

Ankara, Moscow Share Mutual Interests over Russia's Sanctions: Turkish PM

ANKARA - Ankara and Moscow share mutual interests in their bilateral relations, including Russia's economic interests from Turkey, the Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said on Sunday over Russia's decision to impose economic sanctions on Turkey.

"Relations between Turkey and Russia are in a structure based on mutual interests. Turkey is not having one sided interests from Russia. Russia also has economic interests from Turkey. On many areas, we have common interests and neighboring relations," Davutoglu told a press conference in Ankara



Esenboga Airport before leaving for a EU-Turkey summit. The Turkish leader said

that the country has set up a coordination committee headed by minister of economy to

handle outcomes of crisis with Russia. Russia is Turkey's seventh largest export and

import partner. In 2014, Turkish exports to Russia stood at 5.9 billion U.S. dollars, while its imports

from Russia -- mainly natural gas and oil -- stood at 25 billion U.S. dollars.

Turkey exported 20 percent of its foodstuff industry to Russia, in addition to 15 percent of its textile exports.

Turkey's priority is to "keep dialogue channels open" with Russia, and to avoid similar tensions due to military operations in Syria, he said. Davutoglu reiterated that Turkey used its right to defend its airspace which is "in line with international law," but not intentionally targeted Russian warplane. Earlier, Ankara said it ...*(More on P4)...(13)*

Neighbor News

Syria Left its Mark in History: Iran



TEHRAN - A senior Iranian official says the Syrian government and people have managed to leave their mark in history by standing up to aggressors. Ali Akbar Velayati, a top adviser to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, made the remark in a meeting with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in the Syrian capital, Damascus, on Sunday. "Thanks to your and the Syrian people's presence and courage, a glorious and matchless period has been recorded of Syria in history," he told the Syrian head

of state. "You are a source of pride because you have stood up to the enemies of Islam, this global war, and extremist Takfiri movements," Velayati noted, saying Ayatollah Khamenei has "always supported the Syrian government and people and prays for your victory." He said, "We are certain that victory will be the Syrian people's and resistance's." Assad said Syria and its friends were determined to move ahead with fighting terrorism in all its forms, according to the official Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA).*(PressTV)*

C'wealth Leaders put Heads together to Tackle Terrorism

VALLETTA - Leaders of the Commonwealth focused on Saturday on the current global security challenges and the domestic, regional and international policy responses required to counter extremism and terrorism. The leaders -- in Malta for the 24th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting -- were attending a retreat session titled "Violent extremism and radicalisation", to which only they were invited as their advisers and ministers were not allowed in. During the session

held at the Saint Angelo Fort in the historic city of Birgu, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif conveyed Pakistan's condemnation of terrorist activities, whether committed by individuals, groups or states. He appraised the other leaders of the ways in which Pakistan was cooperating with the international community in efforts to counter violent extremism. He reiterated Pakistan's commitment to fully implementing the United Nations Security Council's sanctions regimes on terrorism.*(Agencies)*

JCPOA Implementation to up Iran-Europe Economic Ties: Rouhani

TEHRAN - Iranian President Hassan Rouhani says the implementation of the July 14 nuclear agreement between Iran and the P5+1 will help Tehran and the European Union reach the desired level of economic relations. In a meeting with the visiting Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Kotzias in the Iranian capital, Tehran, on Sunday, President Rouhani said the sanctions against Iran over its nuclear program have had

adverse effects on the level of international cooperation. "If member states of the P5+1 group and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) are committed to fully implementing the ... JCPOA, the Islamic Republic of Iran is determined to implement the agreement as well," Rouhani said. The Iranian president also pointed to the great potential in Tehran-Athens ties for ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

