

## More Than 80,000 Yemeni Children May Have Died from Hunger: Humanitarian Body

DUBAI/ADEN - An estimated 85,000 children under five may have died from extreme hunger in Yemen since a Saudi-led coalition intervened in the civil war in 2015, a humanitarian body said on Wednesday, as the U.N. special envoy arrived in Yemen to pursue peace talks.

Western countries are pressing for a ceasefire and renewed peace efforts to end the disastrous conflict, which has unleashed the world's most urgent humanitarian crisis with 8.4 million people believed to be on the verge of starvation. Save the Children said that according to a conservative estimate based on United Nations data, approximately 84,700 children suffering from severe acute malnutrition may have died between April 2015 and



October 2018 in the impoverished country, where a Western-backed Arab alliance is battling the Iranian-aligned Houthi movement that holds the capital Sanaa. "We are horrified that some 85,000 children

in Yemen may have died because of the consequences of extreme hunger since the war began. For every child killed by bombs and bullets, dozens are dying from hunger and disease and it's entirely preventable," it said

in a statement.

The last available figure from the United Nations for the death toll from the conflict, seen as a proxy war between Saudi Arabia and Iran, was in 2016 and stood at more than 10,000.

The world body has not provided figures for the death toll from malnutrition but warned last month that half the population, or some 14 million people, could soon be on the brink of famine and completely relying on humanitarian aid.

The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), a database that tracks violence in Yemen, says around 57,000 people have been reported killed since the beginning of 2016. (Reuters)

### South Korea's Kim Jong Yang Chosen as Interpol Chief after US Outcry Against Russian Candidate

DUBAI - After a massive campaign against a Russian candidate by US senators, and MSM hysteria over his possible win, Kim Jong Yang from South Korea has been elected as director of Interpol.

Kim was assigned the role of Interpol's acting president during a meeting in Dubai, UAE, after the resignation of Meng Hongwei. The latter is currently detained in his native China, pending a corruption investigation. Reacting to the Interpol

announcement, China director at Human Rights Watch Sophie Richardson noted that "real breaking news" from the organization would involve "showing the slightest shred of concern about what happened" to Meng Hongwei.

However, it wasn't Kim's candidacy that dominated discussion in the mainstream media prior to the announcement, but that of Alexander Prokopchuk - the organization's current vice president. (Russia Today)

### China Building on New Reef in South China Sea, Think Tank Says

BEIJING - China has installed a new platform on a remote part of the Paracel Islands in the disputed South China Sea which could be used for military purposes, according to recent satellite images reviewed by a U.S. think tank.

The strategic waterway is claimed almost in its entirety by China, whose continued building of the military and other installations on artificial islands and reefs there has unnerved the region and angered Washington.

The Asia Maritime

Transparency Initiative of Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies said the images showed a "modest new structure" on Bombay Reef, topped by a radome and solar panels.

"The development is interesting given Bombay Reef's strategic location, and the possibility that the structure's rapid deployment could be repeated in other parts of the South China Sea," the group said in a statement on Tuesday.

The purpose of the plat-



form and radome was unclear, but it could be for military use, it said. "The reef is directly adjacent to the major shipping lanes that run between the Paracels and the Spratly Islands to

the south, making it an attractive location for a sensor array to extend Chinese radar or signals intelligence collection over that important sea lane," the group said. (Reuters)

### Forcing the OPCW to Assign Blame for Chemical Weapons Incidents Will Damage the Organization—Russia



MSOCOW - A recently approved budget for an "attribution mechanism" which will let the UN's Chemical weapons watchdog also assign blame

for attacks has already damaged the organization, Russia's envoy to the OPCW told RT.

The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical

Weapons' (OPCW) increased 2019 budget was greenlighted on Tuesday, including a \$2.4 million allotment for the creation of an "attribution mechanism" which will allow the monitoring organization to assign blame for chemical weapons incidents. At the same meeting, the group shot down Russia and China's joint initiative to establish a special group to investigate the legitimacy of broadening the OPCW's powers.

The "attribution mechanism," which has yet to take any concrete shape,

will provide the OPCW with the power to assign blame for chemical weapons-related incidents, a job which is currently the responsibility of the UN Security Council. The OPCW has traditionally only been tasked with monitoring and providing technical evaluations of such incidents. The primary task now is to mitigate the damage which has been already done, Shulgin continued, suggesting that the attribution mechanism should be accountable to the OPCW's executive council. (Russia Today)

### Turkey Accuses U.S. of Turning Blind Eye to Saudi Killing of Khashoggi

ISTANBUL - Turkey accused the United States on Wednesday of trying to turn a blind eye to the murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi in Istanbul, and dismissed comments from President Donald Trump on the issue as "comic".

