

Russian Politician Blames U.S. for Refugee Crisis in Europe

ULAN BATOR - A Russian politician on Wednesday criticized the United States and other NATO allies for causing the current refugee crisis in Europe by intervening in Iraq, Libya and Syria. Sergey Naryshkin, head of the State Duma, the lower house of parliament, made the accusation in a speech at a meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) held in Ulan Bator, Mongolia. The refugees are escaping their homeland to save themselves and their children from the bullets,



bombardments and starvation, Naryshkin said.

They have the right not only to compassion, but

also to a guarantee that domestic conflicts affect-

ing their homes will be stopped, he said.

He asked the international community to work with the Syrian authorities in what he said the fight against terrorism. "Only in this way will we be able to stabilize the situation, including in Europe," he said.

Naryshkin also called for the restoration of partnership between Russia and the European Union and for the settlement of the Ukraine crisis through dialogue and negotiation. Around 200 parliamentarians from 57 countries gathered in the Mongolian capital on Wednesday for the OSCE parliamentary assembly. (Xinhua)

Ukraine Withdraws from Nuclear Construction Deal with Russia

KIEV - Ukraine's parliament on Wednesday voted to unilaterally scrap an agreement to jointly build with Russia two reactors at the Khmelnytsky Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) in western Ukraine, the parliament's press service said. A total of 234 lawmakers out of the 307 present in the assembly supported the bill submitted by the government, more than the minimum 226 votes needed, the press service said in a statement. Commenting on the withdrawal, Ukraine's Deputy Energy Minister Alexander Svetelik accused Russia of "failing to ful-

fill the obligations under the deal", saying Ukraine will seek an "alternative partner" to complete the construction of No. 3 and No. 4 units at the Khmelnytsky NPP.

The Russian authorities have not yet commented on the Ukrainian decision's potential impact on bilateral cooperation in the nuclear sector.

In June 2010, the former Soviet neighbors signed a deal to jointly unfreeze the construction of two units at the Khmelnytsky NPP. Under the accord, Moscow committed itself to investing 5 billion to 6 billion U.S. dollars in the project.



The construction of the two reactors started in 1985, but was halted a year later following a nuclear disaster at the Chernobyl NPP, which resulted in the demolition of the No. 4 reactor and the spread of radiation across Ukraine, Belarus, Rus-

sia and some European countries.

Ukraine relies heavily on nuclear energy, which generates over half of its electricity. Currently, 15 reactors in four nuclear power plants are operating in the East European country. (Xinhua)

Syria's Assad Blames West for Refugee Crisis



BEIRUT - Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has blamed Europe's refugee crisis on Western support for "terrorists", as people fleeing his country's civil war stream towards the European Union. In his first public comments on the mass migration, broadcast on Wednesday, Assad said Europe could expect more refugees. Countries including the United States, Turkey

and Saudi Arabia want to see Assad gone from power and have supported the opposition to his rule during the four-year-old war, including some of the armed groups fighting him. Assad said Turkish support had been crucial to the growth of two of the biggest insurgent groups in Syria, Islamic State and the al Qaeda-linked ... (More on P4)...(21)

Neighbour News

Leader Urges Efforts to up Iran's Passive Defense Capability

TEHRAN - Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has underlined the need to enhance Iran's passive defense mechanism to boost the nation's defense capability. The leader made the remarks in a decree in which he appointed Brigadier General Gholamreza Jalali as head of Iran's Passive Defense Organization. "It is necessary that effective measures be adopted in the passive defense domain ... and ensure the country's immunity and necessary defense preparedness against the enemy," read part of the

Leader's decree. The three branches of government, especially the executive one, are expected to offer whatever support required to help the top general better discharge his responsibilities, read the decree. "Passive defense" refers to measures taken, without using any weapons, to reduce the probability of and minimize the effects of damage caused by hostile action. By contrast, "active defense" refers to direct confrontation with the enemy using military hardware in order to repel attacks and counter threats. (PressTV)

China, Russia to Cooperate on Long Range Wide-Bodied Airliners

BEIJING - Russia expects to sign an agreement with China by the end of 2015 on joint development of long-range wide-bodied airliners, a Russian aircraft manufacturer said on Wednesday. Yury Slyusar, president of the United Aircraft Corporation (UAC), made the remarks at the Aviation Expo China 2015 in Beijing, saying that the technical parameters of the aircraft will be decided in March, 2016. The airliners will not compete with the C919, China's first large passenger aircraft with 150 seats designed for short-haul

commercial use, because the two models are different in passenger capacity and range. The two sides are already producing aircraft components in Shenzhen, and Russia plans to set up after-sales service and training centers in China, Slyusar said. According to an agreement signed in May, China and Russia will start leasing the jets from Sukhoi, a UAC affiliate, and sales of Sukhoi SSJ-100 will be allowed in China. The Russian company plans to sell 100 aircraft in China and Southeast Asia in the next three years. (Xinhua)

