

Clashes Break Out in Yemen's Key Port City after Cease-Fire

SANAA, Yemen - Yemeni security officials and eyewitnesses say that fighting has erupted in the key port city of Hodeida, the first significant clashes since warring sides agreed to a U.N.-brokered cease-fire deal in December.

They say the combat began overnight into Sunday, leaving fires burning on the main front lines in the city's east and south, while exchanges of artillery fire shook the beleaguered city.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity as they weren't authorized to brief journalists, while witnesses did so for fear of their safety. The fighting comes days after the internationally recognized Yemeni government,



along with allies Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, accused the Houthi rebel foes of breaking the cease-fire and refusing to withdraw their forces from the city in line with the December agreement. (Fox News)

Bus EXPLODES in Central Stockholm after 'Accident'

STOCKHOLM - Plumes of thick black smoke have been spotted above central Stockholm as a bus exploded and went up in flames after reportedly slamming into an entrance to a tunnel.

The explosion occurred on Sunday morning at the Klarat tunnel, after the bus reportedly struck its top. Witnesses say the inferno started when a gas tank located on top of the bus exploded due to the impact. Luckily, it appears that no passengers were on the bus at the time of the blast. Local media reported that the driver was injured.

A police statement confirmed that the driver had been taken to hospital, however, his status remains unclear. Emergency services are now on site and traffic has been blocked in the immediate area and the explosion is now being treated as a traffic incident. The Swedish Transport Administration warned that traffic in the city will be affected for the rest of the weekend. The Central Bridge, as well as the Klarat tunnel and the Soderled tunnel have been closed while emergency services clear the scene. (RT)

All 157 People on Board Crashed Ethiopian Plane Confirmed Dead

ADDIS ABABA - All 157 people on board the Ethiopian Airlines (ET) flight that crashed earlier Sunday are confirmed dead, Ethiopian state television reported. All 149 passengers and eight crew members aboard ET 302, bound for Nairobi, Kenya, are confirmed killed, the Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) said. The Boeing 737-800 MAX took off at 08:38 a.m. local time from Addis Ababa Bole International Airport and lost contact at 08:44 a.m., the airline said

in a statement. Ethiopian Airlines has released telephone numbers for family or friends of those who may have been on the flight to call. In a statement, the Ethiopian Prime Minister's Office has expressed "deepest condolences to the families of those that have lost their loved ones" on the flight. The plane crashed near Bishoftu city, about 45 km southeast of the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, the ET said in a statement. "Ethiopian Airlines staff



will be sent to the accident scene and will do everything possible to assist the emergency services," the statement added. "We are currently confirming the details of the passenger manifest for the flight," the airline said. (Xinhua)

North Korea Goes to Polls to Approve New Parliament Lineup



PYONGYANG, North Korea - Millions of North Korean voters, including leader Kim Jong Un, are going to the polls to elect roughly 700 members to the national legislature. In typical North Korean

style, Sunday's vote is more of an endorsement than a competitive contest - voters are presented with just one state-sanctioned candidate per district. They cast ballots to show their approval or, very rarely, disapproval. The elections, held every five years, are for the entire Supreme People's Assembly, which, on paper at least, is the highest organ of power in North Korea. Delegates come from all over the country and all walks of life. ...*(More on P4)...(13)*

Israel Hammers Gaza for 3rd Night in 'Vigorous Response' Ordered by Netanyahu

JERUSALEM - Israel continues to pound Hamas targets in retaliation for cross-border attacks from Gaza, as the IDF carries out a "very vigorous response" against the militants, ordered by the Prime Minister as he gears up for his reelection. IDF fighter jets and other aircraft struck several Hamas targets, including a military compound in the north of the strip and two naval vessels belonging to the group, the army said in a statement. There were no im-

mediate reports of Palestinian casualties from the strikes which occurred at around 1:30am local time on Sunday. The military said the raids, carried out for a third night in a row, was launched in response to mortar shell attack in southern Israel on Saturday night, as well as "continuing terror activities from the Strip, including balloon explosives" in the last several days. Reiterating that Hamas bears responsibility for everything that ...*(More on P4)...(16)*

Mexico's Leftist President Creates New Style of Government

MEXICO CITY - Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador's first 100 days in office have combined a compulsive shedding of presidential trappings with a dizzying array of policy initiatives, and a series of missteps haven't even dented his soaring approval ratings.

