legal process would begin by the end of March next year.

"Our work is on track, we do stand ready to trigger Article 50 before the end of March, or by the end of March 2017," she told German Chancellor Angela Merkel during a joint media briefing in Berlin

ahead of a bilateral meeting. May's comments follow persistent criticism from opposition lawmakers that the government does not have an exit strategy. There is also the possibility that her plans could be delayed by a legal decision that she must win parliamentary approval before triggering Brexit. The government's appeal against that decision will be heard in early December.

"I want to see this as a



smooth process, an orderly process, working towards a solution that is in the interests of both the United Kingdom but also in the interests of our European partners too," May said.

Merkel said it would not be possible to discuss Brexit in detail during their meeting on Friday as Britain has not yet started the formal process of leaving the bloc. (Reuters)

Tense Russia-U.S. Ties Harmful to World Interests: Russian FM

MOSCOW - A tense relationship between Russia and the United States does not meet the interests of the American people or solve the problems in the world, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said here Friday.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and newly-elected U.S. President Donald Trump also discussed bilateral relations, he said during an inter-

view with "Russia 24" TV channel.

On the issue of Syria, Lavrov said it will be one of the main issues for discussion at the Geneva meeting on Friday.

The meeting will be held in Geneva with the participation of representatives from Russia, the United States and Middle Eastern countries which are involved in the Syrian conflict. (Xinhua)

Battle for Aleppo: Syrian Forces Intensify Air Campaign

ALEPPO - At least 49 people have been killed in heavy government air strikes in the eastern part of Syria's largest city, Aleppo, witnesses and activists say. The overnight bombardment, which began late on Thursday, was part of a wider military escalation by the Syrian government and its allies against opposition groups holed up in Aleppo.

With the latest victims, the total number of people killed in the besieged city since Bashar al-Assad's government launched its

military offensive on Tuesday has climbed to 150. Activist released dramatic video footage of a rescue operation involving a six-year-old child who was trapped under the rubble of a collapsed building. The child survived after his residential neighborhood was targeted with missiles and unguided explosive devices called barrel bombs. Al Jazeera's Osama Bin Javid, reporting from Gaziantep on the Turkey-Syria border, said the bombardment was the ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

2016 Sees Significant Increase of Migrant Deaths in Mediterranean

GENEVA - The International Organization for Migration (IOM) reported Friday that 4,636 migrants and refugees died crossing the Mediterranean Sea to reach Europe this year, marking 1,000 more fatalities than those recorded over the same period in 2015.

This year's latest death toll follows a deadly spree of shipwrecks in the Mediterranean which saw an estimated 365 migrants go missing after six boats capsized in the past three days.

"What is really of great concern about these shipwrecks is that the bad weather did not stop the human smugglers from forcing people onto these unsafe dinghies," IOM spokesman Flavio Di Giacomo said in a written statement.

"From the first testimonies that we collected so far, it seems that the migrants were forced on board, even though they were clearly afraid of the rough seas. It was extremely dangerous in bad weather," he added.



According to IOM figures, most deaths this year (4,154) have been recorded on the central Mediterranean route linking North

Africa with Italy. A further 420 fatalities have been documented on the eastern Mediterranean ...*(More on P4)...(21)*

6 Dead, 3 Missing as Migrant Boat Capsizes off Turkey Coast

ANKARA - Six people were killed and three others missing on Friday when a boat carrying migrants capsized off the coast of Turkey's Didim in the Aegean province of Aydin, Dogan News Agency reported.

The fiber boat, carrying 13 Syrian migrants bound for Greek islands, reportedly capsized off the Turkish coast due to the bad weather, the report said.

Six migrants died and four rescued from the sea. The searching for the missing migrants was ongoing.

On Nov. 15, coast guard units had caught a total of 40 Syrians attempting to cross over to Greece from Didim. (Xinhua)

Palestinians Count on Trump for Achieving Two-State Solution

RAMALLAH - A senior Palestinian official said Friday the Palestinians are looking forward to positively working with the U.S. administration of President-elect Donald Trump to realize the two-state solution.

Saeb Erekat, secretary general of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), made the announcement in a meeting in the West Bank city of Ramallah with the U.S. Consul General Donald Bloom.

He also said in a statement that he conveyed to President Trump that "all types of Israeli settlement are illegal," adding that "the Israeli government's decision to annex occupied East Jerusalem is illegal, and we don't recognize it."

Erekat had earlier met in Ramallah with visiting New Zealand Minister of Foreign Affairs Murray ...*(More on P4)...(25)*

Canada Extradites Second Genocide Fugitive to Rwanda

KIGALI - The Canadian government has deported to Rwanda Henri Jean-Claude Seyoboka, a suspect of the 1994 genocide that killed close to 1 million Rwandans.

Seyoboka, who has been living in Canada since 1996, arrived at Kigali International Airport on Friday morning from Canada. The deportation ends his 20-year run from justice.

The 50-year-old is the second genocide suspect deported by Canada, following Leon Mugesera in 2012. Seyoboka is accused of genocide, crimes against humanity, murder and extermination that took place in Nyarugenge in the capital Kigali, where he participated in meetings that planned the 1994 genocide, according to Rwanda National Public Prosecution Authority (NPPA). Speaking to reporters shortly after the arrival of the suspect, NPPA spokesperson



Faustin Nkusi hailed the Canadian government's cooperation. "We are grateful for the effort put in by several countries across the world towards fighting impunity and seeking justice to Rwanda genocide ...*(More on P4)...(22)*

Malaysian PM Slams Opposition Plotting Anti-Gov't Rallies

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KUALA LUMPUR - Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak slammed the opposition Friday on plotting rallies against the government.

The opposition parties have used purportedly non-partisan non-governmental organization (NGO) to put pressure on the government, instead of exercising their rights to criticize through proper channels, Najib said in post on his personal website.

