

IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL

Obama secures key backing at Congress

AFP, Washington  
US President Barack Obama on Wednesday earned sufficient congressional backing to ensure the Iran nuclear deal does not get blocked, when a veteran Democrat became the crucial 34th senator to back the controversial accord.

Most US lawmakers are opposed to the deal, which would ease punishing economic sanctions on Tehran while preventing it from advancing its nuclear program. Many Republicans warn that the Islamic republic will seek to cheat its way to an atomic bomb.

But with Senate Democrat Barbara Mikulski announcing her support Wednesday, the deal now has 34 backers in the 100-member Senate -- the magic number needed to uphold a certain Obama veto should Congress pass a resolution that disapproves of the deal.

A vote in the House of Representatives is now set for next week. Overcoming a veto requires a two-thirds vote in the Senate and House.

Some Republicans have urged walking away from the deal and renegotiating tougher terms with Tehran. But US negotiators have warned that such a move could see the fragile international coalition that secured the agreement fall apart.

Republicans are unified in their opposition, warning that the deal leaves a civilian nuclear program intact, and that sanctions will provide Iran with a windfall of up to \$150 billion, which they say could be funnelled toward terrorist operations.

Having been assured that the deal will survive, the White House is now eyeing another key threshold. If it gains backing from seven of the remaining undecided Senate Democrats to boost its numbers to 41, it could prevent Republicans from reaching the 60 members needed to force a vote on the resolution of disapproval. That would save Obama the embarrassing step of cobbling together a minority coalition to sustain his veto preserving his landmark agreement, a process that would sow doubts among a skeptical American public and Washington's international partners, which are keen to see strong US commitment to the accord.



(From left, clockwise) A desperate refugee family being dragged away from a train in the town of Bicske; migrants storm into a train, which they believed was heading towards Austria, at the Keleti train station in Budapest; and protest erupts in Bicske after they learn that they are heading towards refugee camps, not Austria.



PHOTO: REUTERS

Hungary's ex-PM hosts refugees at home



BUDAPEST BUSINESS JOURNAL

Hungary's former Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány, who is currently the leader of opposition Democratic Coalition, has been hosting refugees for one night each at his home, Hungarian online daily atv.hu reported.

The online portal contacted the politician after it found video footage of the former prime minister leaving Budapest's Keleti Railway Station, and he admitted that he had been hosting a number of refugees for the past couple of nights, Hungarian online daily index.hu reported yesterday.

Gyurcsány told atv.hu that he hosted a 10-member Syrian family, and a day after he hosted a six-member Syrian-Kurdish group. He added that the refugees receive dinner in the evening and breakfast in the morning, and while they sleep their clothes are washed. The portal noted that the refugees use sign language to communicate with the politician and his family.

'I would rather die than go to a camp'

AFP, Bicske Train Station

Ugly scenes erupted in Hungary yesterday as migrants fought their way onto what they thought was the first train to western Europe in days, only to be left feeling tricked as police halted the train and tried to move them to a refugee camp.

