

# Turkey President Urges Joint Firm Stand Against Terrorism

ANKARA - Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan condemned strongly the terror attack at Istanbul Ataturk Airport in a statement late on Tuesday, urging the world to take a firm stand against terrorism.

"This attack once again revealed the dark face of terrorist organizations targeting innocent civilians," Erdogan said in the written statement.

"It is obvious that this attack does not aim to attain any results but merely aims to produce propaganda material against our country by shedding the blood of and causing pain for innocent civilians." He



added. Erdogan stated that the attack, which took place during the holy month of

Ramadan, shows that terrorism strikes with no regard for faith and values. He appealed governments,

parliaments, media and civil society organizations around the world to take a firm stand against ter-

rorism. Meanwhile, the Turkish president offered his condolences to the victims' families and Turkish

nation in the terror attack. The statement was issued after the meeting which President Erdogan chaired at the Presidential Complex, attended by Prime Minister Binali Yildirim and Chief of General Staff Gen. Hulusi Akar. At least 36 were killed and more than 140 injured in the bombing attacks at Ataturk international airport on Tuesday night. The security situation in Turkey has deteriorated over the past year, with Istanbul, the national capital of Ankara and other cities having already been hit by a number of bombing attacks. (Xinhua)

## U.S. House Committee Releases Final Report on Benghazi Attack

WASHINGTON - The U.S. House Select Committee on Benghazi Tuesday faulted the U.S. government for lack of preparedness and slow response in sending help during the attacks in Benghazi, Libya that left four Americans dead.

The U.S. House Select Committee on Benghazi released Tuesday its 800-page final report on the 2012 attack which marked the culmination of a two-year investigation.

"Despite President Obama and Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta's clear

orders to deploy military assets, nothing was sent to Benghazi, and nothing was en route to Libya at the time the last two Americans were killed almost 8 hours after the attacks began," the report said.

In a statement regarding the findings of the report, Republican Representative Mike Pompeo accused the Obama administration of putting politics ahead of the lives of Americans.

"While the administration had made excuses and blamed the challenges ... (More on P4)...(26)

## Russia Ready to Normalize Ties with Turkey: Putin

MOSCOW - Russia is ready to start restoring its relationship with Turkey and normalize bilateral ties, Russian President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday in a phone conversation with his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The two leaders also agreed to consider the possibility of a face-to-face meeting in the near future, according to a Kremlin statement.

The phone call between the two sides came after Erdogan sent a message of apologies to Putin on Mon-



day over the downing of a Russian warplane in November last year, voicing his readiness to mend ties after the incident. Putin said over the phone that

the message created preconditions for turning the "crisis page" in bilateral relations and beginning the process of resuming collaboration on international

and regional issues as well as on the development of the entire range of Russian-Turkish relations, the statement said. He ... (More on P4)...(27)

## NATO Chief Highlights NATO, EU Cooperation after Brexit

BRUSSELS - NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg on Tuesday highlighted the importance of cooperation between NATO and the European Union, saying it has become more important after Britain's decision to leave the EU.

"A strong European Union is important for NATO," Stoltenberg said at his arrival to participate in a session of the European Council, added that he welcomed the European global strategy on foreign and security policy, which will be



presented at the two-day summit.

Addressing Britain's EU referendum, Stoltenberg noted that it will take time

for all the consequences to be clear and that it is for Britain and the EU to find the way forward. He stressed that Britain's po-

sition within NATO remains unchanged. "The UK is a strong and committed Ally, responsible for ... (More on P4)...(28)

## Iran 'Helpful' in Fight against Daesh in Iraq: Kerry

TEHRAN - US Secretary of State John Kerry praises the role Iran plays in the fight against Daesh Takfiris in Iraq, calling it "helpful."

Kerry made the remarks at the Aspen Ideas Festival in the US state of Colorado on Tuesday.