Obama to Host China's Xi for September 25 State Visit

WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama will offer his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping a full state welcome at the White House on September 25, amid deep and growing tensions between the top economic and political powers. Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama will host Xi and his wife Peng Liyuan, a Chinese folk singing superstar, "at an official state dinner on the evening of September 25," said White House spokesman Josh Earnest. The prestigious welcome comes after Obama made a similar trip to China in November 2014. Xi is seen as one of the most powerful Chinese lead-

ers in decades, but his vision of creating a "Chinese dream" and returning the country to great power status has met economic headwinds. After decades of breakneck growth, the Chinese economy is weakening, creating a worldwide ripple effect, from slower trade volumes to skittishness on global equity and commodity markets. The visit will be an opportunity to "expand US-China cooperation" and "address areas of disagreement constructively," said Earnest, in a nod to problems ranging from cyber attacks to Beijing's controversial maritime ... (More on P4)...(23)

UN Calls for Further Improvements of Human Rights Situation in Sri Lanka

GENEVA - The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein on Wednesday welcomed the positive steps taken by the Sri Lanka new government, and at the same time urged the country to move forward for justice and better human rights situation. Earlier on Wednesday the UN Human Rights Office (OHCHR) published an investigation report showing patterns of grave human rights violations in Sri Lanka between 2002 and 2011. OHCHR was mandated by the UN Human Rights Council last year to conduct a comprehensive investigation into alleged serious violations and abuses of human rights and related crimes by both the Sri Lanka security forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) during the period 2002-11. The investigation report is based on eye-witness testimony, interviews with victims and witnesses, video and photographic

material and an extensive review of documentation, including about 3,000 written statements and submissions, as well as previously unpublished reports. According to the UN report, among the most serious crimes documented in the report are unlawful killings, sexual and gender-based violence, torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, recruitment of children and their use in hostilities, as well as abduction and forced recruitment of adults, attacks on civilians and civilian objects, denial of humanitarian assistance, etc. "The commitment by the new Government to pursue accountability through a domestic process is commendable ... but the unfortunate reality is that Sri Lanka's criminal justice system is not yet ready," the report states. "First and foremost is the absence of any reliable system for victim and witness protection," the report said, adding that ... (More on P4)...(25)

Migrants Seek new Ways to EU after Hungary Shuts Main Route

SID, SERBIA - Riot police fired water cannon and tear gas at migrants demanding to be let through Hungary's newly shut EU frontier on Wednesday, while refugees at other Balkan borders clambered through cornfields in search of new routes. Hungary's decision to shut the EU's external border with Serbia this week was the most forceful attempt yet by a Euro-

pean country to close off the unprecedented flow of refugees and economic migrants overwhelming the bloc. It has left thousands of migrants scattered across the Balkan peninsula seeking alternative ways to reach the EU. Helmeted Hungarian riot police backed by armored vehicles took up positions at the now-barricaded border crossing with Serbia, where



male migrant youths pelleted them with stones, demanding to be allowed through. The border has until now been the main route for migrants, who

mainly arrive first by dinghy in Greece and then trek across the Balkan peninsula to reach the EU's frontier-free Schengen... (More on P4)...(22)

France to Carry out Air Strikes on IS in Syria "in the Coming Weeks": DM

PARIS - France would carry out first air strikes on Islamic State (IS) targets in Syria, joining the U.S.-led coalition "in the coming weeks", Defense Minister (DM) Jean-Yves Le Drian said Wednesday. Asked by France Inter radio about France's military offensive in Syria, Le Drian said air strikes, following the surveillance flights, would be launched "in the coming weeks, as soon as we have clearly identified targets." Since Sept. 8, France had conducted two reconnaissance missions over Syrian territory to determine future action to halt the Islamist insurgents' offensive that "have made

significant progress" in Syria. France was the first country to join the U.S.-led coalition carrying out air strikes on Islamic State in Iraq, but repeatedly ruled out doing so in Syria, fearing that would reinforce Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Speaking to lawmakers at the National Assembly, French Premier Manuel Valls said on Tuesday France changed position as "Daesh (IS) is the new totalitarianism. It uses Islam to impose itself and does not back down against anything." "However, these strikes will not contribute to strengthening the regime of (Syrian president)... (More on P4)...(24)

Yemeni Govt. Returns to Aden after Months in Exile-Spokesman

ADEN - Yemeni Prime Minister Khaled Bahah returned to the southern port of Aden on Wednesday in a step towards restoring a government on home soil after months of working from exile with Gulf Arab allies to fight against Houthi control of the country. Government spokesman Rajeh Badi said Bahah, who is also vice president, was accompanied by seven ministers when he arrived in Aden, which loyalist fighters backed by Saudi-led troops recaptured from Houthi forces in July.

