

**(1) Pakistan, Afghanistan...**

General Bajwa as telling the Afghan delegation.

Mutual allegations of supporting militant attacks against each other have long dogged relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The army statement quoted the head of the Afghan delegation as saying that his country has "very positive expectations" from Pakistan and with mutual help, "we can allay each other's concerns and apply our energies to bring about enduring peace and stability."

Gen. Bajwa also accepted an invitation the Afghan delegation extended on behalf of President Ashraf Ghani to visit Kabul, the statement noted but mentioned no dates.

Frequent high-level interactions between the two countries in recent weeks, say officials in both the countries, have helped ease mutual tensions.

Afghan and American officials allege the Taliban insurgency uses sanctuaries on Pakistani soil for attacks against local and U.S.-led international forces in Afghanistan.

Islamabad rejects the charges and in turn maintains anti-state militants and loyalists of Islamic State sheltering in "ungoverned spaces" on the Afghan side of the border plot terrorist attacks against Pakistan from there.

The nearly 2,600 kilometer border between Pakistan and Afghanistan is largely porous, though Pakistani officials say recently security has been beefed up and a robust fence is being constructed to deter terrorist infiltration in either direction. (VoA)

**(2) Kyrgyzstan...**

restoration of Afghanistan.

Abdrakhmanov proposed to intensify mutual cooperation in the Afghan direction at the expert level and with interested international partners. (Trend)

**(3) No Hurdle to...**

ensure all affairs went smoothly. Efforts for security of TAPI project were intensified after the killing of the five demining workers in Malang Karez area.

Security officials say investigation is underway to identify who killed the workers. (Pajhwok)

**(4) Work on Kapisa...**

engineer, Waheedullah Safi, said the hospital construction work would take 18 months to complete with funds from the French government.

The provincial public hospital director Dr. Shoib Danish said the French government had provided 1.5 million Euros for projects including the Tagab district's hospital.

He said construction of the hospital would resolve health issues of southern localities' residents. (Pajhwok)

**(5) Europe and Asia...**

demand. Secondly, the EU itself has taken ambitious steps to strengthen our own capacities in the field of defence. We are not only a reliable trade partner, not only a pillar of multilateralism: the EU is a security actor in its own right.

The EU currently has 16 civilian and military missions around the world: we train the armed forces in Mali; we advise the Ukrainian and the Iraqi authorities on reform of their civilian security sectors; we fight piracy in the Indian Ocean. Recently, together with EU Member States, we have launched a 'Permanent Structured Cooperation' on security and defence; we are joining forces to become an even more credible and reliable security provider. Our Member States have committed to investing together on practical projects - from rapid response against cy-

ber-attacks to innovative systems for maritime security, to a European training centre for our troops who intervene in case of natural disasters. I have also proposed to set up a new fund, outside the EU budget, to help strengthen our partners' security capabilities.

Collectively, the EU and its Member States have the second largest defence budget in the world; the potential of greater European cooperation on defence matters is immense. We have taken big, important steps over the past year, reflecting the fact that European citizens as well as people across the world increasingly count on a European Union that protects. And this will continue.

Since our first engagement to accompany the Aceh peace process in Indonesia, almost fifteen years ago, we have expanded our security cooperation in Asia and with Asia to a great extent: we are working together on cyber-security, counter-terrorism, non-proliferation, as well as in support of peace processes across the region, from Afghanistan to Mindanao to Myanmar. We have had concrete contributions from several Asian partners to tackle piracy off the coast of Somalia. In the context of the ASEAN Regional Forum, we are working together with Vietnam and Australia on maritime security. We also have increasing military contacts with countries in Asia, for example the Chief of the EU Military Committee has had discussions with his counterparts in Beijing, Islamabad, and Seoul, to name only a few. We have posted security experts to several EU embassies across Asia.

Perhaps the most pressing matter for EU-Asia security cooperation at this time, however, is de-nuclearisation. We share an interest to save the Iran nuclear deal and to support de-nuclearisation talks in the Korean Peninsula. This is why the European Union is already fully engaged with Asian partners on both of these pressing issues. China is a signatory of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, while it is also key to global efforts to bring about the complete, verifiable and irreversible de-nuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula. Likewise, Japan, the Republic of Korea and others all have a major stake in making sure that the nuclear deal with Iran is preserved and the Korean Peninsula is de-nuclearised. We all do. Global peace requires a global effort.