Trump vowed on Tuesday to remain a "steadfast partner" of Saudi Arabia, despite saying that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman may have known about the plan to murder to Khashoggi, a U.S. resident and Washington Post columnist.

Of the possibility Prince Mohammed had a hand in the murder, Trump said: "Maybe he did, maybe he didn't". His comments contradicted the CIA, which believes Khashoggi's death was ordered directly by the crown prince, Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler.

Numan Kurtulmus, the deputy chairman of President Tayyip Erdogan's AK Party, dismissed Trump's assessment. "Yesterday's statement is a comic statement," he told state broadcaster TRT Haber. (Reuters)

### Putin May Meet Saudi Crown Prince at G20 in Argentina: Kremlin

MOSCOW - Russian President Vladimir Putin may meet Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Argentina starting on Nov. 30, the Kremlin said on Wednesday.

Spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters the Kremlin was closely watching moves in oil prices, but declined to comment on whether Moscow would take any possible action to affect them. (Reuters)

### Top Israeli Minister: Trump Wasting His Time with Peace Plan

JERUSALEM - A top Israeli Cabinet minister says President Donald Trump is wasting his time trying to push for an Israeli-Palestinian peace plan.

Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked says that reaching peace is currently impossible and that Trump should focus his energy elsewhere until the Palestinians are ready to compromise.

Shaked spoke at the Jerusalem Post Diplomatic Conference on Wednesday. He says: "I think, personally, it is a waste of time."

The U.S. is preparing to release its long-anticipated Mideast peace plan, which Trump calls the "Deal of the Century." Trump's Mideast team, headed by his adviser and son-in-law, Jared Kushner, has been working on a peace proposal for months but hasn't said when it will be released. The Palestinians consider the plan a non-starter, accusing Trump of being unfairly biased toward Israel. (AP)

### UN Environment Head Resigns after Spending Almost \$500,000 on Air Travel in Less Than 2 Years

NEW YORK - The head of United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) has stepped down after racking up \$488,518 in air travel and hotel costs. An audit has called his globe-trotting extravaganzas a "reputation risk."

Erik Solheim, Norway's former environment minister and the head of UNEP since 2016, found himself in the midst of a controversy in September, when it was revealed that he was away from UNEP's headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, some 80 percent of the time. A preliminary report on him prepared by the UN Office of Internal Oversight Ser-



vices (OIOS) was leaked to The Guardian, detailing the official's exorbitant traveling spend, which accounted for 529 days out of 668 that had been audited. Solheim finally submitted his resignation on Tuesday, after attempting to fight back rather

defiantly. He was asked to account for 76 days he spent in his home town of Oslo and Paris on "official travel," but he called the question "stupid," and demanded that the auditors "stop treating me as if I am a 07 to 16 factory worker." (Russia Today)

### Saudis Can Get Away with Anything 'as Long as They Bribe Washington'

WASHINGTON - The US will keep turning a blind eye to the gruesome murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi and other Saudi crimes, as long as Washington strikes lucrative arms deals with the kingdom, political analyst Lew Rockwell told RT.

"Questions of morality are entirely absent" from US foreign policy with regards to Saudi Arabia, Rockwell, who leads the Mises Institute, noted, adding that the White House is more interested in the kingdom's economic

assets than its human rights record. "As long as the Saudis are willing to bribe enough Americans, or do what the US government wants in terms of oil or give big contracts to American companies, there is nothing they can do that would hurt them," he stressed. Rockwell said that, enjoying such mutually-beneficial relations, the kingdom will likely feel confident to continue targeting dissidents and waging a bloody campaign in Yemen. (Russia Today)

### NASA to Launch Safety Review of SpaceX, Boeing

LOS ANGELES - The United States space agency NASA has ordered a safety review of SpaceX and Boeing, two companies it has hired to fly astronauts to the International Space Station (ISS), according to U.S. media on Tuesday.

The review was prompted by SpaceX founder and CEO Elon Musk's behavior on a webcast live in September smoking marijuana and sipping whiskey.

NASA described the safety review as a "cultural assessment study" in coordination with SpaceX and Boeing to "ensure the companies are meeting NASA's requirements for workplace safety, including the adherence to a drug-free environment."

"We fully expect our commercial partners to meet all workplace safety requirements in the execution of our missions and the services they provide the American people," NASA said in a statement.

