ISIS steps up

Iraq's Ramadi

Islamic State (ISIS) has

stepped up its assault on

the western Iraqi city of

Ramadi, launching a series

of suicide bomb attacks on

Anbar provincial council

a government compound.

member Athal al-Fahdawi

was within range of ISIS

told the BBC the compound

weapons and that it and the

Military reinforcements

jihadists' attacks, he warned.

Earlier this month gov-

major blow to ISIS by recap-

turing the city of Tikrit. Iraq

the victory with campaigns

has said it would follow

in Anbar province, much

of which has been con-

trolled by IS since early

by launching its own

the Baiji refinery.

Farc attack

Colombian President Juan

Manuel Santos lifted a

suspension of air strikes

against the Farc after the

suspected in the killing of

10 soldiers in a pre-dawn

The attack in western

Colombia, which also left

20 soldiers wounded, was

the deadliest since the start

two years ago, officials said.

ceasefire in a bid to advance

peace talks that have been

under way in Havana since

More than 200,000

another five million have

been uprooted as a result

of the five-decade conflict.

people have died and

of peace talks more than

Late last year the Farc

declared a unilateral

November 2012.

attack Wednesday.

Marxist guerrillas were

AFP, Bogota

2014. But ISIS responded

offensives on Ramadi and

city were "in great danger".

sent to Ramadi were not

sufficient to repel the

ernment forces dealt a

assault on

BBC ONLINE

Iran nuke talks

on April 22-23

AFP, Brussels

Major world powers and Iran will hold fresh talks in Vienna on April 22-23 to build on the framework accord reached on Tehran's contested nuclear programme, the EU announced yesterday.

The two sides "will continue work towards a comprehensive solution to the Iranian nuclear issue based on the key understandings reached in Switzerland on April 2," a statement said. The talks will take place at

ing first Helga Schmid of the EU's external affairs arm and Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi. They will then be joined by officials from the five UN Security Council members --

political director level, involv-

Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States plus Germany. "In parallel, experts will continue the work on the technical details necessary

to finalise the political work," the statement said. Marathon talks in Lausanne last month ran overtime but finally produced a framework political agreement whereby Iran would accept strict controls over its nuclear programme in return for the easing of damag-

PHOTO: AFP

ingeconomic sanctions. The restrictions are meant to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, as feared in the West, although Tehran insists its programme is purely for civilian use.

The parties now have until June 30 to reach a final accord but they will have to crack some of the toughest issues -the lifting of global sanctions and a mechanism to reintroduce them if Iran reneges on the deal, as well as research and development and the possible military dimensions of the Iranian programme.

Meanwhile, important talks between the UN atomic watchdog and Iran appeared to have failed to produce any breakthrough on a stalled probe into Tehran's alleged past efforts to develop nuclear weapons.









the liberation of the Nazi death camps where more than six million Jews died during WWII. Colombia truce Russia blames US for tatters after world security crises

AGENCIES

Top Russian officials yesterday accused the United States of seeking political and military dominance in the world and sought to put blame on the West for international security crises, including the conflict in east Ukraine.

Evoking Cold War-style rhetoric, Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu said a drive by the United States and its allies to bring Kiev closer to the West was a threat to Moscow and had forced it to react.

"The United States and its allies have crossed all possible lines in their drive to bring Kiev into their orbit. That could not have failed to trigger our reaction," he told an annual security conference in Moscow.

Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine last March following what it says was an "unconstitutional coup" in which street protests toppled a Moscowallied Ukrainian president in Kiev after he ditched a deal to move closer to the European Union.

Separatist unrest then spread to eastern, Russian-speaking regions of Ukraine where fighting between Kiev's troops and

pro-Russian rebels killed more than 6,000 people.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told the conference, attended by envoys from China, Iran, Pakistan and some of Russia's allies, that Kiev had to deliver on its obligations under peace agreements reached in Minsk to "safeguard unity of the Ukrainian state".

