

Russia Doubts Ratification of CA Nuclear Weapon Treaty by US

Moscow doubts the United States will ratify the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone (CANWFZ) Treaty, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said Friday.

MOSCOW - In 2014, Russia, the United States, the United Kingdom, China and France signed the protocol to the CANWFZ treaty, which legally prohibits the use or the threat to use nuclear weapons against other treaty parties. In March, Russian President Vladimir Putin submitted the protocol to the State Duma, the lower house of Russia's parliament, for ratification. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryab-



kov commented on the situation: "As for the United States, we are not sure, we openly say it. We stress that we are concerned by the difficulties that documents on secu-

urity and nuclear weapon non-proliferation face when going through the Senate of US Congress."

CANWFZ was opened for signature in 2006 and was signed and ratified by Kazakhstan,

Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. It entered into force in 2009. Under the treaty, the five Central Asian countries promise not to research, develop, manufacture, stockpile, acquire, possess, or have any control over any nuclear weapon. The five states also undertake not to seek or receive assistance in any of the activities related to nuclear weapons development, or assist in or encourage such actions. (Sputnik)

Damascus Gives Positive Assessment of Moscow Peace Talks

DAMASCUS - Syria's deputy foreign minister has assessed as positive the recent round of talks between Damascus and the opposition groups in the Russian capital city of Moscow. In an article published on Lebanese al-Bina newspaper on Saturday, Faisal al-Miqdad said the negotiations have created an atmosphere of hope and optimism among all parties which are seeking to find a peaceful solution to the Syrian conflict. Syrian Deputy Foreign

Minister Faisal al-Miqdad "The talks were more organized and featured by seriousness, yet, they resulted in a consensus by all participants on points which were an issue of disagreement between the government and the opposition sides since the outbreak of the crisis in Syria," Miqdad said. The Syrian official also urged the opposition parties to consider the rising threat of terrorist groups in the Arab country, including ISIL and the al-Nusra Front, saying the

Takfiri extremists pose a great danger to the security of the region and the whole world. Miqdad also hailed Russia's efforts to mediate peace talks and end the bloodshed in Syria. "The Syrians, with the help of Russians, are the only ones who are able to restore security and stability to the Homeland through an inter-Syrian dialogue," he pointed out. Qadri Jamil, leader of the Popular Front of Change and Liberation, speaks ... (More on P4)...(18)

India Orders 36 Rafale Fighter Jets from France

PARIS - India's prime minister announced Friday that New Delhi had ordered 36 Rafale fighter jets from France in a multi-billion-euro agreement that has been years in the making. Standing alongside his counterpart Francois Hollande on a visit to France -- the first leg of his maiden trip to Europe -- Narendra Modi finally relieved the frantic speculation over whether tortuous, years-long negotiations on buying the jets would ever bear fruit. "I asked the president (Hollande) to supply us with 36 Rafale jet fighter planes, the ready-to-fly models," Modi said at a

joint news conference at the Elysee Palace. While long-blocked exclusive negotiations between the two sides had initially focused on 126 French Rafales, the 36-jet order is manufacturer Dassault's biggest yet abroad -- estimated to be worth nearly four billion euros (\$4.2 billion). Paris sold 24 Rafale jets to Egypt earlier this year. Negotiations to buy the planes kicked off in 2012 but had been bogged down over cost and New Delhi's insistence on assembling a portion of the high-tech planes in India. Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian told reporters after Modi's an-

nouncement that all 36 jets would be manufactured in France. Indian defence analyst Saurabh Joshi said the country's air force urgently needs new jets to update its ageing fleet in the face of antagonistic neighbours Pakistan and China. As such, India has launched a vast defence modernisation programme worth some \$100 billion. Modi, a right-wing Hindu nationalist, was effectively blacklisted by the European Union for years, accused of encouraging deadly communal riots in 2002 in the western state of Gujarat, which he governed for ... (More on P4)...(19)

Saudi Airstrikes Hit Two Markets in Yemen

KABUL - Saudi fighter jets have carried out airstrikes against two markets near Sa'ada in northern Yemen, as Saudi Arabia continues its illegal military campaign against its impoverished neighbor. Saudi bombers targeted two populated marketplaces in Sa'ada on Saturday killing at least two civilians and inflicting damage on the city's infrastructure. The attack on Sa'ada came after Saudi ground forces allegedly fired mortar shells at the border area near the city earlier in the day. There were also unconfirmed reports of at least three fatalities in Amran, a city south of Sa'ada, where Saudis launched a massive raid. Other areas across Yemen came under similar attacks, with warplanes targeting al-Dailani airbase near the capital Sana'a. There were no reports of casualties. At least three people were killed in another aerial attack in the capital earlier on Saturday while 14 other people were injured in an airstrike on a football stadium. The Saudi fighter jets also attacked a remote district in the northern Jawf Province. Several government buildings along with a football stadium and a school in the western city of Hudaydah were also hit by Saudi bombers. Sources close to the ruling Ansarullah movement say at least 1,000 people, including 200 children, have been killed in Yemen since the Saudi aggression against the Arabian Peninsula state began on March 26. (Press TV)

