

## Ambassador: Turkmenistan - One of Strategic Partners of Belarus

ASHGABAT - Turkmenistan is one of the strategic partners of Belarus, Trend reports referring to the interview of the TV channel "Turkmenistan" with the Ambassador of Belarus Oleg Tabanyukhov.

The envoy noted that January marks some significant dates: the 26th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Belarus and Turkmenistan on Jan. 21 and the 100th anniversary of the Belarusian diplomatic service on Jan. 22.

"Our stands on topical issues of international politics coincide and we firmly rely on the support of each other in the realization of our strategic foreign policy priorities," Tabanyukhov said.

More than 130 bilateral documents have been signed and are



being implemented between the countries, constituting the contractual and legal base of multifaceted cooperation.

Belarus mainly supplies high value-added goods to Turkmenistan: trucks, special-purpose vehicles, tractors, road-building

equipment, medicinal preparations, woodworking products, and agricultural products.

There is also bilateral cooperation in the field of education. In total, over 9,000 Turkmen citizens study at Belarusian educational institutions. (Trend)

### (1) No Compromise...

minister was appointed.

He appreciated the ministry's management affairs during the October parliamentary elections and the process of presidential candidate registration.

Ghani, who registered his candidacy in the July presidential vote to seek his reelection, directed the Interior Ministry to set up a task force for better preparation and security of the ballot.

Emphasizing on reforms in national police ranks and change in status of the special forces, the president directed the police to ensure security of highways in cooperation with the national army. He also stressed increased security of dry ports in order to have more revenue.

Addressing the national police, Ghani said their united and objective management would help gain people's trust.

He said the international community remained committed to standing by the Afghan security forces and there would be no compromise on their sacrifices in the peace process. (Pajhwok)

### (2) Talks Excluding...

"Pakistan, the US, Saudi Arabia and Gulf countries are attending the Afghan peace talks in Islamabad, where the Afghan government will not be represented," the outspoken politician said.

Addressing an event marking the death anniversaries of Abdul Ghaffar Khan at the Bacha Khan Markaz, Asfandyar made clear talks about Afghanistan without the participation of the Afghan government could not succeed.

He was speaking at an event organised at the Bacha Khan Markaz in connection with the death anniversaries of Abdul Ghaffar Khan aka Bacha Khan and his son Abdul Wali Khan.

Afghan Cultural Attaché Hazrat Wali Hotak and senior ANP leaders Ghulam Ahmad Bilour and Mian Iftikhar Hussain also attended the event.

Asfandyar told policymakers against dangers of "reckless steps" they were taking at a time when the country was facing increasing international isolation.

"Pakistan is facing isolation due to flawed and failed policies," he said, asking Pakistani policymakers to learn from the mistake of the former Soviet Union. (Pajhwok)

### (3) Top US Senator...

president on troop withdrawal from Syria and Afghanistan.

The news of withdrawal sent shock waves in the region at a time when the Special Representa-

tative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad was trying hard to move negotiations with Taliban forward.

Khalilzad ended a four-day visit to Pakistan Sunday, after the Afghan Taliban seemingly refused to meet with the American team, despite reported efforts from host country Pakistan. Talks with the Taliban have deadlocked over the issue of involving the Kabul government in the negotiations. The Taliban call the Kabul regime a "puppet" of the Americans and have never accepted it as a legitimate government.

Graham reiterated the war in Afghanistan needs a political solution and suggested a meeting "sooner rather than later" between Trump and Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan to find a resolution to the Afghan conflict.

"I'm going urge him to meet with prime minister [Khan] as soon as practical. I think they will hit it off. Similar personalities," Graham said.

Trust deficit

Graham also blamed Pakistani hesitance to fully cooperate with the Americans on the "terrible" trust deficit between the two countries.

"The day Pakistan sees us as a more reliable strategic partner, the day they'll do more," he said.

The United States has long complained Pakistan provides sanctuaries to the leadership of the Afghan Taliban, a charge Islamabad denies. It has also long claimed Islamabad could do more to bring the Taliban to the table for negotiations.

In recent months, several U.S. officials have indicated Pakistan appeared to be trying to help resolve the Afghan issue, but added they were cautious in their optimism due to what they called a history of duplicity. Khalilzad's tweet at the end of his trip credited Pakistan for pushing to resolve the Afghan conflict.

"We're heading in the right direction with more steps by Pakistan coming that will lead to concrete results," he tweeted.

Graham also seemed optimistic that things were improving, crediting the change to Pakistan military's efforts to deal with the threat of terrorism, plans to integrate the lawless tribal areas into mainstream Pakistan, and a new prime minister in office that he thought could be a "partner" in a "beneficial relationship."

"I don't want to oversell, but it's time to realize things have

changed," he said, adding that he would suggest to his colleagues in Congress to stop "stereotyping."

Graham, who has been to Pakistan dozens of times, also said he saw the country as a "good market" for American products and wanted the relationship to move beyond security-related issues.

But on Sunday, he said, "Nancy, I am still thinking about the State of the Union speech, there are so many options - including doing it as per your written offer (made during the shutdown, security is no problem), and my written acceptance. While a contract is a contract, I'll get back to you soon!" (VoA)

### (4) Khalilzad Says...

Khalilzad said in a tweet that he had "good meetings" on Afghan peace in Pakistan.

He acknowledged that the peace efforts are moving forward in the right direction.

"We're heading in the right direction with more steps by Pakistan coming that will lead to concrete results," Khalilzad tweeted.

Khalilzad said on Saturday that US wants peace in Afghanistan as he mentioned that he is responding to concerns which say that United States is both willing to further the peace process and fight against militants in the country.