Lopez Obrador has answered more questions from the press, flown in more economy-class flights, posed for more selfies with admiring citizens and visited more genuinely risky areas with little or no security than several combined decades of his predecessors. He's also surprised many by maintaining a cordial relationship with U.S. President Donald Trump. ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

U.N. Agency Calls for More Access in Syria to Help Refugees Return

BEIRUT - The United Nations refugee agency should have a bigger presence inside Syria to observe and help refugees returning from abroad and from displacement within the war-torn country, UNHCR Commissioner Filippo Grandi said on Saturday.

After almost eight years of fighting, President Bashar al-Assad now controls most of Syria and the front lines appear stable for now between government territory and two big enclaves in the north and east still outside Damascus's control. Many Syrians scattered within and outside the country - including the more than a million in neighboring Lebanon - are now considering whether to go home. "It is important that in areas of return, organizations ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

'Nothing to do with NATO or F-35': US Pressure Over S-400 Is about Turkey's Sovereignty - Erdogan

ISTANBUL - Washington is blackmailing Ankara because Turkey is becoming a key independent regional player, President Erdogan said, after US threats to block all advanced weapon supplies to its NATO ally if it buys the S-400 from Russia.

The US will not supply the 100 F-35 stealth jets that Turkey has already purchased, nor will it consider selling surface-to-air missile Patriot systems to its NATO ally if Turkey deploys the Russian S-400 air defense complexes, the Pentagon stipulated on Saturday. Replying to the



latest American threats, Erdogan noted that Washington's pressure was due to Turkey's increasingly independent courses of action when it comes to national defense and regional affairs. "Everyone knows that this issue has nothing to do with either NATO and the F-35 project nor

the security of the US," Recep Erdogan said Saturday. "The issue is not about S-400. It is because Turkey takes action of its own will regarding regional developments, particularly in Syria." Turkey insists that diversifying its weapons suppliers and reinforcing its air ...*(More on P4)...(14)*

We Struck Pakistan 3 Times in The Last 5 Years, But Won't Give Full Details: India's Home Minister

NEW DELHI - India carried out three cross-border strikes in Pakistan in the last five years, the country's Home Affairs Minister Rajnath Singh has said. One of these three strikes, however, remains shrouded in secrecy. Singh admitted that Indian forces struck alleged terrorist "launch pads" in Pakistani Kashmir in 2016, after four militants killed 19 Indian soldiers near the town of Uri. India struck again last

month, bombing suspected terrorist training camps in Pakistani territory, in retaliation for a suicide bombing attack that had claimed the lives of 40 Indian police officers. "I want to tell you brothers and sisters that, in the last five years, we have gone beyond our borders thrice and our men have successfully conducted airstrikes," Singh told a public rally in Mangalore on Saturday. ...*(More on P4)...(15)*

With Shrouded Faces, Islamic State Fighters Stand Guard over Final Enclave

BAGHOUS, Syria - Armed with assault rifles and with faces wrapped in scarves, the Islamic State fighters visible at the boundary of their last enclave in eastern Syria are among the hardened jihadists who appear ready to fight to the death.

Thousands of people - many of them the wives of Islamic State fighters and their children - have been streaming out of the besieged enclave at Baghouz for weeks, forcing the U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) to delay an assault on the last vestige of the jihadists' territorial rule.

Reuters TV footage of the Islamic State-controlled frontline shows armed militants, most with only their eyes visible, supervising the evacuations from a scrubby patch of agricultural land scattered with vehicles and a few buildings.

The SDF has said the fighters staying put through waves of evacuations are the most hardened foreign militants, wanted by governments around the world, who are likely to fight to the death.

