Afghanistan Participates as a Theme Country in China-South Asia Expo

Afghan and Chinese leaders called for economic cooperation, common prosperity and people-to-people exchanges in the opening ceremony of the fifth China-South Asia (CSA) Expo in Kunming, capital of Southwest China’s Yunnan province, in 14 June as Afghanistan attended as a theme country.

EU Asylum Agency Reports Sizable Drop in Afghan Refugees

KABUL - Despite the drop in refugee numbers, Afghanistan is still one of the top five source countries of origin of applicants. The European Asylum Support Office (EASO) released its 2017 Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the European Union on Monday and said there had been a notable decrease in the number of asylum seekers in 2017 - particularly involving Afghanistan.

According to the report, in 2017, there were 72,465 applications for international protection in the EU. This figure represents a decrease of 44 percent compared to 2016, when there were almost 1.3 million applications.

Provisional data for early 2018 (January - April) meanwhile shows that application levels have stabilised at an average of less than 50,000 per month, the report stated.

The report stated that while the overall number of asylum applications registered in 2017 dropped, some countries still noted considerable increases. Syria (15 percent), Iraq (7 percent) and Afghanistan (7 percent) remained the top three countries of origin of applicants in the EU. These were followed by Nigeria, Pakistan, Eritrea, Albania, Bangladesh, Guinea and Iran.

Afghan Sikh Leader Holds Out Hope for Dwindling Minority

KABUL - Avtar Singh Khalsa will represent Afghanistan’s tiny Sikh and Hindu minority in the next parliament, when he says he hopes to serve the entire country.

Few Afghans are as involved in the government’s quest for peace and stability as the dwindling Sikh and Hindu minorities, which have been decimated by decades of conflict. The community numbered more than 80,000 in the 1970s, but today only around 1,000 remain.

Khalsa, a Sikh and long-time leader of the community, will run unopposed for a seat in the lower house of parliament that has been reserved for the minority by presidential  

Afghan Taliban Refuses to Extend Ceasefire

KABUL - The Afghan Taliban has refused to extend a ceasefire, saying the insurgents would not extend their ceasefire which ended on Sunday night, the outfit said in an online statement released overnight.

The insurgent announced a ceasefire from June 12 to June 19 to encourage the Taliban to support the national reconciliation process. Repealing the step, the armed group announced a three-day ceasefire starting first Friday, Friday to the end of Sunday.

Afghan Peace Marchers Arrive in Kabul Exhausted and Tired of War

Hundreds of Afghan peace marchers arrived exhausted in the capital, Kabul, on Monday after spending the last six months of Ramadan crossing the war-battered, impoverished province of Ghor under Taliban control.

The march was triggered by a car bomb in Helmand on March 25 that killed at least 14 people and wounded dozens. No group claimed responsibility.

Suicide Attack Leaves Nearly 70 Dead, Wounded in Jalalabad

JALALABAD - Nearly 70 people were killed or wounded after a suicide bomber detonated his explosives near the governor’s residence in Jalalabad city east at around 5 pm local time.

Theovietsy in the area are saying that a suicide bomber had detonated his explosives near the Taliban, security forces, and the ordinary civilians who had gathered near the government’s office to celebrate Eid and every one.

The provincial government media office in a statement said at least 19 people were killed and more than 50 others were wounded so far.

 Provincial government’s spokesman Ahmad Wali Kargar had earlier confirmed the.......

Trump’s Afghanistan Strategy Goes Under the Senate Microscope this Week

WASHINGTON - President Trump’s pick to lead his new war strategy in Afghanistan will likely be pressed this week on whether the plan is finally turning the tide there, and whether building up Afghan security forces is having an effect on rising levels of violence there.

The Senate Armed Services Committee will meet Tuesday to hear from the nominee, Lt Gen. Austin “Scott” Miller. Miller now heads U.S. Joint Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg. Navy Secretary Christopher Grady is also expected to testify.

The Afghan government has complained that US forces are not trying hard enough to support their forces on the ground.

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