

# German Coalition Talks Collapse after FDP Withdraws

BERLIN - The three-party exploratory talks for the formation of Germany's new government failed late Sunday night after the Free Democratic Party (FDP) pulled out due to unbridgeable differences in immigration and energy.

FDP leader Christian Lindner said after the decision that there was no "basis of trust" with German Chancellor Angela Merkel's bloc of CDU (Christian Democratic Union) and CSU (Christian Social Union in Bavaria) and the Green Party.

"We don't blame anyone for sticking to their principles. But we also do so ourselves.



We were voted for to reverse the current trends, but we couldn't reach an agreement. It is better not to govern than to govern badly," Lindner said on Twitter.

Andreas Scheuer, CSU's general secretary, told German TV channel ZDF that the major unbridgeable difference on Sunday was migration.

The union and the FDP wanted a limit on immigration, which the Greens did not want. Moreover, the Greens demanded family reunions for refugees. In addition, the three parties also differed on climate policies, coal-fired power plants and finance. (Xinhua)

## France Wants 'Strong and Stable' Germany: Macron

PARIS - France wants a strong and stable Germany to move Europe forward and will continue to work with the current German government, an official at President Emmanuel Macron's office said on Monday. "For Germany and for Europe, we want our main partner to be stable and strong, to move forward together," the official said.

"This merely reinforces the need for France to make proposals, to take the initiative, to work on an am-



bitious European project that we will implement with our German partner," the official added.

Efforts to form a three-way coalition government have failed, Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Monday, pitching Germany into its worst political crisis in decades. (Reuters)

## EU, Iran Hold High-Level Talks Amid Trump's Threats

TEHRAN - Iran and the EU have started their third round of high-level talks following the 2016 implementation of a nuclear deal between the Islamic Republic and world countries. Helga Schmid, the EU's deputy political director, met Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi in Tehran Monday to discuss issues of mutual interest, the state news agency IRNA reported. Iran and the EU have already held two rounds of high-level negotiations in Tehran and Brussels, addressing

economy and commerce, energy, environment, transportation, human rights, higher education, research and technology, culture, and regional developments.

In her visit to Tehran, Schmid is accompanied by EU Special Representative for Human Rights Stavros Lambrinidis, the European Commission's Director General for International Cooperation and Development Stefano Manservigi, and the Commission's Director General for Energy Dominique Ristori.



As part of the third round, the two sides will attend a seminar titled, International Nuclear Cooperation: Expectations and Responsibilities, in Isfahan on Tuesday. The talks come amid efforts in the US Congress to undermine the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), as the international nuclear deal with Iran is officially called. (Presstv)

## Chinese Envoy Wraps up North Korea Trip after Meetings



BEIJING - A high-level Chinese envoy wrapped up a four-day trip to North Korea on Monday after meeting with top officials and discussing the tense state of affairs

on the Korean Peninsula and other issues.

Song Tao, the most senior Chinese official to visit Pyongyang, North Korea's capital, in two years, was officially tasked with

briefing the government on China's recent party congress. China's official Xinhua News Agency said the ruling parties of both countries agreed to strengthen exchanges and "push forward relations." Song and North Korean officials discussed "the Korean Peninsula issue and other issues of common concern," Xinhua said. Neither side had commented on the tone of the visit as Song wrapped up his official itinerary on Monday. China's foreign ministry, asked to comment on the

visit, repeated a standard line about Song's official itinerary and added nothing further.

Song, head of the Chinese Communist Party's International Department, met with North Korean ruling party Vice Chairman Choe Ryong Hae and former Foreign Minister Ri Su Yong. He also paid his respects to North Korean "eternal president" Kim Il Sung and "eternal general-secretary" Kim Jong Il, leader Kim Jong Un's dead grandfather and father. (AP)

## Russia to Initiate Meeting on Caspian Sea Status next Month

ASHGABAT - Russia will initiate a meeting on the status of the Caspian Sea in December, Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov said at a joint press conference with his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov in Baku Nov. 20.

"We exchanged the views on the legal status of the Caspian Sea," Mammadyarov said. "Russia will initiate new consultations at the ministerial level in early December. Of course, the Azerbaijani delegation will participate there."