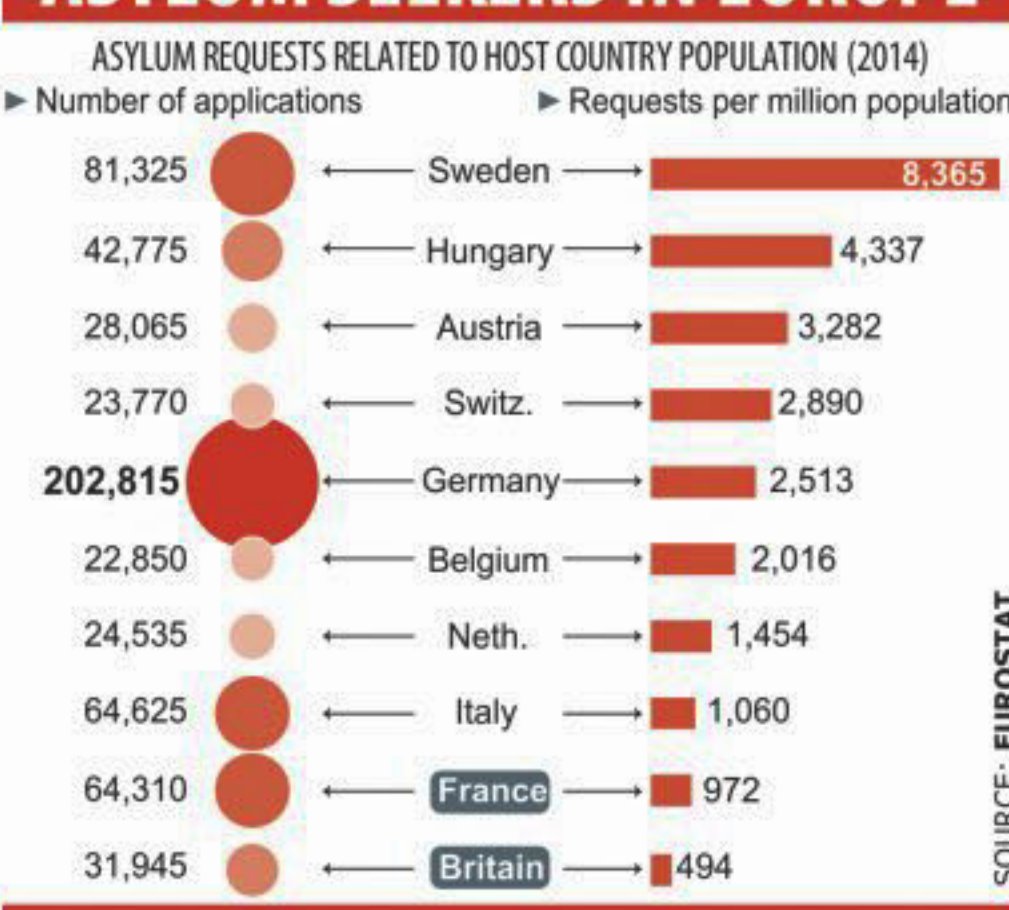
Mayhem ensued at the small train station of Bicske where it was stopped, including when one man pulled a woman and a baby onto the train tracks and refused to be moved before several bulky police dragged him off.

"I would rather die than go to a camp," one Iraqi man told AFP as his daughter -- one of many children on the train -- was taken to hospital with a swollen cheek in the humid late-summer heat.

Most of the migrants, estimated by an AFP reporter to number 200-300, refused to get off the train and onto buses that state news agency MTI reported would take them to the nearby camp.

Furious at their treatment and feeling they had been tricked onto the train, they began chanting "Germany! Germany!" -- their intended destination after a treacherous journey of hundreds of miles.

ASYLUM SEEKERS IN EUROPE



Others held placards with the words "SOS" and "Help!". "I need to go to Germany for life," read another, held by a child. Police handed out water bottles but some of the migrants poured the water onto the ground in disgust.

There were around 100 police present including riot police. An AFP reporter said late afternoon that reinforcements were arriving.

The incident occurred after Hungarian police decided yesterday morning to open Budapest's main international train station Keleti, two days after blocking it to migrants.

That decision came after Hungary on Monday allowed several thousand to board trains for Austria and Germany.

When the station was re-opened yesterday, more than a thousand migrants stormed in, fighting with each other to get on the train headed, or so they thought, to near the Austrian border.

A public announcement said however that the train would be going nowhere, and that no trains for western Europe would be leaving Keleti station "for an indefinite period".

Two hours late it finally left, its occupants -- people carrying luggage, fathers with children on their shoulders -- believing their trek to western Europe had finally resumed.

Around 2,000 people remained at Keleti, the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) estimated.



Turkey slams EU over 'migrant cemetery'

AFP, Ankara

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan yesterday lashed out at EU states for turning the Mediterranean into a "cemetery" for migrants, accusing Europe of being responsible for the death of every single victim.

"European countries, which turned the Mediterranean Sea -- the cradle of ancient civilisations -- into a migrant cemetery are party to the crime that takes place when each refugee loses their life," Erdogan said in a speech in Ankara.

Turkey is hosting some 1.8 million refugees from the crisis in Syria and has repeatedly accused Europe of not doing its part to help share the burden.

"European countries which set the criteria for basic human rights and freedoms are now turning their backs to these principles," Erdogan added.

