

Refugee Crisis to Test EU at Summit of Divided Leaders

BRUSSELS/ LEIPZIG - Bitterly-divided European leaders will seek to find a credible response to the continent's worst migration crisis since World War Two at an emergency summit this week. German chancellor Angela Merkel called on her peers on Sunday to accept joint responsibility. "Germany is willing to help. But it is not just a German challenge, but one for all of Europe," Merkel told a gathering of trade unionists. "Europe must act together and take on responsibility. Germany can't shoulder this task alone." Striking a more skeptical tone on migration



than in previous weeks, Merkel also warned that Germany could not shelter those who were moving for economic reasons

rather than to flee war or persecution. "We are a big country. We are a strong country. But to make out as if we alone can solve all

the social problems of the world would not be realistic," she told a gathering of the Verdi trade union. European Council President

Donald Tusk, who chairs European Union summits, said on Twitter on Sunday following a weekend visit to Jordan and Egypt that

the EU needed to help Syrian refugees find a better life closer at home. That will be one of the topics of discussion for Wednesday's summit in Brussels as hundreds of thousands of refugees and migrants brave the seas and trek across the impoverished Balkan peninsula to reach more affluent countries in northern Europe. The 28-member bloc has struggled to find a unified response to the crisis, which has tested many of its newer members in the East that are accustomed to large-scale immigration. (Reuters)

China-U.S. Cooperation Makes a Better World: John Thornton

BEIJING - Chinese President Xi Jinping's upcoming U.S. visit is a major event for both countries, and the world will be better off if they cooperate, according to Brookings Institution co-chair John Thornton. "The China-U.S. relationship will deepen over time and must deepen over time," said Thornton, former president of U.S. investment bank Goldman Sachs, in an interview with Xinhua on Sunday. Xi's first state visit to the United States since he took office in 2013 will deepen and enrich bilateral ties in culture, education, economics and strategy, he said. "The biggest single change in the

world over the last 30 years is that China has been rising. That will continue to be the case," said the 61-year-old leader of the Washington-based think tank. According to him, China has been and will continue on a course of opening up and reform. Its economy is growing, and the quality of growth is improving. The country is becoming more interdependent and interrelated to the world economy and vice versa. Thornton told Xinhua that the three trends will continue in the future and they will serve as fundamental pillars of China-U.S. cooperation. "Opportunities are ... (More on P4)...(20)

Russia Sends Drone Aircraft on Surveillance Missions in Syria: U.S. Officials

WASHINGTON - Russia has started flying drone aircraft on surveillance missions in Syria, two U.S. officials said on Monday, in what appeared to be Moscow's first military air operations inside the country since staging a rapid buildup at a Syrian air base. The U.S. officials, who spoke to Reuters on condition of anonymity, could not immediately say how many Russian drones were involved in the surveillance missions or the scope of the flights. The start of Russian drone flights underscored the risks of U.S.-

led coalition aircraft and Russian flights operating in Syria's limited airspace. U.S. and Russian defense chiefs agreed on Friday to explore ways to avoid accidental interactions, also known as "deconfliction" in military parlance. The discussions may gain added urgency, now that Moscow has started drone flights. The former Cold War foes have a common adversary in Islamic State militants in Syria, even as Washington opposes Moscow's support for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, seeing him as a driving force in the na-



tions's devastating, four-and-a-half-year civil war. But Russia may also want to target opposition fighters that the United States supports in Syria, seeing them as equal threats to Assad. Russia's drone opera-

tions appeared to be staged out of an air base near Latakia, where it has moved heavy military equipment, including fighter jets, helicopter gunships and naval infantry forces in recent days, U.S. officials said. (Reuters)

Israeli PM Heads to Moscow to Discuss Russian Military Deployment in Syria

JERUSALEM - Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu left for Moscow on Monday to discuss with Russian President Vladimir Putin about Russia's growing involvement in Syria. The topics will include how to keep advanced weapons away from the Hezbollah organization, Israel's staunch enemy, how to prevent attacks on Israel's territories along the Syrian border and coordinate

Israeli operations in Syrian airspace, the Ha'aretz daily reported. Recent evidence showed a growing deployment of Russian forces in Syria, which Israel fears would trickle to Hezbollah and other militant organizations, according to a statement issued last week by the Prime Minister's Office. Russia has been criticized by Western countries for its support of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad



amid the four-year civil war in the country. It said its recent military buildup was aimed, among others, to fight the Islamic State (IS) group. Tensions increased between Jerusalem and Moscow

earlier this year as Russia announced it would go ahead with a deal to sell S-300 missile defense systems to Iran in April. Israel charges Iran poses an existential threat to its security. (Xinhua)