Germany Outlines Plan to Support Fight Against Islamic State

FRANKFURT - Germany could send 1,200 soldiers to the Middle East by the end of the year to support a coalition battling Islamic State, Germany's top defense official told a newspaper on Sunday as his minister backed an international alliance against the group. Chancellor Angela Merkel promised to support the offensive against Islamic State during talks with French President Francois Hollande, who called for more countries to help fight the militants after the Nov. 13 attacks in Paris. Germany's de-

fense minister Ursula von der Leyen called for the alliance for a limited time to combat the militants in a commentary in an advance copy of the Bild newspaper due out on Monday. She said the aim of what she called a "special purpose" alliance was to "weaken ISIS, to limit its freedom for maneuver, to destroy its training camps, to win back city by city, destroy its oil revenue and break the aura of invincibility". Germany's troops plan, which still needs approval from parliament and was outlined by Ger-



many's Chief of Defence Volker Wierer in Bild am Sonntag, does not include direct involvement in the coalition's air offensive. In Germany, the public still dislikes sending

forces overseas except for in peace missions, in part due to memories of Nazi militarism. Under the plan, a German frigate would accom ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

EU Seeks Turkish Help to Slow Migrants for Cash, EU Membership talks

BRUSSELS - Leaders of the European Union aim to sign an agreement with Turkey in Brussels on Sunday that offers Ankara cash and closer ties with the EU in return for Turkish help in stemming the flow of migrants to Europe, draft conclusions of the summit showed. Aware of a sense of desperation in Europe for a solution to a crisis that is tearing the bloc apart following the arrival of close to a million people this year, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan



has been driving a hard bargain. Diplomats said the 28 states had struggled through Saturday

to agree a final offer. The draft deal made clear the trade-off between Turkey's help in handling

the flow of migrants that has called into question the future of Europe's passport-free travel, and the EU offer of cash and restarting stalled talks on EU accession. "Both sides will, as agreed and with immediate effect, step up their active cooperation on migrants who are not in need of international protection, preventing travel to Turkey and the EU, ensuring the application of the established bilateral readmission provisions and swiftly ...*(More on P4)...(16)*

Terrorism Issue Central in Biden Meeting with Italian PM

ROME - U.S. Vice President Joe Biden met Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi in Rome on Friday to discuss cooperation against terrorism and other international issues, which aroused reflection among local experts about the U.S. and Italian role in the fight against the Islamic State (IS).

The two leaders discussed their common efforts to degrade and defeat the IS, counterterrorism cooperation, and efforts to counter violent extremism, according to a statement released by the White House. Biden thanked Italy's contribution to security from Afghanistan to Iraq to the Mediterranean basin. The statement also added that



the two leaders concurred on the importance of fully implementing the Minsk accords on Ukraine and the importance of energy diversification. According to diplomatic sources quoted by Rai state television, a "full harmony of views" emerged from the bilateral talks, which took place at the residence of the

U.S. ambassador in the Italian capital and reportedly lasted about an hour. On Friday, Renzi posted on his personal website that "before deciding military intervention, there must be a clear strategy on what should be done next. That is why we keep our commitments trying to strengthen the coordi ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

Turkey Preparing to hand over Body of Pilot to Russia: PM

ANKARA - The body of the pilot killed when Turkey shot down a Russian jet was taken to Turkey late on Saturday to be handed over to Russia, Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said. The body is being treated in accordance with the Orthodox tradition, Davutoglu said in a news conference in Ankara on Sunday before going to Brussels for a meeting with EU leaders on migration.

He did not say how the body was delivered to Hatay in southern Turkey but said Russia's military attaché was going there on Sunday as part of procedures to recover the remains. Relations between Turkey and Russia have sharply deteriorated since Tuesday's incident, with Russia imposing economic sanctions and revoking a visa-free agreement, while Turkey has sought to cool tensions, seeing the Paris climate change talks that start this week as a chance to mend ties. Davutoglu said that with different coalitions operating in Syria with differing objectives, similar incidents to that of the downing of the Russian jet could happen unless there was information sharing and coordination. Both United States along with other allies, including Turkey, as well as Russia are carrying out air campaigns against Islamic State and other groups. Russia and Turkey have accused each other of aiding Islamic State, but both say they are battling the militants who have taken swathes of land in Iraq and Syria. However, Russia sides with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, and has been ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