"There are working ideas that can allow us to reach the level of the summit of the Caspian-littoral countries to address the issue of the legal status of the Caspian Sea," he added.

The Caspian littoral states - Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Turkmenistan and Iran - signed the Framework Convention for Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea in November of 2003.

Russia and Kazakhstan signed an agreement on the delimitation of the northern part of the Caspian Sea in order to exercise sovereign rights for subsoil use in July 1998.

The two countries signed a protocol to the agreement in May 2002. (Trend)

## South Korea Fears Further Missile Advances by North this Year in Threat to U.S.

SEOUL - North Korea may conduct additional missile tests this year to polish up its long-range missile technology and ramp up the threat against the United States, South Korea's spy agency said on Monday, adding that it was monitoring developments closely.

North Korea is pursuing nuclear weapons and missile programs in defiance of U.N. Security Council sanctions and has made no secret of its plans to develop a missile capable of hitting the U.S. mainland. It has fired two missiles over Japan.

The reclusive state appears to have carried out a recent missile engine test while brisk movements of vehicles were spotted near known missile facilities, Yi Wan-young, a member of South Korea's parliamentary intelligence committee which was briefed by Seoul's National Intelligence Service, said.

No sign of an imminent nuclear test had been detected, Yi noted. The third tunnel at the Punggye-ri complex remained ready for another detonation "at any time", while construction had recently resumed at a fourth tunnel, making it out of use for the time being.

"The agency is closely following the developments because there is a possibility that North Korea could fire an array of ballistic missiles this year under the name of a satellite launch and peaceful development of space, but in fact to ratchet up its threats against the United States," the lawmakers told reporters after a closed-door briefing by the spy agency.

North Korea defends its weapons programs as a necessary defense against U.S. plans to invade. (Reuters)

## UNICEF, NGOs Help Debt-Laden Greece Protect Refugee Children's Rights

ATHENS - Faced with a dual crisis in recent years, the massive refugee influx and the debt drama, the Greek state has found critical aid in UNICEF and other local NGOs specializing in the protection of children's rights. Through multi-level cooperation, strides have been made to assist refugee and migrant children, but more should be done to ensure a better future for children in need, UNICEF and NGOs' representatives told Xinhua.

On the occasion of the World Children's Day marked on Nov. 20 over the past six decades, Sofia Tzitzikou, President of UNICEF Greece, and Myrsini Zorba, co-founder and Honorary President of Greek NGO "Network for Children's Rights" offered an insight of how children in Greece are faring in key areas covered in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and



what Greece is doing to promote their rights and ensure their well being, Greece's National Committee of UNICEF was established in 1977. During the course of 40 years it has provided life changing support to millions of children, but the needs are endless. (Xinhua)

## Trump to Announce Decision on Big-Game Trophy Next Week

WASHINGTON - U.S. President Donald Trump said Sunday that the administration will soon announce its decision on whether to allow trophies of African elephants to be imported into the United States. "Big-game trophy decision will be announced next week but will be very hard pressed to change my mind that this horror show in any way helps conservation of elephants or any other animal," Trump said in a tweet Sunday. The president's tweet came after he de-

## S.Korean President's Approval Rating Rises on Summit Diplomacy



SEOUL - South Korean President Moon Jae-in's approval rating rose last week on a positive effect from the so-called summit diplomacy, a local survey showed Monday.

According to the Realmeter poll, support for Moon was 71.5 percent last week, up 1.5 percentage points from the previous week.

It was based on a poll of 2,514 voters conducted from last Monday to Friday. It had 2 percentage points in margin of error with a 95-percent confidence level. Moon's support score hovered above 70 percent for the third consecutive week on the so-called summit diplomacy effect, the pollster said.

Support for Moon's ruling Democratic Party gained 3.1 percentage points over the week to 51.3 percent last week, keeping the top post since the new government was launched in May.

The main opposition Liberty Korea Party won 18.3 percent of support, down 0.3 percentage points from the prior week.

