

Over 50 Killed, 200 Injured in Las Vegas Mass Shooting

LOS ANGELES - At least 50 people were killed and over 200 others wounded in a mass shooting at a concert Sunday night outside of the Mandalay Bay Hotel in Las Vegas in the U.S. state of Nevada. The death toll if confirmed would make the deadliest in U.S. history and surpass the 49 killed at an Orlando nightclub last year. Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) published the latest casualty number at a news briefing to media early Monday morning.



The shooter opened fire from the 32nd floor of Mandalay Bay hotel and was killed by the police later, said Joseph Lombardo, sheriff of LVMPD. Investigators identified the shooter, 64-year-old Stephen Paddock, as local resident and did not find any links to terrorism, Lombardo said, adding that he had "numerous firearms" in the hotel room. The police also said they were hunting an Asian female named Marylou Danley, adding that they have located the suspected vehicles and the person of interest. (Xinhua)

Iran's FM Calls for Kurdish Talks with Baghdad

TEHRAN - Iran says a recent controversial secession referendum in the northern Iraq runs counter to the Arab country's constitution, calling on Kurdish authorities to negotiate with Baghdad regardless of the outcome of the vote. "The referendum in Kurdistan was against the Iraqi constitution, which not only does not help the people of Kurdistan, but also is not justifiable for Iraq's security," he told IRNA in New York at the end of a his 12-day stay. Zarif, who stayed behind to attend UN General Assembly meetings after travelling to New York with President Hassan

Rouhani, predicted that the referendum would have "a lot of risks for the security of Iraq and the region." "Our expectation is that negotiations begin with respect to Iraq's Constitution, especially Article 1, which lays emphasis on Iraq's national unity and territorial integrity as irreplaceable principles, with recent happenings having no effect on negotiations or the future," Zarif said. Article 1 asserts that "the Republic of Iraq is an independent, sovereign nation, and the system of rule in it is a democratic, federal, representative (parliamentary) republic." (Presstv)

Brexit Biggest Peacetime Challenge to Face a British Gov't: Chancellor

LONDON - Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond on Monday described Brexit as one of the most challenging tasks ever faced by a peacetime government in Britain. Addressing the Conservative Party Conference in Manchester, Hammond added in his keynote speech that Britain would succeed in its task of withdrawing from the European Union. Repeating Prime Minister Theresa May's pledge that the govern-

ment would respect the leave decision in last year's EU referendum, Hammond said the British people had chosen independence over the EU's greater integration. Britain is scheduled to leave the EU in March 2019, with progress in the negotiations with Brussels still described as slow. Hammond said the short-term challenge of uncertainty around the Brexit process must be resolved by accelerat-



ing negotiations with Brussels and to deliver a limited interim period of around two years for businesses to adjust. His message confirmed what May said in her speech in Florence last month that there should be a two-year transition period starting in March 2019. (Xinhua)

Ranks of World's Refugees Swell as Asylum Space Shrinks: U.N.



GENEVA - More than 2 million people fleeing wars or persecution have joined the ranks of the world's refugees this year, but often face more

restrictive asylum policies, including in Europe and the United States, the top U.N. refugee official said on Monday. They include 650,000 from

South Sudan and 500,000 Muslim Rohingya who have escaped violence in Myanmar for Bangladesh over the past five weeks, many of the latter stateless, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi said. "So far in 2017, more than 2 million people have fled their countries as refugees," Grandi told the UNHCR Executive Committee which opened a week-long meeting in Geneva. "They often arrive sick, traumatized and hungry, in remote border locations, in communi-

ties affected by poverty and underdevelopment. Many have urgent protection needs - children separated from their families, men, women, girls and boys exposed to sexual and gender-based violence," he said. At the end of last year, 17.2 million refugees fell under UNHCR's mandate, but some of them have returned and others have been resettled, and there is no updated total. An additional 5 million Palestinian refugees are cared for by UNRWA. (Reuters)