42 IS Militants Killed in Clashes, Air Strikes in Western Iraq

RAMADI - A total of 42 Islamic State (IS) militants were killed and 28 were wounded on Sunday in clashes with Iraqi security forces and air strikes by Iraqi and U. S.-led coalition aircraft in Iraq's western province of Anbar, a provincial security and medical sources told Xinhua. Fierce clashes erupted between Iraqi security forces and allied paramilitary units, known as Hashd Shaabi, and IS militants in Mudheij area in east of the IS-held provincial capital city of Ramadi, leaving at least 12 IS militants killed, the source said on condition of anonymity. Three security members were also killed and six others wounded during the battle, the source ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

U.S., Allies Conduct 22 Strikes Against Islamic State: U.S. Military

WASHINGTON - The United States and its allies conducted 19 strikes against Islamic State in Iraq and three in Syria on Saturday, the coalition leading the operations said in a statement. Seven of the strikes in Iraq hit around Ramadi, destroying a machine gun position, two ISIL buildings and two weapons caches, and wounding an ISIL fighter, the Combined Joint Task Force said on Sunday. The coalition also struck targets in 11 other Iraqi cities, including Fallujah, Sinjar and Mosul. The coalition said it used bomber, fighter, attack and remotely piloted aircraft against ISIL targets. In Syria, two strikes near Raqqa destroyed two ISIL vehicles and struck two separate ISIL tactical units, it said. One strike near DayrAzZawr destroyed an ISIL front end loader. *(Reuters)*

Assad says his Enemies Increasing Support for Insurgents

BEIRUT/AMMAN - Syrian President Bashar al Assad told a senior Iranian official on Sunday that his adversaries had increased weapon supplies and financial support to insurgents since the start of a major offensive aided by his allies to regain lost territory. Assad was quoted by state media as telling Ali Akbar Velayati, a top adviser to Iran's supreme leader, that the military support his country was getting from Iran and Russia had

pushed the enemy states he did not name to "further escalate and increase financing and equipping of terrorists". The Syrian army said on Saturday that Turkey had increased supplies of weapons, ammunition and equipment to what it described as terrorists in Syria. The senior Iranian official was quoted as saying that his country would continue to support Syria as the war "against terror was a decisive ...*(More on P4)...(19)*

Chinese President in Paris for Climate Change Conference

PARIS - Chinese President Xi Jinping arrived in Paris on Sunday to attend the opening ceremony of an international conference on climate change. Xi, accompanied by his wife Peng Liyuan and other senior officials, arrived in the French capital as guest of French President Francois Hollande and Laurent Fabius, France's foreign minister and chair of the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The Chinese president will deliver a speech at the conference on Mon-

day, raising China's proposals on countering climate change before leaving for state visits to Zimbabwe and South Africa and a summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in Johannesburg. During his two-day stay in Paris, Xi is also expected to meet other heads of state including Hollande and U.S. President Barack Obama on the sidelines of the conference, discussing the climate issue and bilateral relations. It will be the first time for China's top leader to be present at the UN climate change conference. *(Xinhua)*

Sharif Leaves for Paris to Attend UN Climate Summit

VALLETTA - Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Sunday left France to attend the UN Climate Change Conference 2015 or COP21 in Paris after concluding his three-day trip to Malta. The prime minister will also hold meetings with other world leaders on the sidelines of the conference. Zahid Hamid, the newly appointed Minister of Climate Change will lead the Pakistani team during the two week negotiations, comprising federal and provincial government officials. A

dozen or so representatives of leading non-governmental organisations and civil society groups will also participate in the conference. During his visit to Malta, Premier Nawaz Sharif participated in the 24th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). The prime minister was seen off at Luqa International Airport by senior officials of the Malta government. Pakistan's Ambassador for Tunisia resident in Malta Zaheer Pervaiz Khan was also present.*(Agencies)*

Iran, Turkmenistan Capable of Larger Cultural Cooperation: Envoy

TEHRAN - The Turkmen Ambassador to Iran Gurbanov Ahmet-Kakabayevich said the two countries have still room to further expand their cultural interactions. Talking to IRNA on Sunday, he referred to the big jobs already done by both countries in cultural areas but said they have still much to do. Referring to the recent

visit of Turkmen president to Iran, the ambassador said that he too stressed the need for more cultural relations in his meeting with President Hassan Rouhani. He further supported holding of cultural weeks in both countries and said President Rouhani has been invited to take part in the independence ceremony of his country.*(IRNA)*