**U.S. House Defies Obama Veto Threat: Passes Defense Policy Bill**

WASHINGTON - The House defied a veto threat from President Barack Obama on Friday and approved a $612 billion defense policy bill that Democrats complain boosts budget limits on military spending and makes it harder for the president to close the U.S. prison for suspected terrorists at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba.

The vote was 290-114 for the legislation, a House priority for next year's spending and inflation-tackling security programs. While Republicans overwhelmingly backed the bill, 24 House Democrats voted against it. In a letter on Thursday, House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) warned that Obama might use a pocket veto to prevent the legislation from taking effect.

Obama has had a falling out with Boehner, following a围绕 the situation in Libya. Boehner and the House leadership have been日子 in combating the Islamic State group in Iraq after the election. The arms deal would be the largest since the 1980s and comes as the Islamic State has seized much of northern Iraq, including Mosul and the city of Tikrit. The deal is expected to be signed in the coming months, and is part of a broader strategy to build a coalition against the Islamic State.

**China Infrastructure Bank Will Uphold Standards: Minister**

BEIJING - China's new international multilateral bank will only work with countries that uphold high quality standards, including on environmental and social safeguards, its chief executive said on Saturday.

"Those standards have applied for some time in China, including China, and China has always been and will be a very important geopolitical player in the region," said Jin Liqun, a former vice minister of the state council who has been named chairman of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).

The 57-nation AIIB, of which China is the largest shareholder, was proposed in November by President Xi Jinping and is the first major initiative to be launched under his leadership. It has drawn strong interest from countries in Asia, as well as in the U.S. and Europe.

**Iran’s Leader Vows to Protect ‘Oppressed’ People in the Region**

TEHRAN - President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on Saturday called for an immediate humanitarian truce in Syria, saying that he was hopeful that an Iran deal could be reached with world powers that would offer a refund. He added that Iran would not be part of any Saudi-led coalition, which has killed at least 2,000 people, U.N. humanitarian coordinator Ibrahim van der Klaauw said.

The first U.N. aid flights touched down in Yemen on Friday after a two-day humanitarian pause declared Friday night. Of a planned 250 air-cargo planes, which will take a total of 150 tons of shelter, food, medicine and water, no flights have reached the besieged city of Taiz, although some have arrived in Aden.

The humanitarian overarching issue in Yemen is the war in Syria, where Russia has been pressing for a humanitarian truce. The U.S. and its allies are currently conducting air operations against the Islamic State group, which has seized much of northern Iraq.

Russia Ready to Receive French Refund for Undelivered Ship

MOSCOW - The French government on Saturday said it was not ready to receive a refund for the warship it had sold to Russia, but that it would consider an agreement with Iran, which has received the ship.

"We have no doubt that we have indeed have some impact on the operation of the U.S. in the region," on North Korea," China's foreign ministry spokesperson said on Saturday. "We are committed to peace and stability in the region." The ministry said it had not yet confirmed the refund, which France had offered a warship to Russia.

"We are not ready to receive a ship that is not going to be used," French Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said. "We will consider an agreement that respects the Russian warship's delivery.

U.S. Seizes Iraqi Govt. Compound, Kills Dozens in Syria

BAGHDAD - Iraq's military on Saturday seized the main government complex in Ramadi, a city now largely held by the Islamic State group, after its militants increased its force across it for the city, the military said.

The arrested men are affiliated to a militant organization that is calling for support for Ramadi, a city in the "city in the coming days," a military official said.

On Friday, the militants swept through Ramadi, the capital of Anbar province, seizing fire from the government and military compounds.

Iraqis Troops Troops "Victory" in Iraq

"Iraqi troops defeated IS terrorist in Ramadi," a police major told a Geneva news agency. "They managed to hit the Islamic State at their headquarters in Ramadi, a city now largely held by the Islamic State group.

Russia Supplies of arms to Iraq continue, according to a U.S. embassy official, who said that Moscow had supplied "large scale" military equipment to Iraq.

Syrian War Not Likely to End Before he Leaves Office: Obama

WASHINGTON - U.S. President Barack Obama said on Saturday that the civil war in Syria was not likely to end before he leaves office in early 2017 and reaffirmed his belief that there is no "military solution" to the conflict. The situation in Syria is "hardly breaking up, but it's extremely complex," he said in an interview with the Saudi-owned Al-Arabiya television network.

"I think the situation is far more complex than people, dead people, might be relieved by the idea," he said.

Obama said it would take a combination of "large scale" military options to end the conflict.

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