

ASEAN FMs Underline Centrality ahead of Summit

KUALA LUMPUR - Foreign ministers of the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on Friday highlighted ASEAN centrality and strong leadership in the bloc's development and its engagement with outside parties. "The ASEAN centrality should remain at the core of all initiatives and ASEAN must provide strong leadership and map ASEAN's future directions collectively, especially in engagement with dialogue partners and other external parties," Malaysian Foreign Minister Anifah Aman, who chaired the



17th ASEAN Coordinating Meeting ahead of the leaders' summit, told the

press. The establishment of the ASEAN Community will help further

enhance ASEAN as an outward-looking regional bloc while maintaining

centrality in the evolving regional architecture, Anifah said. ASEAN has

been known for being a platform which works by building on consensus so that it is comfortably acceptable to all parties involved. Founded in 1967, ASEAN groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. It is agreed that the most significant achievement of the community-building process is the willingness of the 10 member countries that commit to a single vision and future together. The ASEAN Convention on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and ...*(More on P4)...(17)*

Gunmen Attack Luxury Hotel in Mali Capital, 170 taken Hostage

BAMAKO - Malian commandos stormed a luxury hotel in Bamako on Friday after Islamist gunmen took 170 people including many foreigners hostage in the capital of the former French colony, which has been battling rebels allied to al Qaeda for several years. Dozens of people were reported to have escaped or been freed, but at least three were dead. A security source said the gunmen had dug in on the seventh floor of the hotel as special forc-

es advanced on them. There was no immediate claim of responsibility. State television showed footage of troops in camouflage fatigues wielding AK47s in the lobby of the Radisson Blu, one of Bamako's smartest hotels. In the background, a body lay under a brown blanket at the bottom of a flight of stairs. Minister of Internal Security Colonel Salif Traoré said three people had been killed and two wounded by ...*(More on P4)...(18)*

Russian Parliament Demands Tougher Anti-Terrorist Measures

MOSCOW - The Russian parliament Friday decided to tighten security measures and criminal punishment for terrorists and their supporters to protect civilians from terrorist attacks. "No one should escape responsibility from criminal acts," said a resolution approved at a joint session of the Federation Council and State Duma, the upper and lower houses of the Russian parliament. Representatives of denominations and non-governmental organizations also participated in the session. Participants called for tougher criminal penalties for terrorist crimes and other related acts including

recruitment, propaganda, as well as financing and other support to terrorist groups. Parliament members also declared their readiness to improve Russian legislation in the field of migration policy to prevent the spread of all forms of terrorism and international crime. "A solid barrier should be put up at state borders to prevent the penetration of extremists into Russia," the resolution said. The legislators also stressed the necessity to promote broader international cooperation and exchange of information to combat terrorism. "Terrorism should be declared a ...*(More on P4)...(19)*

IFRC Calls for Refugees Protection as Freezing Weather Set to Sweep Europe

GENEVA - The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) on Friday said plunging temperatures are expected to chill Europe this weekend, putting the lives of thousands of refugees at risk.

IFRC is calling on all governments to take steps to protect people seeking safety and ensure their suffering is not compounded as the weather deteriorates. IFRC also urges all organizations to meet their increasing needs. "Winter looks set to arrive in the next few days, putting lives at risk and making a difficult situation for hundreds of



thousands of people even more dire," said Director of IFRC in Europe Simon Missiri. With temperatures predicted to plummet as low as minus 4 Celsius degree in parts of the Balkans and central Europe and daytime highs hovering around zero, people making the difficult cross-continent

journey urgently need winter supplies. Hypothermia and exposure are among the main health concerns as people need days making the journey across Europe to safety. Sub-zero conditions will put people at risk, especially older people, children and those who are already suffering from

illness. IFRC has been stockpiling supplies to cope with the onset of a brutal winter and is prioritizing hot meals, warm clothing, shoes and socks, blankets and sleeping bags, sourcing temporary heated accommodation, particularly across the Balkan route. *(Xinhua)*

