

NEWS IN brief

Iran finds huge high uranium reserve

Iran has discovered an unexpectedly high reserve of uranium and will soon begin extracting the radioactive element at a new mine, the head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization said on Saturday. The comments cast doubt on previous assessments from some Western analysts who said the country had a low supply and sooner or later would need to import uranium, the raw material needed for its nuclear program.

3 killed by PKK in Turkey's southeast

Three policemen were killed by Kurdish militants yesterday in two separate attacks in Turkey's southeast, security sources said, as weeks of violence showed no sign of abating. Since late July, Ankara has used air power and ground forces in a self-declared "anti-terror" operation to try to cripple the PKK in its strongholds in southeastern Turkey and northern Iraq. But the group has hit back, killing dozens of Turkish police and soldiers in almost daily attacks.

'ISIS' attacks Pak-Afghan border post

Pakistan militants who have pledged allegiance to Islamic State yesterday said they had attacked a paramilitary checkpoint along the Afghan border, in the first such assault claimed by a former faction of the Taliban in several months. A militant affiliated with the faction told Reuters the group attacked Damadola district of the Bajaur tribal area in Pakistan's northwest, where the military has been battling a militant insurgency since 2007, late on Saturday. There were no casualties.

Merkel for Russian role in Syria

Germany and other western European powers need to work with Russia as well as the United States to solve the crisis in Syria, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Saturday. Russia had called on Friday for cooperation with the United States to avoid "unintended incidents", as it stages naval exercises off the coast of Syria, where US officials believe Moscow is building up forces to protect long-term ally President Bashar al-Assad.



A Syrian refugee holding a baby in a lifetube swims towards the shore after their dinghy deflated, inset, some 100m away before reaching the Greek island of Lesbos, yesterday. The International Organization for Migration (IMO) said a total of 432,761 refugees and migrants crossed the Mediterranean so far this year.

Accept 1 lac Syrian refugees

US lawmakers, refugee groups urge Obama

Seventy-two House Democrats joined human rights groups on Friday in calling for the US to admit 100,000 Syrian refugees next fiscal year, saying the White House's proposal to take in 10,000 of them is far from enough.

The members said the US should accept 200,000 refugees total in the fiscal year that begins Oct 1, echoing a number put forward by groups that help with and advocate for resettlement.

"We have always been a country that has demonstrated extraordinary leadership in responding to humanitarian crises around the world, and this is a crisis," Rep David Cicilline, who organized the letter, said in an interview. "Ten thousand [refugees] is a step in the right direction but it does not, in my view, respond adequately to the magnitude of the crisis."

White House officials say the most important response is a humanitarian one, noting the US has already given about \$4 billion to help Syrian refugees abroad. But the announcement Thursday that Obama aims to take in 10,000 Syrians next fiscal year indicates the administration is feeling pressure from lawmakers, outside groups and Americans who say resettlement needs to be a bigger part of the equation, particularly as shocking photos of the danger refugees go through while seeking safety dominate the news.

Germany buckles under pressure

Proposes to reintroduce border control after reaching 'capacity limit' as refugees pours in

The German government wants to temporarily reintroduce border controls in response to the refugee exodus, German newspaper Bild said yesterday as authorities in Berlin warned they were stretched to capacity to welcome refugees.

Meanwhile, German Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere said refugees streaming into Europe should not be able to choose where to settle, as authorities said thousands more were on the move across the continent.

In an interview with German newspaper Der Tagesspiegel, de Maiziere said refugees given protection in Europe should accept that they will be distributed across the bloc.

Bild said the border control measure would breach the European Union's open-borders Schengen agreement. It said this would affect Germany's border with Austria first.

The German government was not immediately available to comment on the report.

Some 13,015 refugees arrived in Munich on Saturday alone, and at least 1,400 are expected yesterday to reach the southern German city -- the end of their exhausting and often perilous journey through Hungary and Austria.

