

(1) The Government...

disruption to residents and businesses in Kabul.

The response to the attack, and the resulting power outage was twofold. First, in Kabul, technicians from Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS) immediately activated its backup power resources, including the USAID-funded thermal power plant at Tarakhil. Over the next several days, the backups ran at full capacity, ensuring that hospitals and other critical energy consumers had uninterrupted power supply.

Second, in Baghlan Province, repair crews were dispatched to the damaged towers. Twelve hours after the attack and clearing operations by the Afghan military, the crews restored 170 MW of imported power in Kabul. A combination of DABS' backup power resources, including the USAID-funded backup in Tarakhil, restored close to normal capacity electricity supply to Kabul.

While power was being restored, USAID was in regular contact with DABS and the Government of Afghanistan. The repair team re-erected a collapsed transmission tower and finalized repairs on both power circuits, restoring full supply on March 30. While USAID continues to support needed developments in Afghanistan's electricity generation and transmission infrastructure, DABS' ability to speedily restore power supply shows real resiliency.

"USAID is proud of the work we have done to build the professional capacity of DABS. We acknowledge the independence and expertise shown by the swift action of DABS, and we congratulate DABS", said USAID Mission Director Herbert Smith. (PR)

(2) 60% of Afghans...

have easy access to medical facilities.

Afghan health officials said more attention has been paid to the issue since last year and that work has started on an additional 400 health care centers across the country.

Public Health Minister Ferozuddin Feroz on Monday said at a signing ceremony in Kabul for the construction of health care centers that last year the ministry built 172 new medical facilities in 18 provinces and that this year the ministry will complete another 206 health care centers in 13 provinces.

In February the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC) stated in a report that a survey conducted in the past five months in Kabul and in seven zones in the country found that numerous challenges and problems exist in the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH.)

The report covered health facilities, hospitals and other offices related to the public health ministry and stated that although a lot of money and support had been provided for the health sector in the country, the quality of health services remained very poor.

The commission's report, said if non-government organizations stopped their support, the health sector would not be able to address people's needs and the ministry would face serious problems.

The report said although some progress had been made, there were still numerous challenges and problems in different areas which need to be addressed.

Meanwhile, last year Feroz said that the number of female health workers and doctors was low in the country, adding that there were no female doctors in provinces such as Nuristan, Paktika, Zabul and Uruzgan.

Years of civil war and violence has had a devastating effect on the Afghan healthcare system and unlike other countries in the region, Afghanistan has seen increasing rates of preventable diseases such as diarrhea and respiratory infections. (Tolo news)

(3) Kunduz Governor...

the governor thanked foreign forces, particularly Germany, for its support to Afghanistan over the past one and a half decades. He asked the NATO commander for the northeastern zone to encourage international charity and other organizations to return to Kunduz and resume their services in order jobs could be created for the youth.

The NATO commander said Germany would cooperate with the local administration in areas of security, development and improving people's livelihood.

Germany has 1,000 troops in Afghanistan under NATO command. (Pajhwok)

(4) 139 Entries from...

on the revised UNSC list.

Other entities are Revival of Islamic Heritage Society, Lashkari-Jhangvi, Al-Harmain Foundation, Islamic Jihad Group, Al Akhtar Trust International, Harakatul Jihad Islami, Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan, Jamaatul Ahrar and Khatiba Imam Al-Bukhari. (Pajhwok)

(5) Parliamentary...

authorities who would create their security plan for these stations.

Twenty-one million voter registration cards had been declared invalid while the registration process for new voter cards would kick off on April 15, said the electoral official.

He said voter registration materials had been transferred to nine provinces and to another 13 provinces being delivered.

He said the voter registration program needed nearly 30 million afs which would be provided by donor countries and the government would pay only 10 percent of the amount.

He said transparency and fairness in elections was possible if the government purchased the required machinery and handed it over to the IEC. He, however, pledged to ensure transparency and fairness in elections within the available resources.

Regarding delimitation of constituencies, the IEC chief said a draft in this regard had been handed over to the government nine months ago but there had been no response.

"If the government does not provide a positive or negative response on creation of constituencies, the upcoming elections would be held on the past method and every province would a constituency."