In 2014, SpaceX and Boeing were awarded NASA contracts to build separate capsules to launch astronauts to the space station, with a total value worth up to 6.8 billion U.S. dollars. SpaceX said in a statement that it took seriously its responsibility to carry NASA astronauts to the ISS and that its engineers had worked side by side with NASA for years to develop its Crew Dragon astronaut capsule.

"There is nothing more important to SpaceX than this endeavor," the company said. (Xinhua)

## Neighbor News

### Iran to Set Up Office to Tackle U.S. Sanctions Impacts

TEHRAN - Iranian Economy Ministry plans to establish an "anti-sanctions management room" in a bid to counter U.S. embargoes against Iran, the chairman of the Iranian Parliament's Economic Commission said on Wednesday.

The members of commission held a meeting in Tehran on Tuesday attended by the economic minister and banking officials, Mohammad Reza Pour Ebrahimi was quoted as saying by Tasnim news agency.

"The formation of anti-sanctions management room in the Economy Ministry is aimed at monitoring the Americans' measures in the banking sector and (Iran's) moves to strengthen (its) banking system," Pour Ebrahimi said.

The Iranian lawmaker declined to elaborate on the plan, saying that "some strategies to counter U.S. sanctions on Iranian banks are confidential." Earlier in November, Washington reimposed sanctions on Iran's oil exports, banking sectors and its international financial transactions. The move was followed the U.S. President Donald Trump's withdrawal from Iran's international nuclear deal clinched in 2015. U.S. administration has vowed to exert more pressures on Iran, seeking to make the Islamic republic "change its behavior" in the region. Tehran has dismissed U.S. sanctions' pressures, urging that it will continue its "constructive role" concerning regional policies. (Xinhua)

### Pakistan Reveals Role in Bin Laden Killing for First Time Amid Rift with US

ISLAMABAD - In recent days Pakistani PM Imran Khan and US President Trump have engaged in a war of words with each other over a number of issues amid the American president's accusations that Pakistan hasn't done 'a damn thing' to support US efforts in fighting terrorism.

One of the issues that Trump criticised Islamabad for was the matter of Osama bin Laden living in Pakistan, which the US president claims the authorities in the country were allegedly aware of.

In an official Pakistani FM statement made this

Tuesday (20 November) it was, for the first time, publicly recognised that "it was Pakistan's intelligence cooperation that provided the initial evidence to trace the whereabouts of OBL" (Osama bin Laden). The foreign ministry's announcement came after the US Chargé d'Affaires (US Cda) Paul Jones visited the foreign office in Islamabad where he had been summoned by the Pakistani foreign secretary to "register a strong protest on the unwarranted and unsubstantiated allegations made against Pakistan" by Donald Trump. (Sputnik)

### Tajikistan's Rogun HPP to be Most Powerful Hydroelectric Power Plant in Region

DUSHANBE - With a capacity of 3,600 megawatts, the Rogun HPP of Tajikistan will be the most powerful hydroelectric power plant in the region, said the Ambassador of Tajikistan to Azerbaijan Rustam Soli at an event dedicated to the recent launch of the first unit of the Rogun HPP.

The diplomat noted that after commissioning of the first unit, the HPP was connected to the country's energy system. According to the plans, the second unit will enter into service in 2019, and all six units are due to come on line in December 2024.

"The hydroelectric power plant, exploiting renewable clean sources of electricity, will serve all the countries of the region, and its reservoir with a capacity of some 13.5 cubic kilometers will play a major role in

the regulation of water resources, especially in periods of water shortage," Soli said. He added that the reservoir will also provide the possibility of irrigating more than 300,000 hectares of arid lands.

The ambassador also noted that some 22,000 people are currently working at the Rogun HPP site, and 20,000 of them are Tajikistan nationals. "Since the construction began to the present time the government of Tajikistan has financed the facility to the tune of \$1.9 billion from the state budget. Also, shares of the Rogun HPP were sold for \$500 million," Soli added. Of these, 38 percent were purchased by investors from the US, 24 percent - from the UK, 35 percent - from the EU, and 3 percent - by Asian investors. (Trend)

### OSCE Delegation on National Minorities to Visit Turkmenistan

ASHGABAT - An OSCE delegation led by High Commissioner on National Minorities Lamberto Zannier is expected to visit Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, Nov. 21-24, the Turkmen Foreign Ministry said in a message. Meetings of the OSCE delegation are planned to be held in the Turkmen parliament, the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Educa-

tion during the visit. Zannier is also expected to address lecturers and students of the International University for Humanities and Development and the Institute of International Relations of the Turkmen Foreign Ministry. The OSCE high commissioner also intends to visit Turkmenistan's Dashoguz region during the visit. (Trend)