Germany has become the destination of choice for many refugees, particularly for Syrians after Chancellor Angela Merkel



Like these pictures, Europeans are divided on the refugee issue.

decided to relax asylum rules for citizens of the war-torn country.

However, with some 450,000 people arriving in Europe's biggest economy so far this year, local authorities are buckling under the sudden surge.

"Given the numbers from yesterday, it is very clear that we have reached the upper limit of our capacity," said a Munich police spokesman.

Federal transport minister Alexander

Dobrindt also weighed in, saying "effective measures are necessary now to stop the influx".

Merkel herself had called Saturday on Athens, while facing its own deep economic crisis, to make more effort to protect the EU's external borders.

European Union home affairs ministers will hold emergency talks today as "the situation of migration phenomena outside and inside the European Union has recently

taken unprecedented proportions", said the Luxembourg presidency.

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation is also due to hold an emergency meeting on the crisis yesterday.

While Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey are housing millions of refugees from Syria, many wealthy Gulf states are facing increasing scrutiny over their apparent reluctance to take in people fleeing the conflict.

As the continent scrambles to respond to the biggest movement of people since World War II, sharp divisions have emerged among the European Union's 28 member states -- both among governments and on the ground.

While Germany and France back proposals to help "frontline" states Italy, Greece and Hungary buckling under the strain, European Commission proposals for sharing 160,000 new arrivals in a quota scheme are facing resistance from eastern members.

Hungary, which recorded a new record in migrant arrivals -- 4,330 on Saturday -- was working around the clock to finish a controversial anti-migrant fence along its border with Serbia.

Budapest has recorded some 180,000 people entering illegally this year and has passed a raft of tough new laws that will take effect tomorrow, meaning anyone crossing the border illegally can be deported or even jailed.

Explosives, not gas cylinder caused blast

Indian cops launch hunt for owner of explosives; death toll hits 88

Indian police yesterday said they were hunting for the owner of illegally stored explosives which accidentally detonated in the centre of a crowded town, killing at least 88 people.

Rajendra Kaswa has been charged with illegally storing gelatin sticks and urea, a common fertiliser, next to a restaurant and busy junction in the town of Petlawad in central India, a senior police official and the divisional commissioner Sanjay Dubey said.

"He is on the run. One of his accomplices has already been arrested. He has been charged under the Explosives Act," Dubey told Reuters by telephone from the site of Saturday's blast, one of the deadliest in India in recent years.

Police initially thought the accident was triggered by an exploding gas cylinder in the restaurant, which then detonated the explosives next door, but officers now believe it originated in the warehouse next to the restaurant where Kaswa stored explosive materials and chemicals.

Kaswa held a licence for the explosives but keeping them so close to a restaurant in a densely populated part of town was illegal, senior police official Seema Alava said.

At least 88 people were killed in the explosions as the multi-storey restaurant and adjacent buildings collapsed, sending debris hurtling into the streets during the morning rush hour.



Palestinians shout in front of Israeli security forces who block a road leading to the Al-Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem's Old City, yesterday. Palestinians clashed with police at the compound just hours before the start of the Jewish New Year. The disturbances came with tensions running high after Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Yaalon last week outlawed the groups which are made up of Palestinians and Israeli Arabs and who confront Jewish visitors to the volatile Al-Aqsa mosque complex, considered Islam's third holiest shrine.

INDEPENDENCE REFERENDUM Scotland gears up for second vote

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

SNP, the party that rules Scotland, will set out a timetable for a possible second Scottish independence referendum in its 2016 Holyrood manifesto, Nicola Sturgeon has revealed.

The Scottish First Minister said the decision would be driven by the people of Scotland and that the proposal would not be final.

"Our manifesto will set out what we consider are the circumstances and the timescale on which a second referendum might be appropriate, but we can only propose," she said.

