

# NATO will Help Turkey Against Russia if Needed: Stoltenberg

STAVANGER - NATO will help member country Turkey if needed, the alliance's Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said on Monday, days after Russian jets bombing Syria violated Turkish airspace.

Asked whether NATO would be prepared to defend ally Turkey against Russia, Stoltenberg said: "Turkey is a strong ally and they have the second-largest army," he told Reuters.

"They have a capable air force, so the Turkish armed forces are the first responders, but NATO is there to help and assist them if they need."

(This story has been corrected in headline and text to show Stoltenberg's answer was to a question about Russia, not bombing in Ankara)(Reuters)



## US, Allies Conduct 20 Air Strikes in Syria and Iraq : Military



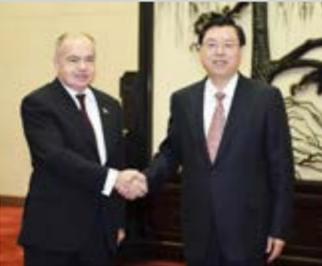
WASHINGTON - A coalition led by the United States conducted 18 air strikes against Islamic State in Iraq on Sunday, according to a military statement that did not directly address reports that the militant group's reclusive leader was killed in one of the bombardments.

Iraq said on Sunday its air force had hit an Islamic State meeting in a town in western Iraq and also struck a convoy that was carrying Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi to the meeting. But Baghdadi did not appear to be among the group's eight senior figures killed in an air strike on the meeting in Karabla, a town in Iraq's Anbar province near the Syrian border.

The military statement did not mention Karabla. It did say that on Sunday an air strike near the town of Al Baghdadi destroyed a vehicle and that seven strikes near Ramadi destroyed explosives, construction equipment and a building, while also wounding an Islamic State fighter.

The coalition also conducted two air strikes against Islamic State in Syria on Sunday, as Russia said it carried out 55 sorties in its escalation in the war-torn country. (Reuters)

## China, Russia Pledge Closer Parliamentary Exchanges



BEIJING - China's top legislator Zhang Dejiang met here on Monday with Ilyas Umakhanov, deputy chairperson of the Russian Federal Council, the upper house of the Russian parliament, vowing closer parliamentary exchanges.

Zhang, chairman of the Chinese National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee, said President Xi Jinping and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin met three times this year, which has guided healthy and high-level growth of bilateral comprehensive partnership of strategic coordination.

He urged win-win cooperation between both sides and enhance strategic coordination.

Hailing the first session of the cooperation committee of the two countries' legislative bodies which convened in June, Zhang called on both sides to cement exchanges and share governance experience.

Umakhanov said Russia expects stronger cooperation between the two countries' legislative bodies and closer exchanges between young lawmakers. (Xinhua)

## Merkel to Visit Turkey Sunday to Discuss Terror, Syria

BERLIN - Germany's Angela Merkel will visit Turkey Sunday to discuss terrorism, the war in Syria and the refugee crisis, her spokesman said, after bombs killed 97 people in Ankara at the weekend.

The chancellor would meet President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu for talks on "the joint battle against terrorism, the situation in Syria and managing the refugee crisis," said Steffen Seibert on Monday.

Merkel had reacted with "great dismay" to the double suicide bombing, the deadliest attack in modern Turkey's history, and had condemned it as "a particularly cowardly act aimed directly against civil rights, democracy and peace", Seibert said.



She had sent a condolence letter to Davutoglu and telephoned Erdogan at the weekend.

A German foreign ministry spokesman said Turkey was a "key country" to help Europe manage its record migrant influx, including the 800,000 to one million

people expected to reach Germany this year.

"Turkey is a large country, a NATO country bordering ISIS (the Islamic State jihadist group) and all the crises in the Middle East," said the spokesman, Martin Schaefer, at a press briefing. (AFP)

## Europe Still to Face Migration Crisis in 2016: Slovak Minister

BRATISLAVA - Europe will still face a migration crisis in 2016 due to its engagement in the foreign affairs of North African and Middle Eastern countries, announced Slovak Interior Minister Robert Kalinak on Sunday.

As an example, Kalinak said that the 2011 bombardment of Libya, involving several European nations, caused an influx of migrants to Italy. He also pointed to the fact that refugees from Bangladesh and Pakistan are also joining the current influx.

Kalinak reiterated the country's objection to the obligatory quotas for redistribution of migrants among European Union member states.



"Slovakia supports resolving the crisis, but not via quotas. The quotas are not technically realizable and Brussels

seems to be leaning that way, too, as the quotas have been scrapped for the time being," added Kalinak. (Xinhua)

## Britain Vows to Build World's most Advanced Floating Lab

LONDON - The British government Monday announced that it is to build a polar research ship that will be one of the world's most advanced floating labs.

The 300 million U.S. dollar vessel, able to break through ice and despatch robotic submarines, is to be built at the Cammell Laird shipyard at Birkenhead on the River Mersey.

It will be the first complete ship to be built at the 187-year-old shipyard since 1993 after Cammell Laird beat off competition from rival bidders in Europe and Asia.

The British government said the ship will maintain Britain's position firmly at the forefront of climate and ocean research.

The decision, announced by Minister of State for Universities and Science, Jo Johnson, follows a 12 month competitive tender. The contract will create 400 jobs at the Birkenhead yard, including many new apprentices.

The shipyard is expected to start work on the contract next month and deliver the next generation polar research vessel ready for operation by 2019. It is being built for NERC, Britain's Natural Environment Research Council. (More on P4)...(19)

## Iraqi Kurdish Opposition Group Rejects Regional President's Orders to Leave Arbil

ARBIL - Iraqi Kurdish opposition party Gorran said on Monday it has rejected orders by the leading Kurdish party, headed by regional President Masoud Barzani, for its officials and politicians to leave Arbil, the capital of Iraq's northern semi-autonomous region of Kurdistan, an opposition official said.