"Khaled Bahah and the ministers who arrived with him are in Aden to stay permanently," Badi said. Bahah's return from Saudi Arabia follows that of several other Yemeni ministers who relocated to Aden from the kingdom in the weeks after the city was retaken in July. Bahah made a brief visit to Aden on Aug. 1. President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi fled Aden for the Saudi capital Riyadh in March as Houthi forces closed in. Since its recapture, loyalist forces supported by Saudi-led ... (More on P4)...(26)

Australia's Victorian Premier Seeks Change of Heart on Rail Funding from New PM



MELBOURNE - Victoria's premier is hoping that a shift in the federal government's leadership will inspire a change of heart on funding the state's major rail project, worth eight billion U.S. dollars. Daniel Andrews, premier of the state of Victoria, will meet Australia's new Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull on Wednesday for the first time since Turnbull's successful leadership challenge earlier this week. Andrews, who publicly congratulated Turnbull following his leadership challenge on Monday, will use the meeting to make a case for the 29th prime minister to invest in Melbourne's Metro rail project. The project will transform Melbourne's rail network, with five new underground stations in the city's heartland. Turnbull's predecessor Tony Abbott vehemently opposed the project after the Andrews government abandoned the East West Link freeway project, which the Abbott government had set aside 2.15 billion U.S. dollars to complete. Abbott declared the rail project would not receive a cent of federal financial backing, with the allocated East West Link funding to stay in a "locked box" among the government's coffers. The Victorian premier described the new prime minister as an "undoubted fan" of public transport, having been snapped using public transport before despite his exceeding wealth as Australia's second richest parliamentarian. On Tuesday, Andrews hailed the leadership change as a chance for the two governments to patch up their fractured relationship. (Xinhua)

Pakistan's Election Bar on Banned Outfits to be Strictly Enforced

KARACHI - The Sindh apex committee decided on Tuesday that no member of outlawed organisations would be allowed to contest the local government elections whose first phase would be held in eight districts of the province on Oct 31. A meeting of the committee presided over by Sindh Chief Minister Qaim Ali Shah also decided against allowing any banned organisation to collect hides of animals during EidulAzha. Only welfare organisations may collect the hides if they follow the official code of conduct. The meeting was attended

by Governor Dr Ishaq-ul-Bad, Karachi Corps Commander Lt Gen Naveed-Mukhtar and other senior officials. Talking to journalists after the meeting, Sindh Information Minister Nisar Ahmad Khuhro said it was a follow-up meeting of the federal apex committee and was aimed to review the pace of implementation of decisions. He said the federal government had decided to set up five military courts in the country, including one in Sindh, and that the province would soon appoint a judge for the trial of cases. (Agencies)

Special Forces' Unit Commander Killed in Clashes with Rebels in Tajikistan

DUSHANBE - Four servicemen, including special forces' Alpha Group commander Colonel Rustam Amakiyev, have been killed in clashes with rebels from the armed grouping of former deputy defense minister Abdulkhalim Nazarzoda in the Ramit mountain gorge in Tajikistan, a source close to the headquarters of the anti-terrorist operation told TASS on Wednesday. Clashes broke out last night 60 kilometers to the east of Dushanbe in Tajikistan's Ramit mountain gorge and still continue. The details of the incident have not been officially reported yet. On September 4, the rebellious general together with his supporters staged two terrorist attacks in Tajikistan's capital Dushanbe and Vahdat, in the country's west. Nazarzoda seized a large amount of weapons and hid in the Ramit Gorge. Nine police officers were

killed as a result of the criminals' attacks and 12 others were wounded. More than 100 terrorists have been detained in an anti-terrorist operation that followed the attacks. Twelve of them surrendered arms voluntarily. Twenty-two were killed in clashes with law enforcers. The anti-terrorist operation is still underway. Tajik prosecutor general's office initiated a criminal case against Nazarzoda, the former defense minister, on charges of high treason, terrorism, organizing an extremist group and sabotage. Similar charges were brought against Nazarzoda's "closest supporter" Colonel Dzhanaidullo Umarov, who took active part in setting up a criminal group and attacking policemen in Dushanbe and Vahdat. The prosecutor general's office also said Nazarzoda possessed a "big business" and dozens of illegally privatized assets. (Agencies)