"We don't think it's fair to burden us with a problem that the whole world faces."

Erdogan's comments came after the image of the corpse of a three-year Syrian boy washed up on a Turkish beach following a failed attempt to cross the Aegean to Greece caused a wave of horror in Europe.

Erdogan said "all of humanity" was drowning in the Mediterranean.

"It's the values that made us who we are that are being drowned. ... a world system which lost its sense of mercy cannot be a remedy to humanity's plight," he added.



Clinton's E-mail row 'More threads contain foreign govts' info'

REUTERS, New York

"Here's my personal email," Hillary Clinton wrote to US special envoy George Mitchell on a summer Sunday in 2010 as he telephoned one European official after another in an effort to keep peace talks between the Israelis and the Palestinians on track.

"Pls use this for reply," Clinton wrote in her email, sent from the clintonemail.com account she set up on an unsecured, private server in her New York home for her work as secretary of state.

Over the following hours, Mitchell wrote back to Clinton with summaries of his conversations, including one with Spain's foreign minister, who had briefed him on discussions with Palestinian leaders. The State Department has redacted the summary of the minister's thoughts, saying it is classified information.

The exchange is among dozens in a new batch of Clinton's emails released this week that shed further light on how Clinton handled information while she was secretary of state from 2009 to 2013.

Reunion wing part is from MH370: France

AFP, Paris

French prosecutors yesterday confirmed that a wing part found on a remote Indian Ocean island was from ill-fated Malaysia Airlines flight MH370, a month after tests on the flaperon began.

"It is possible today to say with certainty that the flaperon discovered on Reunion island on July 29 came from flight MH370," Paris prosecutors said in a statement, confirming claims made by Malaysia's prime minister last month.

The Boeing 777 disappeared on March 8 last year, inexplicably veering off course en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing with 239 people on board.

The disappearance turned into one of the biggest mysteries in the history of aviation, sparking a colossal hunt in the Indian Ocean based on satellite data which hinted at MH370's possible path.

Then at the end of July, a man on Reunion island -- a French overseas territory -- found the two-metre-long (almost seven-foot) wing part, which was flown to France for tests by aviation experts.

Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak was quick to announce that the piece belonged to MH370, but French investigators were more cautious, saying only there was a "very high probability" it came from the plane.

In the statement yesterday, prosecutors said investigators discovered three numbers on the wing part, and later concluded that one of the figures corresponded to the serial number of an MH370 flaperon.

IMPACT OF MIDDLE EAST CONFLICTS ON CHILDREN

13m deprived of education: UN

AFP, Amman

More than 13 million children are being denied an education by Middle East conflicts, the UN said yesterday, warning "the hopes of a generation" would be dashed if they cannot return to classrooms.

In a report on the impact of conflict on education in six countries and territories across the region, the United Nations children fund UNICEF said more than 8,850 schools were no longer usable due to violence.

It detailed cases of students and teachers coming under direct fire, classrooms used as makeshift bomb shelters and children having to cross active front lines just to take their exams.

"The destructive impact of conflict is being felt by children right across the region," said Peter Salama, regional director for UNICEF in the Middle East and North Africa.

"It's not just the physical damage being done to schools, but the despair felt by a generation of schoolchildren who see their hopes and futures shattered."

Last year alone, UNICEF documented 214 attacks on schools in Syria,



Iraq, Libya, the Palestinian territories, Sudan and Yemen.

In Syria, it said education was paying a "massive price" after four years and a half years of conflict.

One in four schools have been closed since the conflict erupted, causing more than two million children to drop out and putting close to half a million in danger of losing their schooling.

In addition, more than 52,000 teachers have left their posts, saddling the country's crumbling education system with an acute skills shortage.

In Yemen, hundreds of schools and colleges have been closed since March, when a Saudi-led coalition launched air strikes on Iran-backed Huthi rebels.

In the embattled Gaza Strip, which

saw a 50-day war last year between Hamas militants and Israel kill about 2,200 Palestinians and 73 on the Israeli side, the UN said at least 281 schools had been damaged, and eight "completely destroyed".

UNICEF said that violence in Iraq has had a severe impact on the schooling of at least 950,000 children.