Going forward, as EU Foreign Ministers today emphasised, we need to move to new actions. The EU will expand its cooperation with Asian partners into areas such as capacity building, training programmes - including on UN peacekeeping - and joint exercises.

As the European Union, we have realised, after centuries of conflicts that ripped our continent apart, that cooperation is essential for peace, and that peace brings prosperity. But in today's world, too often unilateral instincts prevail over the search for common ground. Too many players seek confrontation to achieve their short-term goals, instead of building sustainable solutions through mediation. Against this background, those who believe in a multilateral global order have an interest and a duty to join forces. Europe and Asia, together, can be the engine of a more cooperative approach to world politics. (PR)

**(6) Drought in...**

Ghani also thanked security forces for their cooperation in drought and floods affected areas and requested international aid organizations to provide their assistance in coordination with the Afghan government. Mujib Rahman Karimi, rural reha-

bilitation and development minister, who attended the meeting, presented information about a survey conducted about drought and its effects in the country.

Nasir Ahmad Durrani, agriculture minister, shared his ministry's assessments in the 16 drought-affected provinces and suggestions how to deal with the problem.

UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan, Tadamichi Yamamoto, said: "We are seriously following this matter and we have dispatched our representatives to the affected areas." He promised the UN would deliver its aid to the affected areas in coordination with the Afghan government. (Pajhwok)

**(7) Enter Now for...**

In order to stand a chance to win this prestigious award, candidates need to apply as follows:

Candidates must complete an online application form in English hosted on the One Young World website

One Young World will promote the scholarships through their OYW Community and their social media channels

All submitted applications will be assessed by the One Young World Community Team who will draw up a shortlist of candidates based on pre-defined criteria as below One Young World will provide the TOLO news selection panel with a shortlist of five to 10 candidates. (Tolo news)

**(8) Concerns Rise...**

increased, especially the economic problems and we have to cancel our licenses," one business owner, NavidAzizi said.

Meanwhile a number of people who want to apply for a business license called on government to fulfill its commitments and address problems facing the private sector.

"There are lots of problems, but if government fulfill its commitments, investment opportunities will increase," Shir Mohammad Jahish, an investor said.

This comes after Herat officials said as many as five business licenses are being cancelled in Herat on a daily basis. (Tolo news)

**(9) Two Million...**

deteriorated and reduced their milk production which has led to distress sales and death of livestock: sheep prices have decreased from 25 to 40 per cent across the country while fodder prices have doubled.

"The animals are too weak to walk to their usual pastures in Badkshan province and herders have to rent trucks to bring them there," explained Majidi, the Head of Agricultural Department of Kunduz Province.

Some 1.5 million goats and sheep in the North-Eastern region are struggling to find food and more than 600 out of nearly 1,000 villages in the province are suffering from lack of water.

The report also said that the intensified conflict across many parts of the country exacerbates the effects of the drought and has limited the communities' access to markets: in Helmand, village elders reportedly need to obtain special approval from the armed groups controlling their districts to access markets in areas under government control.

In Uruzgan province, people often cannot access the main market in Trinkot due to fighting and insecurity on the roads to the provincial capital. Following a temporary closure of the road to neighboring Kandahar province in April due to fighting, wheat prices went up by 50 percent in the city itself, and the price for fresh produce quadrupled within days, the report said.

It also said that in the 20 provinces most affected by the drought,

nearly 15 million people rely on farming, livestock or labor opportunities in agriculture. Of these, an estimated two million people will become severely food insecure due to the drought.

Humanitarian partners are ramping up their response across the country trying to reach 1.4 million of the most vulnerable girls, boys, women and men struck by the drought.

OCHA said partners urgently need \$115 million; the majority of this amount will provide food support to help families through the lean season and to provide them with drinking water for six months.

A quick, comprehensive response will enable the delivery of food and water to the rural villages and help to avoid the migration of families to cities where they risk losing all of their few possessions, and where they lack shelter and access to health facilities and schools for their children, read the report. (Tolo news)

**(10) Six Taliban...**

happened in Kohsin area of Sayed Karam of the province after the foreign troops targeted the insurgents, the statement said.