Syrian Refugees in Lebanon Face Deepening Debt Cycle: UNHCR

GENEVA - The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) reported Friday that 90 percent of the more than 1 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon are in worsening debt due to exhausted savings, limited work opportunities and dwindling humanitarian assistance. According to a joint UNHCR, UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and World Food Programme (WFP) survey, the amount of money owed by Syrians to landlords, shop owners, friends and relatives has



increased by 22 percent in 2015. This brings the average accumulated debt per Syrian refugee family per month to 842 U.S. dollars, an increase of 180 U.S. dollars from last year. The

survey recorded that 40 percent of refugees owe money to their landlords, and that over 75 percent of refugee households are buying food on credit, up from 30 percent in 2014

and 19 percent in 2013. Amid significant cuts to food assistance because of lack of funding, estimates show that 70 percent of refugees in Lebanon today are living below the national poverty line of 3.84 U.S. dollars per day. Additional requirements relating to their stay that have been in place since January are further compounding the situation. Residency must be renewed every six months and registered refugees of working age must sign an ...*(More on P4)...(20)*

Hollande Calls on Nationals to be Vigilant in "Sensitive" Countries

PARIS - French President Francois Hollande called on French expatriates to be vigilant in "sensitive" countries, especially in Mali where a terrorist assault at a luxury hotel packed with foreigners left at least three dead.



"I ask our nationals in sensitive countries to take precautions," said Hollande, calling on those living in Mali to contact the French embassy in Bamako to ensure their safety. "Life must go on for the economic activity and development in these countries, but it's important in such situations to think about security," he added on the sidelines of a meeting on the Paris Climate Change Summit. Unidentified armed

men stormed on Friday a luxury hotel in central Bamako, taking 170 hostages, including French and Chinese nationals. Eighty hostages have been released so far, Malian media reported.

In a statement, Air France announced that its 12 crew members at Radisson Blu Hotel were "in a safe place." Flights from France

from and to Bamako have been cancelled on Friday, the flag carrier added. "The raid has started and we will use all the means available to us on the ground to free the hostages," Hollande stressed. Fifty elite French counter-terrorism officers are flying to Bamako on Friday to help boost security, according to local reports. *(Xinhua)*

Russia Interference Boosts Montenegro Chances: NATO

BELGRADE - Any attempt by Russia to interfere in Montenegro's bid to join NATO would only boost the country's chances of membership. The military alliance's secretary general said Friday "The aspiration of Montenegro to become a member of NATO is something that is up to Montenegro and NATO to decide," Jens Stoltenberg said during a visit to Serbia. "No one else has the right to intervene or to interfere with that decision," Stoltenberg added. "If any effect, Russian interference more likely will reinforce our interest to invite Montenegro to become a full member of the alliance." NATO is expected to decide at a meeting on Dec. 1-2 whether to formally invite Montenegro to join. The United States has backed Montenegro's bid, but Russia - which has traditionally strong religious, cultural ...*(More on P4)...(21)*

UK Police Admit Abuses over Undercover Relationships

LONDON - British police on Friday issued an "unreserved apology" to seven women deceived into sexual relationships with officers on undercover assignments, one of which led to the birth of a child. Metropolitan Police accepted the women were tricked into "abusive, deceitful, manipulative and wrong" relationships and said that settlements had been reached. "I acknowledge that these relationships were a ...*(More on P4)...(22)*

EU-Turkish Summit on Migrants Risks Delay: Diplomats

BRUSSELS - A summit between the European Union and Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan to seal cooperation on Europe's migration crisis may be delayed because the two sides have yet to agree how to implement a joint action plan, European diplomats said on Friday. The meeting was provisionally penciled in for Nov. 29 when EU leaders met in Malta last week on the sidelines of a summit with African nations on controlling migration flows. But diplomats ...*(More on P4)...(23)*

Balkan Border Restrictions Spark Concerns Among UN Agencies

GENEVA - New border restrictions implemented by Balkan governments are "becoming increasingly untenable," according to a statement jointly released by the United Nations refugee agency and two other organizations. A range of restrictions, including profiling on the basis of nationality, are hindering the movements of refugees and migrants leaving Greece and moving further north through the Western Balkans, according to the statement by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). Tensions at borders are also being reported as a result of these measures, especially since many refugees and ...*(More on P4)...(24)*

Turkey Summons Russia Envoy over Syria Bombing Near Border

ANKARA - Turkey summoned the Russian ambassador after Moscow's war planes carried out a heavy bombing raid inside Syrian territory "very close" to the Turkish border, the foreign ministry said on Friday. Russian ambassador Andrey Karlov was summoned to hear Turkey's concern over Russia's bombing of "civilian Turkmen villages... very close

to the border" with Turkey, the foreign ministry said in a statement. Turkey has asked Russia to "immediately end its operation," it added. Ankara also warned that bombing villages populated by the Turkmen minority in Syria could lead to "serious consequences," the ministry added. Turkey conveyed its "warning and demand" ...*(More on P4)...(25)*

Nieghbor News

Iranian Forces have Foiled all Enemy Plots: IRGC Cmdr.