He was answering a question on whether Iran's role in Iraq is "more helpful or more harmful." "Look, we have challenges with Iran as everybody knows and we are working on those challenges," Kerry was quoted as saying by CNN. "But I can tell you that

Iran in Iraq has been in certain ways helpful, and they clearly are focused on ISIL-Daesh, and so we have a common interest, actually." Kerry's remarks followed comments by Brent McGurk, the US special envoy to oversee the so-called fight on Daesh terrorists. "We think most of these popular mobilization forces do operate under the control of the Iraqi state, but about 15-20% of them actually do not," McGurk said. "And those groups are a fundamental problem." Abu ... (More on P4)...(29)

## Two Congos Call for Reforms at the UN Security Council

BRAZZAVILLE - The presidents of Republic of Congo Denis Sassou Nguesso and Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) Joseph Kabila, have reiterated their support for an African proposal for the reform of the UN Security Council, local media reported on Tuesday.

They were speaking in a meeting held on Monday in Oyo, some 400 km from Brazzaville, during which they also discussed peace and security issues affecting their respective countries.

The two presidents ... (More on P4)...(30)

## At Least 28 Killed in Explosions at Istanbul's Ataturk Airport, all Flights Suspended

ISTANBUL - At least 28 people were killed and 69 others injured in two explosions that hit the Ataturk Airport in Istanbul on Tuesday evening, forcing the suspension of all flights.

Turkish Justice Minister Bekir Bozdog said in Ankara that one terrorist opened fire at random and then blew himself up at the airport, resulting in at least 28 deaths and 69 injuries.

Press reports, citing eyewitnesses, spoke of two terrorists wreaking havoc, while social media put the number of injuries at least 40. Turkey's NTV said three explosions occurred, causing at least 60 people wounded, six of them seriously.

Kerem Kinik, the head ... (More on P4)...(31)

## Kazakhstan Elected as Non-Permanent Member of UN Security Council



UNITED NATIONS - The UN General Assembly on Tuesday elected Kazakhstan as a non-permanent member of UN Security Council in a second round of vote, following the election of Ethiopia, Bolivia, and Sweden.

The 193-member General Assembly has been voting to elect five non-permanent members of the 15-nation council on Tuesday. A two-thirds majority of 129 votes is needed for a member state to be elected.

In the second round, Kazakhstan garnered 138 votes, beating its competitor Thailand with 55 votes to win the seat for the Asia-Pacific region.

One more seat needs to be

filled out in another round of votes which engages competition between Italy and the Netherlands. Neither of the countries garnered a two-thirds majority of votes in the second round.

The newly-elected members will replace the retiring members of Angola, Malaysia, New Zealand, Spain, and Venezuela. They will join the other five non-permanent members of the Security Council, namely Egypt, Japan, Senegal, Ukraine and Uruguay. The UN Security Council consists of five permanent members and 10 non-permanent members elected by the UN General Assembly. Five non-permanent members are elected every year to join the five permanent and veto-wielding ... (More on P4)...(32)

## 7 Killed in Car Bomb Blast in Northern Syria

DAMASCUS - At least seven people were killed and 25 others wounded on Wednesday when a car bomb tore through a northern border city controlled by the U.S.-backed Syria Democratic Forces (SDF), local media and activists reported.

The blast targeted the city of Tell Abyad in the northern countryside of al-Raqqa province in northern Syria near the Turkish borders, said state news agency SANA.

Meanwhile, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the blast was huge, with a car bomb targeting one of the Kurdish administrative institutions in the city.

The city is under the control of the SDF, which consists of Arab ... (More on P4)...(33)

## IS Militants Kill 40 U.S.-Backed Fighters in Eastern Syria

DAMASCUS - At least 40 fighters of the U.S.-backed New Syrian Army (NSyA) were killed on Wednesday, by the Islamic State (IS) terror group, IS-related media outlets reported.

IS official news agency Amaq said it had killed 40 of the NSyA fighters and captured 15 others after trying to storm IS areas in the countryside of the Bukamal city in Syria's eastern province of Deir al-Zour.

Earlier in the day, pan-Arab al-Mayadeen TV and activist groups said U.S. coalition's aircraft parachuted fighters of the NSyA on IS-held territory near Bukamal.

