



S. EU Leaders Calls for Unity to Deal with Terrorism, Migrant Crisis, Boost Growth

LISBON - Southern European leaders called for a united EU to fight terrorism, boost growth and find a solution to the migrant crisis at the Southern EU countries summit in Lisbon on Saturday. Seven leaders of EU countries met on Saturday, including host Portugal, Cyprus, Spain, France, Greece, Italy and Malta. The informal meeting focused on the future of EU in the context of Brexit, as well as migrations, safety and defence, and U.S. President Donald Trump's administration. "During these times of worldwide uncertainty, we need a stronger and more united Europe," Portuguese



Prime Minister Antonio Costa said at a press conference, pointing out that it was vital to defend values of democracy and free

trade. "We have to deliver clear responses to reinforce the confidence of our citizens," he said.

Costa pointed out that essential areas were growth, employment and convergence, as well as internal and external security and

the management of migrations. French President Francois Hollande pointed out that ...*(More on P4)...(6)*

Zakhilwal, Shahbaz Agree on Expanded Trade Ties



PESHAWAR - Afghan Ambassador to Pakistan, Hazrat Omar Zakhilwal, and Pakistan's Punjab Chief Minister Shabaz Sharif have agreed on expanding cooperation in different sectors. At a meeting with the diplomat in Lahore on Saturday, the chief minister called terrorism and extremism collective problems of nations across the world. He said collective steps are needed to deal with the issues of common concern. Pakistan and Afghanistan stood united in the journey of peace, a prerequisite for harmony in the region, he added. Shahbaz said both countries should take steps to promote economic and trade relations. "Peace in Afghanistan is as desirable as in Pakistan." *(Pajhwok)*

Local Taliban Leader Surrenders to Government

KUNDUZ - A Taliban local leader together with five comrades have surrendered to government in Kunduz province, a local official said on Sunday. "Payyenda Mohammad after understanding the truth about the situation of his country defected the Taliban ranks and surrendered to provincial branch of National Directorate of Security (NDS) late Saturday," a NDS official told Xinhua on the condition of anonymity. The NDS is the national intelligence agency of the country. The surrendered man was leading a group of Taliban militants in Dasht-e-Archi district of the province, according to the official. "Mohammad took the decision after founding the high-ranking leaders of the Taliban insurgent group have made contacts with the Russia recently," the source said. Some Taliban members or their fathers were involved in fighting against former Soviet Union's occupation of Afghanistan in 1979 to 1989. The source also noted several hundreds of Taliban members would join the government-initiated peace and reconciliation process in near future in the province, bordering Tajikistan. *(Xinhua)*

Afghan Forces Kill 49 Insurgents: Mol

KABUL - At least 49 insurgents have been killed in the past 24 hours in counter-terrorism joint operations between Afghan security forces in the country, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) said in statement. According to the MoI, the operations were conducted in Helmand, Nangarhar, Kandahar, Farah, Jawzjan, Herat and Faryab provinces. Six other insurgents were also wounded in this time and five were arrested, the MoI said. During the operation, Afghan forces seized weapons and ammunition. No details have been given regarding casualties among security forces or civilians. *(Tolonews)*

Govt. Keeping Mum on Kandahar Explosion Findings



KABUL - Kandahar provincial council members claimed on Sunday government is not revealing its findings following a probe into the recent bomb blast at the Kandahar governor's guesthouse which claimed the lives of 12 people, in-

cluding five United Arab Emirates diplomats. "No information has been given to people and no satisfactory evidence has been shown to them," Sayed Ahmad Silab, a member of the council, said. The incident is being inves-

tigated by a commission appointed by the Afghan government; in addition to the task team, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and NATO are also investigating the incident. The Ministry of Interior (MoI) ...*(More on P4)...(7)*

Thousands Receive Aid in Kabul, Jalalabad

KABUL - Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) launched a winter campaign to distribute aid to thousands of Afghan returnees and displaced families, an official said on Sunday. Fakhria Abavi, an IRW official told Pajhwok Afghan News at a ceremony here that they were distributing relief materials to the affected families in Kabul and Jalalabad, the capital of Afghanistan. Given by Australia, Britain, Malaysia and some other countries, the aid is being distributed by IRW. She said the organisation provided relief items to about 5,000 displaced families and returnees in Nangarhar and Kabul. The process would continue over the next one month. Abavi said that each family was provided with 72 kilograms of flour, five kilograms of ghee, four kilograms of beans and 400 kilograms of firewood. The IRW which main office is in UK, has been active in Afghanistan for the past 18 years. Malakullah Dad, a resident of the 9th police district of Kabul, said they had been living there for the past several months but they had no shelter. ...*(More on P4)...(10)*