India to Launch its First Space Observatory Next Week

NEW DELHI - India will launch its first space observatory Astrosat next week, a senior space official said Monday. "The 1.5-ton space observatory will be launched by the Indian Space Research Organization on board the country's indigenous PSLV rocket from the southern spaceport of Sriharikota on September 28," the official said, on condition of anonymity. "The observa-

tory will study celestial bodies once it is placed successfully into a 650 km orbit. Six more satellites -- one each from Indonesia and Canada, and four from the United States -- will also be launched on board the rocket," he added. If successful, India will join the elite club of three countries -- the United States, Russia and Japan -- which have launched a space observatory. (Xinhua)

Neighbour News

Iran's Role in Nuclear Probe Meets Standards: IAEA

VIENNA - The chief of the U.N. nuclear agency acknowledged Monday that samples used to determine whether Iran tried to develop a nuclear weapon were collected by the Iranians instead of agency experts, but insisted the probe stands up to strict agency standards. Such sampling of soil, air or dust from equipment is usually done by the International Atomic Energy Agency's own experts. But IAEA chief Yukiya Amano confirmed that Iranians carried out that part of the probe at Parchin, where the agency suspects that explosive triggers for nuclear weapons might have been tested in the past. Dip-

lomats say Iran insisted on the compromise as a condition for any probe of Parchin. Deputy IAEA Director General Teror Varjoranta said that there have been over 40 instances of letting a country being inspected use their own nationals to do their own sampling and that the process is only a small part of a rigid regimen established by the agency to make sure there is no cheating. He said the criteria at Parchin included: invasive monitoring by video and still cameras while the sampling took place; GPS tracking of the sampling process; IAEA agreement on where the samples were to be taken. (AP)

China Prosecutors Investigate 140,000 Suspects in Anti-Graft Drive

BEIJING - Prosecutors handled 110,000 corruption cases, involving 140,000 suspects, from the beginning of 2013 until this August, according to the Supreme People's Procuratorate (SPP). "Our country has been taking decisive anti-corruption measures since 2013 and made notable achievements in handling corruption cases," said SPP Vice President Sun Qian on Monday at a press conference. A sweeping campaign against corruption and extravagance was launched after the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in late 2012 when the new leadership headed by Xi Jinping vowed to crack down on corruption. The campaign is still going strong

as discipline inspections routinely uncover misbehaving officials at various levels and pass their cases to judicial organs. According to Sun, an increasing number of senior officials are among the judicial targets. In 2013, eight officials at or above the provincial or ministerial level were under judicial investigation. Last year, the number rose to 28, while the first eight months of 2015 have already seen the fall of 26. Among them were Zhou Yongkang, former Standing Committee member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, who was sentenced to life in prison for graft in June, and Ling Jihua, a former senior political advisor who is still under prosecutors' investigation. (Xinhua)

Qatar to be Among Top Investors in Tajikistan: Visiting PM said

DOHA - Prime Minister of Tajikistan Kokhir Rasulzoda stressed on Monday the importance of Qatari investment to enhancing his country's economy, reports QNA. Rasulzoda, who concluded his official visit to Doha today, said that Qatar would be one of the top investors in Tajikistan's promising sectors. Speaking to representatives of the biggest Qatari corporations, Rasulzoda said that Qatari Diar is currently establishing a massive high-end real estate project called DiarDushabne. Qatar is also building the country's biggest mosque. The Prime Minister added that

those two projects were the perfect example of the strong bilateral cooperation the two countries have. He highlighted that the meeting with Prime Minister and Minister of Interior HE Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa Al-Thani focused on bilateral relations in the economy and trade fields. The Prime Minister added that his country has ample investment opportunities in fields like energy, water resources, tourism, agriculture and the mining sector. He added that Qatar would be one of the top investing partners Tajikistan is looking to attract. (Agencies)

Gen Raheel Approves Death Sentences of Nine Hardened Terrorists: ISPR

RAWALPINDI - The Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif on Monday approved the death sentences of nine 'hardcore terrorists' involved in various heinous terrorism activities, said a statement released by head of military's media wing on Twitter. The director general of Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Maj Gen Asim Bajwa, tweeted that the army chief confirmed the death sentences of nine hardcore terrorists involved in the killing of civilians and security personnel. The condemned terrorists were involved in the killing of Major General Sanullah, General Officer Commanding for