"It's then for people in Scotland, whether it is in this election or in future elections, to decide whether they want to vote for our manifesto and then if there is in the future another independence referendum, whether that's in five years or 10 years or whenever, it will be down to the people of Scotland to decide whether they want to vote for independence or not.

A recent poll for the STV news channel found that 53 per cent of Scots would vote for independence in the event of another vote. Another poll conducted in the same week showed a similar result.

Sturgeon previously warned that changes at Westminster such as "English Votes for English Laws" could trigger another independence referendum, as could forced Scottish withdrawal from the European Union.



Jeremy Corbyn is 'threat to national security'

Claims UK PM; report says Labour divided on defense policy

Prime Minister David Cameron said Sunday that veteran socialist Jeremy Corbyn's election to the Labour leadership made the main opposition party a threat to Britain's national security.

"The Labour Party is now a threat to our national security, our economic security and your family's security," he said on his personal Twitter account, in his first response to Corbyn's victory on Saturday.

The Conservative leader's comments mirror those made by Defence Secretary Michael Fallon on Saturday, and by the centre-right party itself.

Corbyn, a co-founder of the Stop the War anti-war movement, advocates unilateral nuclear disarmament, ending austerity and increasing public spending.

The media battle comes ahead of a likely parliamentary vote on bombing Syria, one of the first foreign policy tests of Corbyn's leadership.

Corbyn was elected as Labour leader to succeed Ed Miliband on a landslide, gaining 59.5 per cent of the vote.

would aim to convince new Labour boss Jeremy Corbyn of the merits of the Nato military alliance, addressing a split at the top of the party over defense and foreign policy.

Corbyn opposes the renewal of Britain's Trident nuclear-armed submarine program and has advocated withdrawing from Nato.

Watson, who backs the renewal of Trident, also said he would definitely sup-



port Britain staying in the European Union at a referendum due by the end of 2017.

Corbyn was starting work yesterday on putting together a shadow cabinet, with several senior Labour figures ruling themselves out of serving under him.

However, Watson told BBC television there was "zero chance" of a successful coup against the new chief, saying moderates had to respect Corbyn's "huge mandate."

Yemen govt rejects UN-backed talks

AFP, Al-aber

Yemen's exiled government backed out of UN-brokered peace talks as loyalist forces supported by a Saudi-led coalition launched a major offensive yesterday against Shia Huthi rebels.

A military official said the offensive aimed to push the Iran-backed rebels out of the oil-rich Marib province east of Sanaa and eventually move on the capital, which the rebels seized a year ago.

President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi's government, which has fled to Saudi Arabia, said Friday it would join UN-mediated talks this week in Oman.

But in a short statement overnight Hadi's office said the government would not join the talks unless the rebels first accept a UN resolution demanding their withdrawal from territory they have captured.

Zawahri calls for lone wolf attacks on West

Urges greater unity between militants

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The al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahri has called on young Muslim men in Western countries to carry out lone-wolf attacks -- and urged greater unity between militants.

"I call on all Muslims who can harm the countries of the crusader coalition not to hesitate. We must now focus on moving the war to the heart of the homes and cities of the crusader West and specifically America," he said in an audio recording posted online yesterday, referring to nations making up the Western-led coalition in Iraq and Syria.

He suggested Muslim youth in the West take the Tsarnaev and Kouachi brothers, who carried out the Boston marathon bombings and Charlie Hebdo shootings in Paris respectively, and others as examples to follow.

In a recording released on Wednesday, Zawahiri denounced ISIS as "illegitimate", indicating the extent of the schism between the two groups. In the audio message, Zawahiri said that his organisation does not recognise ISIS as the caliphate they claim to be.

Zawahiri said: "We have endured a lot of harm from Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (leader of ISIS) and his brothers, and we preferred to support with as little as possible, out of our concern to extinguish the fire of sedition," Reuters reported.

ISIS declared a caliphate in large parts of Iraq and Syria under its control. The strategic differences between the two organisations indicate a generational split, terror experts say.