Muslimyar Nangarhar Power Being Supplied to Kabul



JALALABAD - Meshrano Jirga Chairman Fazal Hadi Muslimyar met Da Afghanistan Breshna Shirkat (DABS) chief, Quadrattullah Dilawari. Muslimyar stressed Nangarhar's electricity issue be resolved immediately. The recommendation by Muslimyar comes as Nangarhar and Laghman provinces have been witnessing frequent and prolonged power blackouts over the past few weeks. Officials, however, have been tight-lipped on the issue. Muslimyar said the DABS had promised over and over again to resolve power issues but so far no progress had been made in this regard. The DABS chief had prom-

ised completing installation work on Nangarhar's third transformer with the capacity of 20-megawatt in three months. But the work has not been done yet. He also expressed concern over the stoppage of work on Daronta Power Plant's reconstruction and recommended its early resumption. "Nangarhar province has a right to 31MW of power. Why are you supplying it 25MW? And when there is lack of power in Kabul, why do you supply Nangarhar's power to Kabul?" the Senate chairman asked Dilawari. Muslimyar promised he would not let anyone usurp Nangarhar rights or snatch its share of electricity. The DABS chief said the third transformer installation work would be launched within 10 days and would be completed until summer. He also pledged the ...*(More on P4)...(11)*

Shayesteh Joins Iran's Paykan

TEHRAN - Iranian football club Paykan completed the signing of Afghanistan national team captain Faysal Shayesteh on Sunday. Shayesteh is the first Afghan player who joins an Iranian professional football team. The 25-year-old midfielder has joined Paykan on an 18-month contract for an undisclosed fee. Shayesteh started professional football career in Germany and started to play for the Afghanistan national football team in 2014. He joined Bulgaria's Etar Veliko Tarnovo in 2013 and after one year he moved to Thai club Songkhla United. Shayesteh has made 24 appearances for Afghanistan and scored 17 goals. Afghan keeper Owais Azizi was on the verge of joining Iranian football club Naft Tehran in early January. *(TNA)*

Scores of Nangarhar Residents in Daesh 'Custody'



JALALABAD - A number of residents in the eastern province of Nangarhar on Sunday said dozens of residents from Achin and Pachiragam districts are being held in Daesh custody and that no significant efforts have been made by government to secure their release. They said that Daesh has taken dozens of residents hostage over the past year. "Government has done nothing, the tribal elders have also held talks with Daesh militants and there are hopes that these hostages are released. However none of them have so far been released by Daesh," said a member of Nangarhar provincial council Zabiullah Ezmarai. "Mothers lost their children in Pachiragam, they do

not have information about whether they are still alive or dead and government is doing nothing in this respect," said a resident of Khogyani district, Farhad. "They also took hostages in Achin, all people must be mobilized against Daesh," another resident, Khan Mohammad, said. Meanwhile, some tribal elders in Nangarhar have accused government of neglecting the safe release of these hostages from Daesh custody. "Soldiers render sacrifices and leaders do not value their sacrifices. Every day they said that Daesh are killed, but we are surprised that this small group still exists and increases day by day," said tribal elder, Malik Shah Zaman. But ...*(More on P4)...(8)*

Taliban, Collecting Bills for Afghan Utilities, Tap New Revenue Sources

KABUL - The Afghan government faces a peculiar problem in at least two major provinces: It provides precious electricity, some of it imported at costly rates from neighboring countries, but Taliban militants collect most of the bills. If the government cuts off power, it will further anger a population that is already disenfranchised. If it does not, the revenue from the power will continue to provide more income to an already emboldened Taliban.



The Taliban, fighting the Afghan government and a large international military coalition, have long tapped into Afghanistan's lucrative drug trade and illegal mining, in addition to the streams of donations they receive from supporters abroad, mainly in the Persian Gulf states. But as they have taken over increasingly large areas in the past two years, they have found new ways of diversifying and collecting revenue, according to ...*(More on P4)...(9)*

Iraqis, Afghan who Helped US First Detained under Trump's Ban

KABUL - An Afghan and two Iraqi immigrants who helped U.S. war efforts were among the first to be de-

tained at airports on Friday night after President Donald Trump signed an executive order targeting Muslims and

refugees. According to U.S. media reports, an Afghan interpreter was detained at San Francisco International Airport on Friday while his wife and children were allowed through, said Matt Zeller, founder of No One Left Behind, a nonprofit that helps Afghan and Iraqi combat interpreters with special immigrant visas resettle safely in the United States. Protesters gathered around the ...*(More on P4)...(12)*