Malakand division, and Lt Col Tauseef Ahmed during an attack on the military convoy in Swat. The Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan had claimed responsibility for the attack. The police later claimed that the suspect behind the attack, Abdul Rahim alias Raes, was arrested in March this year during an operation in Barawal, near the Pak-Afghan border. The ISPR said that those convicted were involved in sectarian attacks in Mastung, killing of civilians and security personnel in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, suicide attack in Newshehra and the IED attack on military convoy in Swat. (Agencies)

UNHCR Repatriates over 4,000 Somali Refugees from Kenya

NAIROBI - The UN refugee agency said that it has so far repatriated 4,108 Somali refugees from Dadaab refugee camp in northeast Kenya to Somalia since December last year. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said in its bi-Weekly Update received in Nairobi Saturday that 250 individuals returned to the Horn of Africa nation by road convoy while 224 returnees were assisted to return to Mogadishu by flight in the first half of September. "The total number of returnees assisted under the voluntary return process stood at 4,108 as of Sept. 15 (3,510 by road and 598 by flight)," the UN refugee agency said in its latest report. It said some 4,878 refugees have confirmed their intention to return to Somalia as of Sept. 15, adding that it has strengthened the identification and assessment of people with special needs under the voluntary return process. "Their details and needs will be shared with UNHCR Somalia for further follow up upon arrival in Somalia," the UN agency said. It also said that with the anticipated rains in October and November, the number of flights carrying returnees to Mogadishu will be increased to six flight rotations per week. "This will allow more returnees going to Mogadishu and its environs to reach their destinations safely before the rainy seasons starts," UNHCR said. The new phase of repatriation is the result of efforts by the Tripartite Commission, formed by UNHCR and the governments of Kenya and Somalia, to step up support for voluntary repatriation of Somali refugees. Despite the fragile security environment situation in Somalia, refugees have started to return, UNHCR said, noting that more still have returned spontaneously without receiving assistance from UNHCR. (Xinhua)

EU Seeking Answer to Threats of Youth Marginalization

BRUSSELS - The European Commission on Monday called for European youth policy to give greater attention to young people at risk of falling behind and to support their active role in society. This was one of the findings of the Commission's new draft youth report, to be jointly adopted with European Union (EU) member states. The report highlighted more education opportunities and better support in securing employment were key to finding an answer to the threats of youth marginalization and radicalization. "Though better educated, in-

formed and connected than their parents, almost a third of Europe's young people are today at risk of poverty or social exclusion. We cannot afford to leave them behind. We must work to let all young people find their place in our society and help us build an open and tolerant Europe," said Tibor Navracsics, EU Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport. The report offered a review of EU youth policy since 2013, which was the basis for national youth agendas, and it gave strategic orientation to funding support for youth under the Erasmus program, according to an EU statement. (Xinhua)

New Australian Leader Doesn't Plan Constitutional Change

CANBERRA - Australia's new Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull indicated on Monday that he is in no hurry to sever the nation's constitutional links to Britain by appointing an Australian president as head of state. But six days after becoming prime minister, Turnbull said he had no plans to revisit the constitutional issue. "While I am a republican, I have to say to you that there are much more immediate issues fac-

ing me and the government than the republic, and the key ones all relate to economic growth," Turnbull told Nine Network television. Governor General Peter Gosgrove, the British monarch's representative in Australia, swore in Turnbull's 21-member Cabinet later on Monday. His team is younger and has more women than the 19-member Cabinet of his predecessor, Tony Abbott. "Today we are forming a government for the 21st century, a ministry ... (More on P4)...(21)

Iran Inks Gas Deal as Omani Minister Visits



TEHRAN - Iran and Oman have signed an agreement on studying an undersea gas pipeline across the Persian Gulf in a project worth \$60 billion, managing director of the National Iranian Gas Exports Company (NIGEC) says.

Two separate agreements were signed for studies in the offshore and onshore sections, with Omani Oil Minister Mohammad bin Hamad al-Rumhy visiting Tehran, Alireza Kameli said. The offshore deal was signed between the Iranian Offshore Engineering and Construction Company (IOEC) and Oman's Oil Ministry. For the onshore section, an agreement was signed between the Pars Consulting Engineering Company and the Omani side. The offshore section envisages building a pipeline for 200 kilometers from Kuh-e Mubarak in Iran to Oman's Sohar port in five months. The onshore section of the pipeline in Iran will be built for another 200 km from Rudan to Kuh-e Mubarak in six months. The \$60 billion deal was concluded during President Hassan Rouhani's visit to Muscat in 2013 to ship 28 million cubic meters per day of the Iranian gas to Oman for a period of 15 years.

The two countries signed another deal in 2007 to build a liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant in Oman to process the Iranian gas. (PressTV)