Spain, S. Korea and Austria Approved as Founding Members of AIIB

BEIJING - Austria, Spain and South Korea have been approved as founding members of the Asia Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB), the Chinese Finance Ministry announced Saturday. including Germany, France and the UK. Japan has decided not to apply, saying it would want the terms of joining to include establishing lending rules with due account for social consequences plus certain

guarantees on transparency. Tokyo however said it may join in the future. Washington was first skeptical of the emerging bank, seeing it as a rival of the US-led World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the Manila-based Asian Development Bank (ADB), which is dominated by Japan and the US. In a subsequent shift of tone, though, Nathan Sheets, US Treasury Under-Secretary for International Affairs, said the US "welcomed new multilateral institutions that strengthen the international financial architecture." The AIIB was established by China in 2014 and had an initial subscribed capital of \$50 billion, which is planned to be increased to \$100 billion. (Agencies)



A founding member of the bank has the right to help write its rules and Saturday's additions bring the number of prospective founders to 41. The exact number of founding members will be finalized on April 15. Any country that joined the AIIB after March 31 will only be allowed to be an ordinary member, which means they have voting rights but less say in making the rules. The AIIB was set up to provide finance for railways, roads, airports and other important infrastructure projects in Asia. The State Council of the People Republic of China has confirmed that Russia will also become a founding member of the bank. A number of leading European economies have also applied to becoming founding members,

including Germany, France and the UK. Japan has decided not to apply, saying it would want the terms of joining to include establishing lending rules with due account for social consequences plus certain guarantees on transparency. Tokyo however said it may join in the future. Washington was first skeptical of the emerging bank, seeing it as a rival of the US-led World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the Manila-based Asian Development Bank (ADB), which is dominated by Japan and the US. In a subsequent shift of tone, though, Nathan Sheets, US Treasury Under-Secretary for International Affairs, said the US "welcomed new multilateral institutions that strengthen the international financial architecture." The AIIB was established by China in 2014 and had an initial subscribed capital of \$50 billion, which is planned to be increased to \$100 billion. (Agencies)

Neighbor News

Hundreds Protest in Iran outside Saudi Embassy

TEHRAN - Hundreds of people demonstrated Saturday outside the Saudi embassy in Tehran to protest against alleged sexual harassment against Iranian youths by Saudi police. Official IRNA news agency said about 500 people gathered outside the embassy in northeastern Tehran in a protest that had not been authorized by the authorities. Media reported that two Iranian teenagers who had gone on pilgrimage to holy sites in Saudi Arabia had been sexually harassed by police at the Red Sea airport of Jeddah, as they prepared to return home. The alleged incident occurred several days ago, media said without giv-

ing an exact date. State television said Iran summoned the Saudi charge d'affaires to lodge an official complaint and demanded that the case be taken to the courts. Deputy Foreign Minister Hassan Ghashghavi told the state broadcaster that the two Saudi police had been arrested. Outside the Saudi embassy, protesters chanted slogans hostile to the Sunni-ruled Gulf kingdom and demanded that authorities in Shiite majority Iran shut the diplomatic mission. "Shame on you. Get off our soil," the protesters chanted as security forces ringed the embassy. (AFP)

UAE Warns Pakistan of 'Heavy Price for Ambiguous Stand' on Yemen

ISLAMABAD - Pakistani lawmakers' call for the government to remain neutral on the escalating crisis in Yemen has evoked a strong response from the United Arab Emirates (UAE). "The vague and contradictory stands of Pakistan and Turkey are an absolute proof that Arab security - from Libya to Yemen - is the responsibility of none but Arab countries," UAE's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Dr Anwar Mohammed Gargash said. Speaking to renowned Emirati newspaper Khaleej Times, Garhash warned Pakistan of having to

pay a "heavy price" for taking on what he called an "ambiguous stand". He added that Pakistan should take a clear position "in favour of its strategic relations with the six-nation Arab Gulf cooperation Council". "The Arabian Gulf is in a dangerous confrontation, its strategic security is on the edge, and the moment of truth distinguishes between the real ally and the ally of media and statements," Gargash tweeted moments after the Pakistani parliament passed the resolution insisting on neutrality in the Yemen conflict. ... (More on P4)...(20)