Bangladesh, Myanmar Agree to Draw up Plan for Refugee Repatriation: Minister

DHAKA - Bangladesh and Myanmar agreed on Monday to set up a "working group" to plan the repatriation of more than half a million Rohingya Muslim refugees who have fled to Bangladesh to escape an army crackdown, the Bangladeshi foreign minister said. The United Nations has called the exodus of 507,000 Rohingya since late August the world's fastest-developing refugee emergency, and says Buddhist-majority Myanmar is engaging in ethnic

cleansing against its Rohingya Muslim minority. Myanmar denies that. It says its forces are battling Rohingya "terrorists" who triggered the latest wave of violence with coordinated attacks on the security forces on Aug. 25. Myanmar says more than 500 people have been killed since, most of them insurgents, whom it has accused of attacking civilians and setting most of the fires that have reduced to ashes more than half of more than 400 Rohingya villages in the north of Rakhine State. (Reuters)

EU Calls for Dialogue in Spain, Deems Catalonia Independence Vote "Not Legal"

BRUSSELS - The European Union (EU) on Monday called for unity and stability instead of divisiveness and fragmentation in Spain, saying that Sunday's independence vote in Catalonia was "not legal" under the Spanish constitution. "For the European Commission, as President Juncker has reiterated repeatedly, this is an internal matter for Spain that has to be dealt with in line with the constitutional order of Spain," said the EU commission in a statement published on its website. "We also reiterate the legal position held by this Commission as well as by its predecessors. If a referendum were to be organized in line with the Spanish Constitution it would mean that the territory leaving would find itself outside of the European Union," said the commission. "Beyond the purely legal aspects of this matter, the Commission believes that these are times for unity and stability, not divisiveness and fragmentation," said the statement. "We call on all relevant players to now move very swiftly from confrontation to dialogue. Violence can never be an instrument in politics. We trust the leadership of Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy to manage this difficult process in full respect of the Spanish Constitution and of the fundamental rights of citizens enshrined therein," said the statement. Rajoy on Sunday gave a televised speech defending government actions following violent clashes which left hundreds injured in a banned referendum. (Xinhua)

Merkel's Bavarian Allies Insist on Conservative Unity before Coalition Talks

BERLIN - The Bavarian sister party of German Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) has said they must agree policies on immigration limits, pensions and healthcare before opening coalition negotiations with two other parties. Leaders of Bavaria's Christian Social Union (CSU) - stung by a drop in support of more than 10 percent in the Sept. 24 election - have redoubled their push for a 200,000 per year cap on immigra-



tion, a demand that Merkel has rejected, complicating her efforts to form a new government. CSU leader Horst Seehofer said the conservative allies could not begin negotiating with the environmental Greens and pro-business Free Democrats (FDP) until the issues were resolved, the Sueddeutsche Zeitung newspaper reported on Monday. (Reuters)

Spanish PM Says there was No Catalan Independence Referendum

SEOUL - South Korea's presidential Blue House said on Sunday that it was closely cooperating with the United States to keep communication channels with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). Presidential spokesman Park Soo-hyun told reporters via a text message that the government emphasized the peaceful resolution through dialogue of the DPRK issues whenever opportunities were given, according to local media reports. He said the government also expressed its position that dialogue could be of various types, including bilateral and multilateral ones. Park said the gov-

ernments of South Korea and the United States were closely cooperating in efforts to maintain a contact channel with the DPRK while sticking to a principle that maximum pressure and sanctions would be needed to encourage Pyongyang to return to a dialogue table. The comment came after U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said the U.S. government was in direct communication with the DPRK and had two to three channels open to Pyongyang. Park said the U.S. government had a position that it needs a quiet contact with the DPRK to resolve humanitarian issues such as the release of U.S. citizens detained in the DPRK. (Xinhua)

S.Korean President's Approval Rating Rebounds in Five Weeks

SEOUL - South Korean President Moon Jae-in's approval rating rebounded in five weeks on Moon's meeting with opposition party leaders to discuss security issues, a poll showed Monday. According to the Realmeter survey, support for Moon was 67.7 percent last week, up 2.1 percentage points from a week earlier. It was based on a poll of 2,523 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 ended the downward trend for the past four weeks, during which tensions escalated on the Korean Peninsula following the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)'s nuclear and missile tests. The rebound was mainly attributed to Moon's meeting last week with chiefs of the four opposition parties to discuss security issues. The main opposition Liberty Korea Party head refused to attend the meeting. Moon's ruling Democratic Party maintained its top post with 49.7 percent of support scores. It was followed by the Liberty Korea Party with 17.1 percent. The centrist People's Party got 6.6 percent in support scores, with the minor conservative Righteous Party and the minor progressive Justice Party garnering 5.6 percent and 6 percent respectively. (Xinhua)