Conflict has also affected child learning in Libya with more than half of those displaced in the 2011 chaos reporting that their children cannot attend classes.

UNICEF called for better informal education services in countries affected by school closures and for donor nations to prioritise education funding throughout the Middle East.

ISIS's unholy business of artefacts

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

So why is Isis blowing to pieces the greatest artefacts of ancient history in Syria and Iraq?

The archeologist Joanne Farchakh has a unique answer to a unique crime. First, ISIS sells the statues, stone faces and frescoes that international dealers demand. It takes the money, hands over the relics -- and blows up the temples and buildings they come from to conceal the evidence of what has been looted.

"Antiquities from Palmyra are already on sale in London," the Lebanese-French archaeologist Ms Farchakh says. "There are Syrian and Iraqi objects taken by Isis that are already in Europe. They are no longer still in Turkey where they first went -- they left Turkey long ago. This destruction hides the income of Daesh [ISIS] and it is selling these things before it is destroying the tem-

ples that housed them.

"It has something priceless to sell and then afterwards it destroys the site and the destruction is meant to hide the level of theft. It destroys the evidence. So no one knows what was taken beforehand -- nor what was destroyed."



Ms Farchakh has worked for years among the ancient cities of the Middle East, examining the looted sites of Samarra in Iraq -- where "civilisation" supposedly began -- after the 2003 US invasion. She has catalogued the vast destruction of the souks and mosques

of the Syrian cities of Aleppo and Homs since 2011.

Ms Farchakh says Isis does not destroy all of Palmyra in one video to serve its purpose. "It started with the executions [of Syrian soldiers] in the Roman theatre. Then it showed explosives tied to the Roman pillars. Then it depicted the retired antiquities director, al-Asaad. Then it blew up the Baal Shamim temple.

The longer the destruction lasts, Ms Farchakh believes, the higher go the prices on the international antiquities markets. Isis is in the antiquities business, is her message, and Isis is manipulating the world in its dramas of destruction. "There are no stories on the media without an 'event'. First, Daesh gave the media blood. Then the media decided not to show any more blood. So it has given them archeology. When it doesn't get this across, it will go for women, then for children."

**নিখোঁজ সংবাদ**

**BAPEX**

বাংলাদেশ পেট্রোলিয়াম এক্সপ্লোরেশন এন্ড প্রোডাকশন কোম্পানী লিমিটেড (বাপেক্স)

জনাব নাসির আহমেদ, পিতা : মৃত আব্দুল ওয়াহেদ হাজার, মাতা : মৃত ফাতেমা বেগম, বাপেক্স-এর একজন নিয়মিত কর্মচারী। পদবী : সহকারী কর্মকর্তা (সাধারণ), পরিচিতি নং : ১০৬৭। তিনি গত ০৬-০৪-২০১৩ তারিখে উত্তরার ভাড়া বাসা হতে বের হয়ে অদ্যাবধি আর ফিরে আসেননি। পরবর্তীতে তার স্ত্রী বেগম সাহিদা আক্তার কর্তৃক এ বিষয়ে গত ১২-০৪-২০১৩ তারিখে উত্তরা থানা (পশ্চিম), ঢাকায় একটি সাধারণ ডায়েরী করা হয়, যার নম্বর : ০৬৬১। বর্ণনা : বয়স প্রায় ৬০ বছর, মাঝারি গড়ন, দাড়ি গৌফ ওয়ালা, উচ্চতা ৫'-৪"। স্থায়ী ঠিকানা : গ্রাম-লালপুর, ডাকঘর- লালপুর বাজার, থানা/উপজেলা- চাঁদপুর সদর, জেলা- চাঁদপুর এবং বর্তমান ঠিকানা : বাপেক্স ভবন, ৪, কাওরান বাজার, ঢাকা-১২১৫। উক্ত নিখোঁজ ব্যক্তির কোন সন্ধান পেলে উপরোক্ত ঠিকানায় অথবা নিকটস্থ থানায় যোগাযোগ করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।

মোহাম্মদ শওকত উসমান  
মহাব্যবস্থাপক (প্রশাসন) ও কোম্পানী সচিব  
টেলিফোন নম্বর : ৮১৮৯১২৩।

GD-2894