"I see that many are concerned that the United States is willing to both talk and fight. Let me be clear: the US wants #peace," Khalilzad tweeted.

Khalilzad said US is ready to address legitimate concerns of all Afghan sides in the peace process. (Tolo news)

### (5) Afghan Who Stabbed...

man in a 'headlock' and that Seyed had initially used the glass bottle as a 'milder' way to resist the attack.

There were 'six boxing classes' between them and Seyed was physically weaker, the judge said.

The verdict might be 'incomprehensible' to the victim's family but courts had to make 'neutral and emotionless' decisions, he said.

The prosecution had argued that six stabs of the knife were more than was needed for Seyed to defend himself.

According to RTL the Afghan, who came to Germany three years ago, had also faced deportation if he was convicted.

Earlier in the case the victim's tearful mother had appeared in court and faced her son's alleged killer.

## New Zealand Gov't Launches Health Guidelines Facing Extreme Heat

WELLINGTON - The New Zealand government launched Monday a brand new Heat Health Plan Guidelines for the ongoing summer which is predicted to be one of the hottest, local media reported.

"Climate change is a big threat to our society, and we need to plan for anticipated weather like hotter days now," Associate Health Minister Julie Anne Genter said with temperatures high around the country.

"Although it is great to enjoy the outdoors, getting too hot is a serious risk that will happen more in our future. Our health will be impacted by climate change, and we need to ensure we are all ready," Genter said in a statement.

The number of days where temperature exceeds 25 degrees Cel-

sus is expected to increase between 40 and 100 percent by 2040 and between 40 and 300 percent by 2090, she added.

Extreme heat can be especially concerning for infants, pregnant women, older people, those with pre-existing medical conditions, and those with disabilities, Genter said, adding that every year there were elderly New Zealanders who die due to heat issues and this is projected to increase.

She warned that climate change does not just affect people's health, it also has an impact on people's productivity at work, the primary industries and the economy, saying the new plan guidelines will raise awareness to deal with the impact of extreme temperatures. (Xinhua)

She described Jose as a committed young man and said he was 'there whenever someone needed help'.

'It didn't matter if they were black or white, red or green, German or not German - he'd be there', she said.

Jose had wanted to become a teacher and was a member of the town's youth parliament, she said. (Agencies)

### (6) AWCC Launches...

This comes as last year, Bayat Power has signed contract of generating gas power with Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat, allowing the company to build a gas-to-electricity plant in the country. (ANT)

### (7) Kandahar Mayor...

road due to its rundown condition.

The mayor also provided information about the Ahmad Shah Baba home's acquisition, saying a total of 18 residences in the area had been purchased for 239 million afghanis to change the historic site into a museum. (Pajhwok)

### (8) Girls' School...

Farah province was torched last night and parts of the school was damaged but so far we don't know who are responsible for this action," Halimi said.

Farah is an insecure province in the west of the country and in recent months the province witnesses an increase in security forces operations. (Tolo news)

### (9) Personal Interests...

Anwarul Haq Ahadi, head of Afghanistan's New National Front, Ismail Khan, former water and energy minister, Mohammad Younus Qanuni, former vice-president, Hamayon Hamayon, first deputy speaker of Wolesi Jirga, Haji Zahir Qadir, a lawmaker from Nangarhar province, Lalai Hamidzai, a lawmaker from Kandahar province and some other political figures are other members of the alliance.

However, Rabbani and Dostum announced their support for Dr. Abdullah Abdullah in the presidential race, with Noor, Mohaqiq, Qanoni and Ismail Khan joining Mohammad Hanif Atmar's camp and Nabil independently nominated for the election.

Haji Hazrat Ali, a member of the GNA said, "These figures destroyed Afghanistan for their own interests and power, God may destroy them, it would be better if all these leaders become united for a single purpose which is national interest and announce a single team, but each of them

are moving in different directions."

Ali said most of GNA members had made deals and had forgotten their promises with the people.

"People from the eastern region have always taken part in national processes but their rights always denied," he added.

Gulzar Sangarwal, a provincial council member of Laghman province, also criticized political leaders of the country and said, "We will support a team which is good for the country and defends the rights of people of the east."

Sayed Ghafor Ghafori, an influential figure from Laghman province, said unity between political leaders would help improve the situation in Afghanistan and politicians should think about national interest not personal.

Peer Bakhsh Gardiwal, a representative of the gathering, said, "Elders of the eastern region have come to the conclusion that they would support Ashraf Ghani if they did not find a committed team." (Pajhwok)

### (10) US Gen. Meets...

He said Pakistan despite constraints had contributed to all efforts for regional peace and would continue to do so.

Besides, US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad concluded his four-day visit to Pakistan which was to follow up on the discussions held in December.

During the visit, Ambassador Khalilzad held meetings with Prime Minister Imran Khan, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Foreign Secretary Tahmina Janjua, Gen Bajwa and members of the diplomatic corps in Islamabad, said a statement issued by the US Embassy.

During the consultations, both sides reaffirmed their commitment to advance the Afghan peace process. (Tolo news)

### (11) 12 Security...

Public Health Director Dr. Mohammad Salim Ashgharkhel said 12 security personnel were killed and 30 others wounded in the bombing. Six of the injured were taken to Kabul in critical condition.

Meanwhile, Taliban claimed credit for the complex attack. Zabihullah Mujahid, the group's spokesman, tweeted the bombing was carried out through a Humvee vehicle.

He said the rebels entered the facility after the bombing and killed several security personnel. (Pajhwok)