AIIB to be Lean, Clean and Green: Chinese officials

SINGAPORE - China and all the member countries of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) will be committed to building a BANK which would be lean, clean and green, said Jin Liqun, secretary general of the interim multilateral secretariat of the China-proposed institution here in Singapore on Saturday. Jin made such remarks at the two-day "Singapore Forum 2015" which concluded Saturday. "Lean is cost effective; clean, this bank will have zero-tolerance on corruption; green means it's going to promote the

economy," he said. The bank has seen more than 40 prospective founding members by Saturday, with Spain, South Korea and Austria as the most recent prospective founding members. Talking about whether the increasing number of members would add difficulty on the decision-making process of the AIIB, Long Yongtu, China's former vice trade minister who also attended the forum, told Xinhua that the more countries joining in, the stronger the foundation of AIIB would be ... (More on P4)...(21)

Islam Karimov Assumes Office of the Uzbekistan's President

TASHKENT, Uzbekistan - Islam Karimov assumed the office of the President of Uzbekistan on Friday. At the joint session of the chambers of Oliy Majlis, Islam Karimov was sworn-in as the President of Uzbekistan. He vowed to serve the people of Uzbekistan, strictly follow the Constitution and laws of the country, guarantee the rights and freedoms of citizens, fulfill the duties of the President of Uz-

bekistan in good faith. Chairperson of the Central Election Commission, Mirza-Ulugbek Abdusalomov handed over a certificate of the President of Uzbekistan to Islam Karimov. Afterwards Islam Karimov delivered a speech. Islam Karimov collected 90.39% of votes in the presidential elections, which took place on 29 March. About 18,942 million out of 20,798 million registered voters casted their vote in the elections. (PR)

Seoul Strengthens its Position in Turkmenistan

WASHINGTON - Hillary Clinton is expected on Sunday to announce, via video and social media, her intention ASHGANAT, Turkmenistan - Ashgabat and Seoul will sign a package of bilateral documents aimed at major expansion of the legal framework of cooperation, the Turkmen media reported.

The documents will be signed following the visit of President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov to South Korea, which is scheduled for April 11-14. "During the upcoming Turkmen-Korean summit talks topical areas of cooperation between the two ... (More on P4)...(22)

د افغانستان اسلامي جمهوریت
د اقتصاد وزارت
د افغانستان د بیارغونې او پرمختیایي خدماتو دفتر

جمهوری اسلامی افغانستان
وزارت اقتصاد
دفتر خدمات بازسازی و انکشافی افغانستان

Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Ministry of Economy
Afghanistan Reconstruction & Development Services

ARDS

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

Procurement Entities	ARDS on Behalf of Afghan Civil Aviation Authority
Funded By	GOA
Item Description	Flight Inspection "Flight Check"
Ref. No	ACAA/2001/ICB
Bid Security	Lot 1: 3200 USD Lot 2: 2000 USD
Deadline for Bid Submission	12May, 2015 at 2:00PM (Kabul Local Time).
Address for Bid Submission	Afghanistan Reconstruction & Development Services (ARDS) 4th Floors, Ministry of Economy Building Malik Asghar Square, Kabul - Afghanistan. Telephone: +93 (0) 752055747
Bid Documents is available at	A complete set of bidding documents in English may be obtained by interested bidders, free of cost, by downloading from the ARDS website www.ards.gov.af or may obtain in CD from the ARDS Office (Address given above). In case of any difficulty in downloading from website, interested bidders may contact at e-mail address: ards.procurement@ards.org.af & wafullah.ebadi@ards.org.af with a copy to pavel@ards.org.af

Iran FM Due in Kazakhstan for Mutual, Regional Talks

WASHINGTON - Hillary Clinton is expected on Sunday to announce, via video and social media, her intention to seek the Democratic presidential nomination in 2016, a Democrat close to the Clinton camp told Reuters on Friday. The relatively low-key announcement is a recognition that the former secretary of state and wife of former President Bill Clinton, viewed as the heavy favorite for the nomination, already has huge name recognition and needs an uncomplicated start to the long campaign ahead. Following the announcement, Clinton will travel to the key early voting states of Iowa and New Hampshire, said the source, who asked to remain unidentified. "She's expected to make her intention to run known on Sunday," the source said. A representative for Clinton, who also served as a senator from New York, declined to comment. Once she starts traveling, Clinton is expected to participate in small events to get up-close to voters to hear their concerns and explain why she wants to be president. (Reuters)