

Upcoming Xi-Obama Meeting Aims to Narrow Gaps, Expand Cooperation: U.S. Official

WASHINGTON - The upcoming meeting between Chinese and U.S. leaders will focus on narrowing and managing differences, and expanding practical cooperation between the two countries, a U.S. official said Tuesday.

U.S. President Barack Obama will have an "extended" bilateral meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping ahead of the G20 summit in China, Daniel Kritenbrink, senior director for Asian affairs at the U.S. National Security Council, told a press briefing in Washington.

Obama will make clear as he has in the past that the United



States welcomes a rising China that is peaceful, stable and prosperous, and is a responsible player in global affairs, Kritenbrink said.

The U.S. president will also make clear that when China invests itself in resolving regional problems, the United States and the world will benefit, the official said.

Kritenbrink recalled the previous engagements between the two presidents, including their first informal summit held at the Sunnylands estate in California in 2013, Obama's state visit to Beijing in 2014 and Xi's state visit to the United States in September last year. (Xinhua)

IS Spokesman Targeted by U.S. Airstrike in Syria: Pentagon

WASHINGTON - An airstrike by the U.S.-led coalition in Syria on Tuesday targeted Abu Muhammad al-Adnani, the longtime Islamic State (IS) spokesman, according to the Pentagon.

"We are still assessing the results of the strike, but al-Adnani's removal from the battlefield would mark another significant blow to ISIL," said Pentagon spokesman Peter Cook in a statement, using another acronym of the extremist group.

Meanwhile, the Amaq News Agency of the IS announced on Tuesday that

the group's spokesman was killed "while surveying the operations to repel the military campaigns against Aleppo," Syria's fiercest battleground.

Al-Adnani was known for his calls for lone-wolf attacks in the West and his call to intensify attacks this summer had so far resulted in one of the bloodiest months of Ramadan in decades. Born in the countryside of the northwestern Syrian province of Idlib, al-Adnani was also among the first group of foreign fighters against U.S. invasion in Iraq in 2003. (Xinhua)

Russian Airstrikes Kill Senior IS Leader and Spokesperson

MOSCOW - Abu Muhammad al-Adnani al-Shami, a senior leader and the official spokesperson of the Islamic State (IS), was killed in a recent airstrike in Syria's Aleppo province, the Russian Defense Ministry said Wednesday. Based on multiple intelligence channels, al-Adnani was killed during an airstrike by a Russian Su-34 warplane on

Tuesday, in which up to 40 terrorists were also eliminated, the ministry said in a statement. "Abu Muhammad al-Adnani was considered the number two leader in the IS after its head Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, and was renowned for his calls for terrorist attacks in Western Europe and the United States," the statement added. (Xinhua)

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

BEIJING - The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) President Jin Liqun welcomed Canada's decision to apply for AIIB membership on Wednesday, according to a press release.

Canadian Finance Minister Bill Morneau announced at a press conference in Beijing on Wednesday that Canada had decided to apply for membership to the development bank.

The AIIB was officially established on Dec. 25, 2015 and started operation on Jan. 16 this year.

Finance Minister Lou Jiwei was elected the first chairman of the AIIB board of governors, and Jin Liqun its president.

Headquartered in Beijing, it has 57 founding members, with more waiting to join. With authorized capital of 100 billion U.S. dollars, the AIIB will initially prioritize investment in energy, power generation, transportation, rural infrastructure, environmental protection and logistics in Asia. The AIIB followed more than two years of preparations by China and other founding members since Chinese President publicly proposed the initiative. (Xinhua)

Turkey, U.S. Squabble on Military Operation in Syria

ANKARA - The Turkish Foreign Ministry said in a statement Tuesday that comments from the U.S. about the target of the Turkish military operation in Syria were "unacceptable."

U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter on Tuesday urged Turkey to stay focused on fighting the Islamic State (IS) militants and not to engage the Kurdish elements of Syrian rebel forces, which Washington backs. He warned at a press conference that their conflict with the Kurdish forces would hinder efforts to defeat the IS.

Tension between Ankara



and Washington over Kurdish forces in Syria is continuing to simmer amid the differences on Turkey's recent military operation in northern Syria.

The Foreign Ministry responded that the operation would continue until

[al-Adha]. This will also be on the table with interlocutors at the G20."

Kalın said President Erdoğan would hold meetings with People's Republic of China President Xi Jinping, U.S. President Barack Obama, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, U.N. General Secretary Ban-ki Moon and EU leaders, including German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President François Hollande and Italian Prime

Trump Needs to Tone Down Immigration Rhetoric to Woo Moderate Voters

WASHINGTON - As U.S. Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump prepares to make a speech on the hot-button issue of immigration on Wednesday, analysts said he needs to tread softly if he wants to woo moderates voters.

The controversy over Trump began around a year ago when the bombastic billionaire sparked a firestorm by comparing Mexican immigrants to criminals and rapists, while vowing to build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border to keep illegal migrants from entering

the U.S. While his over-the-top way of speaking has galvanized white, working-class males, it has turned off most other demographics. And Trump needs to move beyond his base to win the presidential race in November, analysts said.

In recent weeks, Trump has made an effort to tone down his rash rhetoric. Dan Mahaffee, an analyst with the Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress, told Xinhua that to reach the broader electorate, Trump's best hope is to explain that he



Minister Matteo Renzi. He also stressed that any efforts to depict Turkey's Operation Euphrates Shield against terrorist or-

ganizations in Syria as an operation targeting Kurds is completely unethical and nothing more than ... (More on P6)... (18)



understands the anger of many Americans about illegal immigration.