Nieghbor News

China, EEU Complete Negotiations on Economic, Trade Cooperation Agreement

BEIJING - China and the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) have finished substantial negotiations on an economic and trade cooperation agreement, the Ministry of Commerce said Sunday in a statement. Zhong Shan, China's commerce minister, signed a joint statement on the formal completion of the negotiations with the EEU trade minister Veronika Nikishina, on Sunday in Hangzhou, east China's Zhejiang Province. This is the first important institutional agreement reached between China and the EEU in economic and trade field, according to the statement. It is also an important

result on pairing China's Silk Road Economic Belt initiative with the EEU. China and the EEU members are highly complementary to each other in economy, enjoying huge trade potentials, it said. The agreement is very important for both China and members of the EEU. It will help reduce non-tariff trade barriers, facilitate trade, create a favorable environment for industrial development, promote the Belt and Road Initiative, and push forward further development of China's economic ties with the EEU and its members, the statement said. Negotiations were officially launched on June 25, 2016. (Xinhua)

Hearing of References Against Sharif Family Members Adjoined Till Oct 9

ISLAMABAD - The Islamabad Accountability Court on Monday adjourned hearing of references against Nawaz Sharif and his children till October 09 while issuing arrest warrants for Hassan, Hussain and Maryam Nawaz and Capt (R) Muhammad Safdar. The former prime minister appeared before the accountability court for the second time at judicial complex Islamabad. The court postponed indictment of Nawaz Sharif as other accused were not present. AC Judge Muhammad Bashir took up for hearing three references against Sharif family members filed by National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in compliance of Supreme Court orders in

Panama papers case. As the hearing began, the court asked NAB prosecutor whether the other nominated persons in the case were produced after their arrest. The NAB official told the court that orders had been delivered to the security guard at the residence of Sharif family in Lahore. The security guard had informed that Nawaz Sharif's children including Hassan, Hussain, Maryam Nawaz and son-in-law Captain (R) Safdar were abroad due to ailment of Begum Kulsoom Nawaz, he said. The NAB requested the court to issue non-bailable arrest warrants for the accused for skipping court proceeding for the third time. (Monitoring Desk)

Iran, Turkey Vow to Expand Military, Security Cooperation

TEHRAN - Iran and Turkey's top military officials on Monday called for the boost of ties and the reinforcement of security cooperation. Military cooperation between Iran and Turkey will increase, and the two neighbors will hold joint war games and exchange experiences, the visiting Chief of the General Staff of Turkey Hulusi Akar and Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Baqeri said in the joint press conference. Akar and Baqeri discussed a host of topics of common interest including military and security issues and held talks on regional developments, fight against terrorism and joint border security issues, official IRNA news agency reported. The two sides also re-

viewed defense ties and previously made agreements between Tehran and Ankara. The Turkish commander's visit to Tehran comes at the official invitation of Baqeri and in response to his August visit to Ankara. The Iraqi Kurdish region's recent vote for secession from Iraq was also on the agenda of their talks, according to Tasnim news agency. The top military commanders also voiced strong opposition to the independence referendum in the Iraqi Kurdistan, saying it is "unacceptable," Tehran Times daily reported. Akar said Iran and Turkey have reached agreements on the battle against terrorism and on measures to ensure border security. (Xinhua)

Putin Calls to Boost Trade with Turkmenistan

ASHGABAT - At talks with his Turkmen counterpart in Ashgabat, Russian President Vladimir Putin emphasized a need to discuss measures to bolster trade cooperation of the two countries. "We must discuss what moves are to be made to develop trade relations," Putin said to President Gurbanguly Berdimukhamedov, noting a decline in trade between the countries. The Turkmen leader said Ashgabat puts much emphasis on Putin's visit. He said substantial

legal framework "which has strategic nature" has been built in years of cooperation. President Berdimukhamedov also hailed cooperation between the countries' parliaments. Prior to the talks in a narrow format, the leaders met at the hall of the presidential palace. A military band greeted the visiting Russian leader with the national anthem of the Russian Federation, after which the anthem of Turkmenistan was performed. (TASS)