"The Gorran movement does not comply with the orders of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) to prevent the speaker of the Kurdistan regional parliament (member of the movement) and ministers of the movement from attending their jobs in Arbil," Mohammed Haji, head of Gorran's political office, told reporters here. "No political party or person has the right to breach the legitimacy of the parliament," Haji said.



"The Gorran movement is part of the government and the parliament of Kurdistan in accordance with the (regional) electoral results, not by a charity from any other party," Haji said, warning that the opposition movement will inform all the foreign consulates and other international bodies about the measures taken by Barzani's KDP. The opposition's rejection

## Australian PM Defends Keeping Children in Detention

CANBERRA - Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has defended the government's immigration policy amid a well-respected hospital refusing to return asylum seeker children to detention centers.

Turnbull, who showcased his new hand-chosen cabinet as parliament resumed in Canberra on Monday, took heat from Greens MP Adam Brandt for failing to release every young child housed in what Brandt dubbed "mental illness factories". "Nobody wants to have children in detention. Not me, not anyone in this House," Turnbull said in Question Time on Monday.

On Sunday, it was revealed by Fairfax Media that the Melbourne Royal Children's Hospital was not discharging asylum seekers from its care to keep them out of detention.

Doctors of the hospital, who are treating dozens of these young patients, cited concerns for asylum seekers' welfare if they discharged them into an unfit environment.

Vice President of the Australian Medical Association (AMA) Stephen Parnis, a staunch opponent of the government's indefinite detention of children, told Fairfax Media doctors had in the past encountered cases of self-harm, anxiety and severe depression in kids housed within the facilities. Victoria's Health Minister... (More on P4)...(18)

## Nieghbor News

### China, Russia Pledge more Pragmatic Cooperation

HARBIN - Chinese Vice Premier Wang Yang held talks with Russian counterpart Dmitry Rogozin in Harbin, capital of northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, on Sunday, pledging to boost pragmatic cooperation.

Wang, Chinese chairperson of the Joint Commission for the Regular Prime Ministers' Meetings of China and Russia, said China is willing to make joint efforts with Russia to implement the consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries.

The China-Russia comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership has developed extensively, Wang said, calling

ing on the two sides to make preparations for the next round of regular meetings between the Chinese and Russian prime ministers later this year.

China stands ready to integrate the Silk Road Economic Belt initiative with Russia's development strategy, Wang said, noting that the two countries will focus on promoting large-scale cooperation on aerospace, nuclear energy, civil aviation and cross-border transportation projects.

Rogozin said Russia attaches importance to strengthening pragmatic cooperation with China and is willing to... (More on P4)...(21)

### Leader Warns of Planned, Extensive Soft War Against Iran

TEHRAN - Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei warns of the hegemonic system's pre-planned, extensive and all-out soft war against the Islamic Republic.

The most important goal of such a complicated war is to manipulate the Iranian nation's beliefs, the Leader said in a meeting with President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) Mohammad Sarafraz and its managers and officials in Tehran on Monday.

"The main goal of this well-thought-out and calculated war is to transmute the Islamic Republic of Iran, and change its essence and nature while maintaining its appearance," Ayatollah Khamenei said. The Leader also added that Iran's national radio and TV has a unique role to play in this "serious battlefield" and

should draw up "precise and wise" plans to fulfill its duties.

The enemy's soft war is aimed at having Iran serve the interests of the US, Zionists and the global network of powers, the Leader added.

The main targets of the soft war are the officials and people, especially the elite, academics and university students, Ayatollah Khamenei underlined.

"They (the enemy) seek to influence the people and a wide range of their beliefs, especially [those of] the youth and elite," said the Leader, adding, "The people's religious, political and cultural beliefs are among these beliefs."

Another objective of the enemy's soft war is to have people change their beliefs about the past, Ayatollah Khamenei underlined. (PressTV)

### We Standby you, Gen Raheel Tells Turkish Counterpart

ISLAMABAD - Pakistani Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Raheel Sharif on Monday assured his Turkish counterpart, Hulusi Akar, of unflinching support in the face of daunting challenges, and condoled the recent twin blasts in the Turkish capital that killed over a hundred people attending a peace rally.

On a three-day visit to Turkey beginning Monday, General Raheel visited the headquarters of the Turkish Land Forces.

where he met the Turkish army chief and discussed "enhanced cooperation" on the future direction of counter terrorism, DG ISPR Asim Bajwa said in a series of tweets on Twitter. The army chief told his Turkish counterpart that he understood "the enormity of their challenges" and "stood by them".

Upon his arrival, the army chief was presented a guard of honor by the Turkish Land Forces. (Agencies)

### Tajikistan Expected to Amend the Military Retirement System

DUSHANBE - The Government has prepared amendments to the country's law on the military retirement provision and these amendments have been tabled to the agenda of Monday's meeting of the board (Shuro) of Tajikistan's lower chamber of parliament.

Under these amendments, which are initiated by the Ministry of Finance (MoF), officers of the power-wielding structures should serve no less than twenty-five years in order to get pension. Some representatives of the country's power-wielding structures

say that initiators of the amendments do not realize that offering such amendments they may undermine peace and stability in the country.

"Those who offered these amendments do not understand or do not want to understand that the number of skilled people wanting to serve in the power-wielding structures will sharply reduce after such amendments and dilettantes or even criminals will take their place," one of retired law enforcement officers told Asia-Plus in an interview. (Asia-Plus)