Sayed Karam is an insecure district in the province in which insurgents have activities and frequently target local security forces.

However, the Taliban have not yet commented on the airstrike. (Tolo news)

**(11) Nangarhar's...**

The electricity shortage in Jalalabad, the provincial capital, would be resolved by 80 percent with the transformer's installation while Rodat district would be facilitated with solar electricity, he said.

Sabah added that efforts for building a power dam in Kama district were underway to resolve electricity shortage of local residents there.

He thanked Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS) for providing technical cooperation in installation of the transformer.

Meanwhile, Eng. Sayed Akram, a lawmaker from Nangarhar province, welcomed installation of the transformer and urged the central government to develop a long-term plan for electricity problem of the province.

He said Nangarhar was a great place for factories and resolving electricity problem of the province would create jobs for thousands of people. (Pajhwok)

**(12) Taliban Decides...**

mountains and valley sides" instead, according to The Guardian. The Taliban group has so far not reacted regarding the report but the US commander in Afghanistan Gen. John Nicholson had earlier warned that the air campaign against the main financial resources of the group would continue. (KP)

**(13) Pakistani Truck...**

during the search of the vehicle by border police forces.

According to MoI, at least four people have been arrested in connection to smuggling attempt of the explosives and are in custody of the security forces for further investigations.

The anti-government armed militant groups frequently use explosives materials for the roadside bombings and car bombings to target the government staff and security personnel.

However, in majority of such incidents the ordinary civilians are targeted besides such bombings incur casualties to the security personnel and in some cases the Taliban militants themselves are killed or wounded.

A total of 10,453 civilian casualties - 3,438 people killed and 7,015 injured - were documented in the 2017 Annual Report released last

month by the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the UN Human Rights Office. The report further added that the high number of casualties to the civilians were inflicted by suicide bombings and other attacks using improvised explosive devices (IEDs). (KP)

**(14) Taliban closing...**

that Khwaja Ghar district had been besieged by the Taliban.

The Taliban once seized Khwaja Ghar district two years back, but it was recaptured by Afghan forces. (Pajhwok)

### 3rd Caspian Sea Safety Conference Held in Tehran

TEHRAN - Third edition of a conference on measures to ensure and improve the Caspian Sea's safety wrapped up in the Iranian capital city of Tehran on May 28.

Representatives from Iran, Azerbaijan, Russia, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan attended the two-day conference, Trend's correspondent reported from the event.

Maritime safety, promoting interaction mechanisms on inspection and rescue affairs and taking advantage of legal capacities in controlling and inspecting ships were among the topics discussed at the event.

Iran, Azerbaijan, Russia, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan participated in the second round of the conference in 2017 in Turkmenistan.

The largest inland body of water, the Caspian Sea is shared between five countries: Kazakhstan; Azerbaijan; Turkmenistan; Russia; and Iran, whose share is 650 sq kilometers. The ancient inhabitants of its coast believed the Caspian Sea was an ocean, presumably due to its saltwater and vastness.

Apart from its rich resources of oil and gas and significant diversity of aquatic animals, it provides Iran with a perfect opportunity to increase its revenue through expanding maritime tourism industry in its coasts; a prospect that has not been fully explored so far. Iran's share of the Caspian Sea is divided between the provinces of Gilan, Mazandaran, and Goelstan. Past governments started various projects to capitalize on the Caspian Sea coastline, but the majority of the projects were never completed. If managed by the private sector, the unfinished projects may finally deliver on their potential by providing investment opportunities and by extension, create jobs and help boost the tourism industry and the economy. (Trend)

### Russian, Iranian, Kazakh, Kyrgyz Presidents to Visit China

SCO - The Russian, Iranian, Kazakh and Kyrgyz presidents will visit China and take part in a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi said at Monday's briefing, TASS reports.

"The presidents of Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Iran will visit China during the summit in Qingdao at Chinese President Xi Jinping's invitation," he said. According to a statement of Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Lu Kang released on the ministry's website, the visits will be held on June 6-10.

The SCO summit will be held on June 9-10 in Qingdao, Shandong Province, in eastern China. In June 2001 six states - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, China, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan - signed a declaration to create this association. On June 9, 2017, India and Pakistan became the SCO full members. (Trend)