Bersih, a group calling for clean elections and governance, has planned a rally in downtown in the capital city of Kuala Lumpur on Saturday. Previous rallies organized by the group have seen clashes with ...*(More on P4)...(23)*

Ukraine's Shadow Economy Shrinks Amid Overall Stabilization

KIEV - Ukraine's shadow economy fell by 4 percentage points in the first half of 2016 to 38 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) amid the overall stabilization in the country, the Economic Development and Trade Ministry said late Thursday.

The macroeconomic recovery, the improved business climate, the taxation reform and the start of the de-shadowing process on the labor market were the main factors behind the reduced share of the underground economy, the ministry said in a statement.

Among the key imbalances that contribute to the development of economic activities that yield no taxes, the ministry listed the reduction of the corporate sector lending, ...*(More on P4)...(27)*

Iraqi Forces Struggle to Tell Friend from Foe in Mosul Street Battle

MOSUL, Iraq - A vehicle shielded with metal plates and driven by a suicide attacker turned onto a main road filled with soldiers in eastern Mosul and burst into a ball of fire, causing several casualties.

As it careered down the road it was riddled with gunfire as Iraqi forces responded to the latest Islamic State counterattack against their push to reclaim the northern city.

This and what followed on Thursday were indicative of the challenges Iraq's

U.S.-backed military faces in fighting enemies who are willing to kill themselves to defend their last major stronghold in the country while surrounded by well over a million civilians.

Elite Counter Terrorism Service (CTS) forces posted at intersections along the road pounded targets a few hundred meters away with heavy machine gun fire. Sharpshooters honed in on black-clad figures scurrying across rooftops or popping out of houses ...*(More on P4)...(26)*

Neighbor News

Tajikistan, India Review Bilateral Ties

DUSHANBE - Tajik-Indian cooperation The Tajik-Indian relations were the focus of the meeting of Tajikistan's First Deputy Foreign Minister Nizomiddin Zohidi and Deputy Foreign Minister of India Sujata Mehta in Dushanbe, said the press service of the Tajik Foreign Ministry.

The diplomats considered a wide range of issues of the Tajik-Indian

ties and development of cooperation of the two countries within the international and regional organizations.

They discussed security and sustainable development of the region, combating terrorism and extremism and the agenda of the upcoming ministerial conference on Afghanistan issues scheduled for December 3-4 in India. (AKIpress)

China Hopes Bilateral Arrangements Not Harmful for other Countries

BEIJING - China hopes that bilateral arrangements between any countries do not harm the interests of other countries, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said Friday.

Geng Shuang made the remarks at a daily press briefing when asked to comment on the meeting between U.S. President-elect Donald Trump and Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe Thursday.

Geng said China is pleased to see the development of normal

bilateral relations between any countries, but noted that such relations should respect the security concerns of countries in the region and be conducive to regional peace and stability.

He also said the 27th session of the China-U.S. Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade (JCCT), slated for November 21-23, is being organized.

Chinese Vice Premier Wang Yang will attend the JCCT, in the United States. (Xinhua)

Ambassadors See Great Momentum in Belarus-Turkmenistan Relations

MOSCOW - Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Belarus to Russia Igor Petrishenko met with Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Turkmenistan to Russia Batyr Niyazliyev in Moscow on 17 November.

The diplomats noted that the cooperation between Belarus and Turkmenistan has been developing rapidly, the press service of the Belarusian Embassy in Russia told BelTA. "The parties said that the po-

litical, trade, economic, and humanitarian cooperation between Belarus and Turkmenistan has been growing at a rapid pace. Igor Petrishenko and Batyr Niyazliyev also discussed the current state and prospects of the bilateral cooperation in a wide range of areas of mutual interest," the press service said. The diplomatic relations between Belarus and Turkmenistan were established on 21 January 1993. In 2015, the bilateral trade totaled \$93.6 million. (BelTA)

Iranian Official Pledges Unwavering Support for Iraq's Anti-Terror Fight

TEHRAN - Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani says the security of the region is intertwined with that of Iraq, reaffirming Tehran's support for Baghdad in restoring peace and security to the Arab country.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran always stands by the Iraqi nation and government and is fully ready to render any type of assistance [to Iraq]," Larijani said on Wednesday during a meeting with First Deputy Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament Sheikh Humam Hamoudi in Tehran on Wednesday.

Iran supports Iraq's territorial integrity and unity

among Iraqi groups, including Sunnis, Shias and Kurds, Larijani said, expressing optimism that the Arab country could overcome its problems through solidarity. He also hailed recent gains made by the Iraqi troops and volunteer forces against terrorists and hoped for their final victory against terrorism. The Iranian official warned against rifts among Muslims and said, "The biggest threat to security and stability in the Islamic world is fanning the flames of religious strife and stoking tensions among Muslim ...*(More on P4)...(24)*

Erdogan Arrives in Uzbekistan to Mull Interstate Co-Op

TASHKENT - Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan paid a visit to Uzbekistan on Thursday evening, Uzbekistan's national news agency (UzA) reported.

The Uzbek Deputy Prime Minister Adham Ikramov welcomed Erdogan at the Samarkand airport.

Turkey's president is accompanied by Deputy Prime Ministers Veysi Kaynak and Yildirim Tuğrul Türkeş, Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu, Economy Minister Nihat Zeybekci and Minister of

Energy and Natural Resources Berat Albayrak. Erdogan is expected to visit the resting place of Uzbek President Islam Karimov and pay tribute to his memory.

During the scheduled meeting, the Uzbek Acting President Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Erdogan will discuss the state and prospects of the Uzbekistan-Turkey cooperation development.

In addition, they will exchange views on the topical regional and international issues. (Trend)