TEHRAN - A senior commander of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) says the country's security forces have managed to foil all attempts by enemies aimed at destabilizing the country. IRGC Commander Major General Mohammad Ali Jafari said on Friday that the country's enemies have sought to create instability in Iran like the recent deadly terrorist attacks in France but they failed. "Enemies made great efforts to render our country insecure as well but all such plots have been thwarted thanks to

strength and efforts of our security forces," he pointed out. At least 129 people were killed and 352 others injured when assailants struck at least six different venues in and around the French capital of Paris on November 13. In a statement the day after, the Daesh Takfiri terrorist group claimed responsibility for the attacks. The IRGC commander further said enemies mainly intend to target the Islamic Revolution and the Islamic Republic but they have come to an understanding that they cannot use a language of force against Iranians. *(PressTV)*

China's Temperature, Sea Level Rise Faster than Global Average

BEIJING - China has seen faster temperature and sea level increases compared with the global average, according to a report released on Friday. The sea level along the country's coastal areas rose by 2.9 millimeters per year from 1980 to 2012, and the average temperature in China increased by 0.9 to 1.5 degree Celsius in the 100 years since 1909, according to an assessment report on climate change in China. The report, the third of its kind since 2007, also shows that from the 1970s to the beginning of 21st century, China's glaciers have retreated by 10.1 percent. These findings indicate that China will continue to warm, with the report

projecting a temperature rise of 1.5 to 5 degrees Celsius by the end of the century. The report will be presented at the Paris climate change Conference of the Parties (COP21) on Nov. 30, according to Chen Chuang-hong, head of the Department of Science and Technology for Social Development under the Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST). The findings are the result of more than three years of work by over 500 scientists. The project was led by the MoST, China Meteorological Administration (CMA), Chinese Academy of Sciences and Chinese Academy of Engineering, with contributions from 16 other central authorities. *(Xinhua)*

ADB's \$1.4 Bln Financing to help Pakistan Resolve Power Crisis

ISLAMABAD - The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved combined loan assistance of nearly 1.4 billion U.S. dollars for two programs that will help Pakistan resolve some of the key issues in the power sector, allowing it to lift growth, boost incomes, and cut poverty, the ADB said on Friday. The 990-million-dollar multitranche Second Power Distribution Enhancement Investment Program will introduce an Advanced Electricity Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system for power distribution companies across the country. The system will help reduce losses, improve revenue collection and load management, and strengthen the financial viability of the sector. The 400 mil-

lion dollars loan for the second subprogram of the Sustainable Energy Sector Reform Program supports ongoing policy reforms, which aims to build an affordable and secure energy sector. Pakistan is struggling with an ongoing power crisis which puts pressure on real GDP growth. The electricity supply-demand gap of 5,000 megawatts is blamed for a sharp decline in manufacturing. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said that his government will end power shortage by 2018 when he completes his five-year term. The authorities still observe hours of power load-shedding across the country even in winter in view of the power shortage. *(Xinhua)*

Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan still Fail to Reach Agreement on Disputable Border Areas

DUSHANBE - Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan have failed to reach agreement on the disputable stretches of the mutual border. The Kyrgyz government's official website reports the two sides have endorsed a draft agreement on 519.9 kilometers of the border but they have failed to reach an agreement on furthering the issues of delimitation and demarcation of the border and possible exchange of separate land plots. Meanwhile, Kyrgyz media in late October cited the then Deputy Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan, Abdurahman Mamataliyev, as saying that Kyrgyzstan has proposed Tajikistan to exchange the disputable border areas. *(Asia-Plus)*

meeting participants reportedly discussed draft description and line of the disputable stretches of the Tajik-Kyrgyz border and reached an agreement on furthering the issues of delimitation and demarcation of the border and possible exchange of separate land plots. Meanwhile, Kyrgyz media in late October cited the then Deputy Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan, Abdurahman Mamataliyev, as saying that Kyrgyzstan has proposed Tajikistan to exchange the disputable border areas. *(Asia-Plus)*