Trump also needs to tell Americans that he wants to combine a tough approach to border security and deportation of immi-

grants with criminal records alongside a realistic and humane approach to the 11 million illegal migrants, taking into consideration their contribution to the economy, Mahaffee said. (Xinhua)

Yemenis Wary over U.S. Initiative to Salvage Peace Process

SANAA - Yemeni factions have warily welcomed the U.S. initiative to salvage the peace process.

The Saudi-backed government said it will deal with any effort to end the conflict if it is in line with the GCC-drafted power transfer deal in 2011, the outcomes of the national dialogue conference and the UN Security Council's resolution 2216.

And the Houthi-Saleh alliance represented by the lately formed supreme political council said it will

deal positively with any peace effort if it guarantees an end to Saudi-led military campaign and blockade on Yemen.

Actually their wariness is not a good sign, observers said, while expecting Kerry's initiative revealed on Thursday is likely to be a waste of time like previous efforts.

In content, the initiative had nothing new and did not say how controversial issues would be solved practically, observers said. On ... (More on P6)... (20)

Syrian Ambassador Says Probe into Syria Chemical Attacks Lacks "Physical Evidence"

UNITED NATIONS - The conclusions made by a UN-led probe report which accuse Syrian government force of using chlorine gas lack "physical evidence," said Syrian Ambassador Bashar Jaafari here on Tuesday.

"The conclusions contained in the report were totally based on statements made by witnesses presented by the terrorist armed groups," said Jaafari. "Therefore these conclusions lack any physical evidence, whether by

samples or attested medical reports that chlorine was used."

The report, provided by a Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) of the UN and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), said "information suggests the involvement of both the government and other actors" in alleged chemical attacks in Syria.

The report notes that the Islamic State has used sulfur mustard in one attack. And ... (More on P6)... (21)

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Russian Official Due in Tehran for Nuclear Energy Talks

TEHRAN - Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov arrives here on Wednesday for talks with Iranian officials on the construction of nuclear plants in Iran, local media reported.

"Mr. Ryabkov will exchange views with his counterpart, Abbas Araçchi, during the visit," Russian ambassador to Tehran, Levan Dzhangaryan, was quoted as saying by Tehran Times in its Tuesday editions.

Last week, a spokesman of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization said that President Hassan Rouhani had approved the funding of two nuclear power plants planned to be built

by Russia.

"In the coming weeks, we will try to hold the final talks (with the Russians), and soon after we will announce a date for starting the construction of the power plants," said the spokesman, Behrooz Kamalvandi.

Also on the agenda during Ryabkov's Tehran trip could be the signing of a deal under which Moscow will purchase heavy water from Iran.

"The talks to sell heavy water to Russia are almost in their final stages," Kamalvandi was quoted as saying.

Iran's first nuclear power plant, the Bushehr plant, was... (More on P6)... (22)

Pakistan Moving at a Greater Pace against Terrorism: Kerry

NEW DELHI - US Secretary of State John Kerry said Pakistan had made progress in the fight against extremism in recent months, but urged Islamabad to push harder against militants hiding within its borders as tensions with neighboring India rise amid more violence in the disputed region of Kashmir.

"It is clear that Pakistan has worked to do in order to push harder against its indigenous groups that are engaged in extremist activities," Kerry said on Wednesday, the second day of a visit to

India. Kerry said the United States had made it clear to Islamabad that it needs to act against groups such as the Taliban-linked Haqqani network and Lashkar-e-Taiba that are suspected of operating from Pakistan to launch attacks against its neighbors India and Afghanistan.

"In fairness, the Pakistanis have suffered greatly from terrorism in their own country," Kerry said. "All of us need to be supportive and also understanding of how difficult it is to take it on step by step." (Monitoring Desk)

Uzbekistan Celebrates 25th Independence Day

TASHKENT - Today, Uzbekistan celebrates its dearest holiday, the 25th anniversary of national independence. The string of event and broad explanatory work call for each and every person to contribute to the preservation of prosperity and stronger independence and boost the feeling of belonging to everything festive that is going on.

Within a historically short period of time significant results, the importance of which can not be overestimated, massive results have been achieved. In the first years of independence, Uzbekistan set itself the goal of building a socially oriented market economy, conduct an open policy, bring about the rule of law and a strong civil society. The strategy, recognized worldwide as the 'Uzbek model' of development, identified five principles of state and social construction. And today we see the effective implementation of reforms that have changed

the outlook of people and their attitude to life.

Over the past 25 years, Uzbekistan, once an area with a lopsided economy and full monopoly of cotton production, has become a fast growing economy, first of all thanks to the modernization and development of modern sectors, which has been highly appreciated across the world.

In the tough conditions in 1989-1990, the farming households of 1.5 million families were expanded and 700,000 received land, which helped to mitigate the critical social situation at the time.

Uzbekistan has drawn the line at a shock therapy since the very first days of its independence and has implemented phased reforms. It has prioritized economy over politics as well as the rule of law and a strong social policy.

Every year, about 60% of the State Budget is allocated to the social sector, which contributes to the ... (More on P6)... (23)

Tajikistan Refutes Rumors about Strengthening of Border Security

ALMATY - Tajikistan has refuted the information about security strengthening at the state border with Uzbekistan, reports the Tajikistan Telegraph Agency (TajikTA). "The management of the border troops of Tajikistan refutes the information spread by mass media sources about strengthening of the security at the state border with Uzbekistan," said a source in the press-center of the

border troops. According to the message, the Tajik frontier guards are working in the routine mode at the border of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Some mass media sources with a reference to the officials of Tajikistan had reported that Tajikistan apprehends escalation of the situation at the border with Uzbekistan following the messages about death of Islam Karimov. (Agencies)