The minor conservative Righteous Party earned 5.7 percent in approval scores, while the minor progressive Justice Party garnered 5 percent of support. Approval rating for the centrist People's Party was 4.9 percent. (Xinhua)

## Neighbor News

### Chinese Premier to Visit Hungary, Attend SCO Meeting in Russia

BEIJING - Chinese Premier Li Keqiang will attend the sixth meeting of heads of government of China-Central and Eastern European (CEE) Countries during his official visit to Hungary, and attend the 16th meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (Prime Ministers) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in the Russian city of Sochi from Nov. 26 to Dec. 2.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lu Kang made the announcement on Monday, saying the invitation of Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban and Russian Prime Minister Dmitry

Medvedev.

Concerning China-CEE cooperation, Lu said the meeting in Hungary coincides with the fifth anniversary of the establishment of China's cooperation with the 16 CEE countries. During these five years, cooperation between the countries have achieved tangible progress in connectivity, trade, economy, finance, industrial capacity and cultural exchanges.

Lu said that China expects the upcoming China-CEE meeting to map out the future cooperation direction and steps on the basis of previous experience, and to advance China-Europe ties. (Xinhua)

### Pak President for Collective Efforts to Promote, Protect Children Rights

ISLAMABAD - President Mammoon Hussain said the protection of child rights and ensuring equal opportunities to them required a strong and robust partnership between public and private agencies and called for collective efforts to protect and promote their rights. "I, therefore, call upon the parents, teachers, members of the civil society, NGOs, volunteers, philanthropists, international development partners, media and corporate houses to play their constructive role towards promotion and protection of the rights of children," he said in his message to the nation on Universal Children Day being observed Monday (November 20).

He said as Pakistan joins the international community to celebrate Universal Children Day, we re-affirm our commitment and determination to safeguard the rights of our children.

He said the observance of the Children Day today should serve to remind us of our obligation to the children as ordained in the injunctions of our religion and also in the Constitution.

Being a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Pakistan remains in the forefront to advocate, protect and promote child rights. For this, the government has undertaken all necessary measures to ensure better livelihood, education, healthcare and protection of children, he added.

President Mammoon said Islam enjoins upon us the sacred task of care, protection and development of our children. Pursuant to our religious and international obligations, the government is fully cognizant of the need for protection and development of children, who are our greatest asset, he maintained. (Monitoring Desk)

### Iran, Lebanon Reject Arab League Criticism as Tensions Mount

TEHRAN - Iran on Monday rejected a harsh statement by Arab League foreign ministers condemning the Islamic Republic and its proxy Hezbollah, saying the tirade was "full of lies" and the product of Saudi "pressure and propaganda."

State media quoted Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Ghasemi as calling on Saudi Arabia to stop its "barbaric attacks" on Yemen, where a Saudi-led coalition has been at war with Tehran-backed rebels since March 2015. He also called on Saudi Arabia to drop its boycott of the

Gulf Arab nation of Qatar, which has warm ties with Iran.

Arab League foreign ministers meeting in Cairo on Sunday lashed out at Iran and the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, accusing them of destabilizing the region and vowing to take the matter to the U.N. Security Council.

Lebanese President Michel Aoun, a Christian ally of Hezbollah, also rejected the Arab League statement, which had accused the militant group of terrorism and of supporting "terrorist groups" across the region. (AP)

### American Senators to Visit Uzbekistan

TASHKENT - A delegation of the US Congress led by a member of the House of Representatives Trent Kelly will visit Tashkent, Uzbekistan on Monday.

The delegation includes congressmen representing both the Republican and Democratic parties.

During the visit, the congressmen will hold talks in the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as meetings in the Government, the Foreign Ministry and visit a number of facilities.

In September, President

Shavkat Mirziyoyev signed visited the U.S., where the sides signed a solid package of documents for a total amount of \$2.6 billion. It provides for the implementation of promising joint projects in the oil and gas and petrochemical sectors with the corporations General Electric and Honeywell, in machine building with CNH Industrial, John Deere and Caterpillar, in the electrical industry with OSI Systems and Lutron, in civil aviation - with Boeing and others. (Trend)