> Both said Moscow saw the development of the U.S.-led missile shield in Europe as tilting the postwar balance of power and a threat to its strategic nuclear deterrent capability. Shoigu said Moscow was taking steps to counteract that. Meanwhile, Russian President Vladimir

Putin yesterday admitted that the Soviet Union had sought to forcibly impose the Soviet model on Eastern Europe after World War II.

"We have to admit this. And there's nothing good about it."

Putin, however, accused the United States of trying to impose its own will just as the Soviet Union had in the past. "The Americans are acting in a similar way by trying to impose their model around the world," Putin said. "They

may double: Report AFP, Kuala Lumpur

The search area for flight MH370 will double in size to encompass a vast Indian Ocean corridor if wreckage remains elusive, Malaysia, Australia and China said Thursday, asserting their commitment to finding the plane. Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, ministers from the three coun-

MH370 search zone

tries said the deep-sea zone now being scanned for signs of the ill-fated Malaysia Airlines jet would be expanded to 120,000 square kilometres if the current area comes up empty. "If the aircraft is not found within the current 60,000-

square-kilometre search area, we have collectively decided to extend the search by an additional 60,000 square kilometres within the highest-probability area," Malaysian Transport Minister Liow Tiong Lai said. He spoke at a press briefing following a meeting with

Australian Deputy Prime Minister Warren Truss and China's Minister of Transport Yang Chuantang.

The Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777 with 239 passengers and crew aboard mysteriously veered off its route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing on March 8, 2014, creating one of the world's greatest aviation mysteries and sparking a massive international effort to find it.

The cause of the diversion remains unknown. Theories range from rogue pilot action, catastrophic mechanical problems, or a hijacking.

Clinton risks being seen as Obama proxy

AP, Norwalk, Iowa

Hillary Rodham Clinton came to Iowa Clinton embraced two of the most to give voters an intimate glance of who she'd be as president. What they got instead was a glimpse into the complicated relationship between the current inhabitant of the White House and the woman who hopes to follow in his path.

The Midwestern state's caucuses will kick off the presidential nomination process in 2016. In 2008, Clinton lost the caucuses — and ultimately the nomination — to Barack Obama, a stunning defeat for the former first lady who had been considered the Democratic primary front-runner that

On her second try, Clinton appears unlikely to face a formidable Democratic opponent in the primary. Still, she is trying to show Democratic voters that she's taking nothing for granted.

On a two-day swing through Iowa,

politically fraught planks of Obama's legacy: the health care law and the push for an immigration overhaul. But even as she cast herself as continuing an upbeat appeal to inherit the diverse the Obama administration's domestic policies, Clinton carefully drew a subtle contrast between her leadership and that of the president.

"I want fix our political system. I Americans. want to get things done," she told small business owners, sitting between cardboard fruit cartons at a produce company warehouse. "We have to start breaking down the divisions that have paralyzed our politics."

Clinton's success will depend, at least in part, on how she walks the fine line between praising Obama enough to maintain the support of his loyal coalition, particularly the black and millennial voters who overwhelmingly backed his candidacy, and putt-

ing enough distance to woo independthe opening act of her 2016 campaign, ents frustrated with Washington partisanship.

will also fail."

Just days into her early campaign,

that strategy is already on display. While Clinton's kickoff video was coalition that twice elected Obama, at events in Iowa she took a more downbeat tone, describing the middle-class dream as slipping away from many

"Unfortunately the deck is still stacked in favor of those at the top," Clinton said on Wednesday. "We need to reshuffle the cards and begin to play a different hand."

In polling conducted by CNN last month, 57 percent of Americans said their "perfect candidate" would be someone who changed most policies of the Obama administration. Already, Republicans are stressing the deep ties between the two, describing Clinton's candidacy as a "third Obama term."



A migrant from Syria holds her child upon arrival in Greece at the port of Lesbos island, yesterday. The conflict in Syria has left more than 220,000 dead since it began four years ago with an uprising against President Bashar al-Assad, a key monitoring group said yesterday. The head of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, Rami Abdel Rahman said more than 67,000 of the dead were civilians, including more than 11,000 children. PHOTO: AFP