It was the first airdrop ... (More on P4)...(34)

## Neighbour News

### Rouhani Urges Firm Action over Saudi Embassy Raids

TEHRAN - Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has called for firm judicial action against the individuals involved in raids on Saudi diplomatic perimeters in two Iranian cities back in January.

Addressing a ceremony that marked the beginning of the Judiciary Week in Iran on Tuesday, President Rouhani emphasized the importance of public trust in the judicial institution.

"The reason why everyone can calmly go to sleep at nights in Iran is the presence of a capable judiciary," the president said at the ceremony, which was attended by the heads of the other two branches of the Iranian government as well. Referring to the raids on the diplomatic Saudi perimeters, President Rouhani said, "The public wants to know how the Judiciary deals with the

perpetrators and those behind the move - who are well-known - and how the public is notified of verdicts."

The raids occurred on January 2, when demonstrations were held in front of the Saudi embassy in Tehran and its consulate in Mashhad - both of which were vacant at the time - over Saudi Arabia's move earlier to execute a prominent Saudi cleric, Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr. Some angry protesters mounted the walls of the consulate in Mashhad while incendiary devices were hurled at the embassy in Tehran.

A day later, Saudi Arabia cut its diplomatic ties with Iran.

Iranian officials had promptly condemned the attacks, and some 100 people were arrested over the acts of transgression. (Presstv)

### Iran Suspends all Flights to Istanbul Following Airport Attack

TEHRAN - All flights from Iran to Turkey's Istanbul were suspended following deadly terrorist attacks on Istanbul Ataturk Airport, Iran's Civil Aviation Organization (CAO) announced on Wednesday.

"Following the explosions at Turkey's Istanbul airport, eight flights from the Imam Khomeini International Airport to Istanbul airport were cancelled," Director of Public Relations Department of the CAO Reza Jafarzadeh was quoted as saying by Iran's private news agency Tasnim.

No flights to the Turkish

airport are being operated, said Jafarzadeh. Suicide bombers opened fire at random and blew suicide jackets up at Istanbul Ataturk Airport on Tuesday night, killing at least 36 and injuring more than 140.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif condemned on Wednesday the terrorist bomb attack.

"Extremism and violence is a global threat, and we must tackle it together," Zarif said, expressing regret that terrorism has hit Iran's "friendly and neighboring" country. (Xinhua)

### Pak Senate Body Okays SECP, Financial Institutions Bills

ISLAMABAD - The Pakistani Senate Standing Committee on Finance approved the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (Amendment) Bill 2016 and the Financial Institutions (Recovery of Finances) (Amendment) Bill 2016, besides approving an amendment to the Credit Bureaus (Amendment) Ordinance 2016.

These bills, already approved by the National Assembly, will now be forwarded to the Senate and, if approved, will need the presidential assent to become a law.

The SECP Bill 2016 covers all the deficiencies and shortcomings in the existing law. The commission succeeded the Corporate Law Authority (CLA) in 1999 as a unified regulator of the capital markets, and for the superintendence and control of cor-

porate entities.

However, its mandate has continued to be enhanced through various amendments, such as floatation, management and regulation of modarabas (1999), insurance sector (2000), non-banking financial companies sector (2002), commodity futures market (2003), real estate investment trust (2008), etc. The new law will meet the local and international requirements for the corporate sector regulator, including the requirements of the International Organisation of Securities Commissions.

Among the major deficiencies in the existing SECP Act 1997 there is limited financial/administrative independence. Besides, the SECP has ineffective enforcement powers to call for information, lack of process for ... (More on P4)...(35)

### Tajikistan Ratifies Amendments to TRIPS Agreement

DUSHANBE - Tajikistan deposited its instrument of acceptance of the Protocol amending the TRIPS Agreement (Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights). Over 62 percent of WTO members have submitted their instruments of acceptance of the Protocol, which will enter into force once two-thirds of the WTO members have accepted it. The amendments aim to

make it easier for developing member countries to receive more affordable, generic versions of patented medicines, as the Protocol allows exports of medicines made under compulsory licenses to countries that are unable to manufacture them. Originally, compulsory licensing was to be authorized primarily for supplying the domestic market. (Monitoring Desk)