Based on the IEC draft plan, five people could be elected to the lower house from one election constituency while Kabul has 33 seats from allotted five constituencies.

Meanwhile, political parties have demanded single seat for every constituency.

Referring to the presidential and provincial council elections, Sayyad said a committee had been tasked with deciding schedules for the polls. (Pajhwok)

(6) Global Cooperation...

"Under these circumstances, we all should consider new ways of multilateral cooperation, which would make it possible to reinforce the successes achieved in the war on terror and prevent this threat from spreading further," the Russian leader pointed out. Tass reported.

Representatives from nearly 100 countries, including defense ministers, general staff chiefs, prominent researchers and experts, as well as high-ranking officials from the United Nations

and other international organizations have attended the 2018 event. (Agencies)

(7) Pakistan Can...

and SAFRON, adviser to the prime minister on finance, foreign secretary, national security adviser, the army chief and UNHCR country representative.

Having served as a political officer at US Embassy in Islamabad, Wells previously visited Pakistan in January, accompanied by senior officials from US National Security Council. (Pajhwok)

(8) UNHCR...

refugees. "Treating those in real need and trying to save lives is the noblest act of service to humanity."

Menikdiwela appreciated the people and government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for hosting Afghan refugees in the spirit of Islamic values of hospitality and generosity for decades.

According to a statement from the UN agency, it has previously constructed the emergency assessment room and provided medical equipment to the Peshawar ShaikatKhanum Hospital in 2015.

UNHCR's budget to support refugees in the country has increased over recent years. The UN agency also implements the Refugee Affected and Hosting Areas (RAHA) Programme to support Afghan refugees and their host communities.

Since its launch in 2009, the RAHA programme has provided assistance to over 10.6 million people through 4,100 projects worth \$200 million in Pakistan in the sectors of education, health, livelihood, water, sanitation, infrastructure and social protection. (Pajhwok)

(9) Ghani Tasks...

also offered condolences to the families of civilians who lost their lives and directed the authorities concerned to help the injured people and provide them necessary assistance.

Defence Ministry spokesman Gen. Mohammad Radminish told reports here that the Afghan Air Force (AAF) targeted a Taliban training centre in Dashti-Arch district. He showed pictures of Taliban to reporters who had gathered at the site.

He named 18 Taliban affiliates, including Taliban's Quetta Shura member Mualvi Baryal who killed and 11 others injured in the airstrike.

"We targeted the spot from where the AAF copters were targeted with anti-aircraft guns," he said.

But some sources said many civilians had been killed and injured in the AAF airstrike.

Lawmaker Abdullah Quarleq said 25 Taliban, 60 civilians had been killed while over 50 civilians injured in the airstrike. (Pajhwok)

(10) IDB, ITFC Assure ...

CEO of International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation assured of their full cooperation for development of Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(11) Tuberculosis...

advising people to avoid dirty air and separate eating tools for family members diagnosed with TB.

He stressed TB was treatable and there was 82 centres in Nangahar where free of cost treatment of TB was provided.

Faqiri warned a person diagnosed with TB could transfer the disease to 15 more people and his treatment could save them.

According to the Public Health Ministry, Afghanistan is among 22 countries where TB disease is widespread. (Pajhwok)

(12) Mohib Welcome...

underlining support for the vital sector, Mohib welcomed the report and said 70 percent people

of Afghans in remote areas of the country had been associated with agriculture.

He added the government to strive for persuading farmer into cultivating saffron, cotton and other high-income crops. (Pajhwok)

(13) Nangarhar...

to lighten their homes in this cyber age.

Abdul Latif Waheedi, a civil society activist urged similar demand and said with arriving of hot season around the province, the issue has to solve permanent. Meanwhile, Nangarhar power utility head Omaid Sabah assured an effort had been made to resolve the electricity issue for short and permanent in the province.

Sabah also assured about the constructing of an electricity dam on the Kunar's river in Kama district of the province and creating another major solar electricity network in Hisar-i-Shai area, being the priorities of Da Afghanistan Breshna Shirkat (DABS). (Pajhwok)

(14) Herat, Bamyan...

Ahmad Bayangar, a resident of Herat City, said: "We have been tired of the war and now want peace and stability in the country because peace is every Afghan's dream."