On Saturday, a Reuters witness saw dozens of mostly men cross from Islamic State territory into SDF-controlled lines. The SDF said these were wounded Islamic State fighters. A few women in full face-covering black robes and children carrying bags could be seen among the people milling at the frontline. A man on crutches was also visible. ...*(More on P4)...(19)*

Neighbor News

UNEP, Chinese Science Academy Sign MOU on Environment Conservation

NAIROBI - The UN Environment and the Chinese Academy of Sciences on Sunday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to promote water and environment conservation in developing countries.

Liu Jian, director of science division and chief scientist at UN Environment, told Xinhua in Nairobi that cooperation will be done to encourage South-South cooperation. "The purpose of this MoU is to provide a framework of cooperation and understanding, and to facilitate collaboration between the parties to further their shared goals and objectives in regard to the training and joint research programs to assist and provide solutions

for the developing world in the field of water and environment, based on a South-South cooperation approach," Liu said on the sidelines of the second global session of the UN Science, Policy and Business Forum on the environment.

Liu said the agreement will remain in force through December 2023. Qu Jihui, academican of Chinese Academy of Engineering and professor at the Research Center for Eco-Environmental Sciences, Chinese Academy of Sciences, said that the two parties have also agreed on joint research on atmospheric environmental strategy, technology and its application in developing countries. (Xinhua)

Pakistan Violates Ceasefire at 4 Places in J&K's Poonch, Say Officials

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan on Sunday resorted to unprovoked ceasefire violations targeting forward posts and villages at four places along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, officials said.

The firing was intense in the Krishna Ghati sector, where the Pakistani troops resorted to mortar shelling and firing by small arms early in the morning, a defence spokesman said, adding the Indian army retaliated the firing. He said the cross-border shelling between India and Pakistan continued till 07.30 am.

There was no report of any casualty on the Indian side, he said. Officials said firing and shelling by Pakistan

were also reported from the Balnoi and Mankote (both in Mendhar sector), besides from Shahpur sector-- all in Poonch district-- for a brief period in the early hours of Sunday.

The firing was mild in nature and lasted for a brief period without causing any harm, they said. Late last night, the Pakistan army targeted Indian positions in Sunderbani sector of Rajouri district for several hours, officials said. There has been a spurt in ceasefire violations by Pakistan after India's "pre-emptive" air strike on a Jaish-e-Mohammed terror camp in Balakot on February 26, following the February 14 Pulwama terror attack in which 40 soldiers were killed. (Agencies)

Iran to Unveil New Nuclear Achievements Next Year: Salehi

TEHRAN - The head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), Ali-Akbar Salehi said Sunday that new nuclear achievements will be inaugurated during next Iranian year of 1398, which have been made by the domestic experts.

Speaking on a visit to Alborz province, Salehi hailed the achievements after the 1979 Islamic revolution, saying that "it was the revolution that laid the ground for self-sufficiency of the country and the nation's awakening." The Iranian nuclear chief also praised the

revolution for the scientific and technological achievements, saying that the country's domestic experts have made great achievements despite pressures and restrictions from outside.

According to Salehi, new nuclear achievements will be unveiled during the next Iranian year of 1398, which will begin 10 days from now on March 21, stressing that the new achievements have all been made through the efforts of the domestic experts at the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI). (MNA)

Turkmen Delegation to Discuss TAPI Gas Pipeline Project in Pakistan

ASHGABAT - Turkmen deputy prime minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs Rashid Meredov will visit Pakistan March 11-13, Trend reports with reference to the Turkmen government.

Political consultations, as well as a number of bilateral meetings, are planned to be held in Islamabad. The issues related to the intensification of the work on the implementation of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline construction project will become subject of thorough discussion, the report said.

The aspects of cooperation in the electric power industry and telecommunications, including

those related to the implementation of power transmission and fiber-optic communication lines along the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (TAP) route will also be considered. Transport sector has been defined as one of the priority directions of the partnership. In this context, it is planned to discuss the issues of creating a new transport corridor with the use of the possibilities for entering Europe through the Caspian Sea by using the transit potential of Afghanistan, Turkmenistan and Pakistan.

Construction of TAPI was launched in December 2015, while the Afghan section in February 2018. (Trend)