He declared his support for the peace movement of Helmandis and urged the Taliban to renounce violence and join the reconciliation process.

Syed Ashraf Sadat, a civil society activist, said: "If citizens raise their voice for peace in a determined manner, it can lead to peace between the government and Taliban."

In Bamyan City, civil society activists held a protest gathering in support of the peace movement of Helmand residents and urged all the countrymen to swing behind the campaign for peace.

Civil society activist Ismail Zaki told the gathering that the people of Afghanistan could no longer tolerate the bloodshed and want to live in peace.

He asked the warring parties to resolve their difference through talks because the war --- if continued for 100 more years --- would bring nothing but destruction.

In their resolution letter, the Bamyanis urged the United Nations to support the peace movement in Helmand. (Pajhwok)

U.S. Military Unloads Controversial Ospreys to Be Deployed At Tokyo Base, Local Residents Demand Withdrawal

TOKYO - Five Air Force CV-22 Osprey aircraft were unloaded at the U.S. Army's Yokohama North Dock and will fly to Yokota Air Base in the suburbs of Tokyo amid public opposition, local media reported Wednesday.

The arrival of the controversial tilt-rotor planes followed a sudden announcement that the plane's formal deployment would be brought forward from the fiscal year through September 2020, as was previously planned, to this summer.

Along with the arrival of the aircraft, 100 personnel will also arrive ahead of a broader deployment of 10 Ospreys and about 450 personnel to Yokota in the coming years.

The sudden, unexpected disclosure about the change of plans was made by U.S. forces in Japan on Tuesday, with the news unnerving local residents near the base and those who might be in the vicinity of the planes' flight paths.

The backlash, particularly from residents close to the Yokota base and Japan in general, comes as the turboprop planes are known

to have a heavily checkered safety record, which includes a fatal crash occurring off the coast of Australia last year that killed three personnel aboard.

Japan's public broadcaster NHK on Wednesday, while highlighting the fact that the Yokota base is located in a densely-populated area adjacent to central Tokyo, said "Residents have demanded that the Osprey deployment plan be withdrawn."

The Marine Corps already have Ospreys based in Japan's southernmost prefecture of Okinawa, much to the chagrin of the tiny island's local residents and officials, and the plane's deployment on Japan's mainland will mark the first for the accident-prone aircraft.

Defense analysts here have highlighted the instance of a commander of one of the U.S. Marine Corps two MV-22 Osprey squadrons based in Okinawa being fired in February, owing to a loss of trust in his ability to command.

The U.S. commander was in charge when the fatal accident occurred off the coast of Australia last year.

They noted that his high-profile removal came as tensions here continue to rise amid a recent spate of accidents and mishaps involving U.S. military aircraft. Despite the public's ongoing and vehement safety concerns, however, the Japanese government still believes the Osprey's deployment at Yokota will help with domestic and regional stability, its proven unsound performance record, notwithstanding. (Xinhua)

New Zealand Gov't Accounts Show Surplus Above Forecast

WELLINGTON - The New Zealand government accounts continued to track slightly better than expected in the eight months to the end of February, with the government surplus nearly 500 million NZ dollars (363 million U.S. dollars) higher than the Treasury forecast in December, Finance Minister Grant Robertson said on Wednesday.

The latest financial statements show that the government is sticking to the Budget Responsibility Rules, which require to run a sustainable surplus, keep net debt on track to fall to 20 percent of GDP in 2022.

"A strong jobs market this year has meant employment growth has been higher in recent months than the Treasury expected, meaning pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) is above forecast," Robertson said in a statement.

Greater residential investment and private consumption have boosted goods and services tax (GST) receipts, while a rise in customs and excise duties have also contributed to core Crown tax revenue coming in 692 million NZ dollars better than expected, Robertson said.

The Treasury has said that most of the positive variance in revenue is expected to remain through the rest of the year. This reflects underlying economic conditions, with surveys of business and consumer confidence pointing to sustainable growth rates of about 3 percent over the next few years for the New Zealand economy, he said.

Core Crown expenses were close to forecast in the eight months to February. The operating balance before gains and losses was 2.85 billion NZ dollars, which was 494 million NZ dollars above what the Treasury had forecast in December. The surplus is 1.4 billion NZ dollars higher than the same time last year.