

(1) Trump Writes to...

settlement to end war in Afghanistan, the U.S. decision is welcomed. Pakistan reiterates its commitment to play a facilitation role in good faith. Peace and stability in Afghanistan remains a shared responsibility," Faisal concluded.

An American Embassy spokesman in Islamabad when contacted for a confirmation declined to comment.

The rare contact between the two countries at the highest level comes as a Pakistan's traditionally tumultuous relationship with the United States has deteriorated over allegations the Taliban continues to use sanctuaries on Pakistani soil for attacks inside Afghanistan.

President Trump reiterated those allegations in a television interview and subsequent tweets last month, justifying his suspension of military assistance to Pakistan. The allegations prompted Khan to also take to Twitter and denounce the U.S. president for questioning Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts. The Pakistani leader insisted his country was being made "a scapegoat" for U.S. military "failures" in Afghanistan. The 17-year Afghan war has intensified in recent months, with the Taliban inflicting heavy casualties on U.S.-backed Afghan security forces and bringing more territory under insurgent control. The U.S. military has lost more than 2,400 service members and spent nearly a trillion dollars since the war started in 2001. (VoA)

(2) Afghan Govt Asks...

he said, while referring to efforts of US Peace Envoy Zalmay Khalilzad and the High Peace Council (HPC).

"We want to tell our neighbouring countries that no threat has been posed to them from Afghanistan."

Stressing state to state relationship with neighboring countries, Murtazavi said they expected the neighbors not to seek their interest in support of terrorist groups. The presidential spokesman said the government fully believed in the independence of the Election Commission and every decision of the election bodies was acceptable to the government. He reiterated the government's financial support for the election commissions.

Referring to Afghanistan's commitments with the international community, he said 68 percent progress had been made in some areas while work on key developments was ongoing and opportunities for further progress existed in every department. (Pajhwok)

(3) Alliance of Protesting...

Ahmad Khan Ahmadzoy, a Kochi candidate, said massive rigging happened during the Wolesi Jirga elections in the Kochi constituency and powerful individual stuffed ballot boxes in their favour.

Ahmad Khan Muslim, a Wolesi Jirga candidate from Kandahar province, said the election were pre-planned and engineered and should be declared invalid.

He said elections results would not be acceptable to them until fraud votes transparent votes are not separated from fraud vote and individuals who committed fraud are identified. (Pajhwok)

(4) Taliban will Return...

There is high cost of staying in Afghanistan, there is high financial cost for NATO allies and there is a high human cost. We have had fatalities also in the past weeks. but we have to compare the cost of staying with the cost of leaving.

"If NATO and NATO allies leave Afghanistan, we have to be prepared there is a high risk that the Taliban will come back, and the different terrorist organizations will be able to gain ground and establish strong footholds in Afghanistan. For instance, we know that al-Qaeda is there, we know that ISIS (Daesh) is there. So this is about helping Afghanistan, but its also about helping ourselves.

"It is important that Afghanistan holds elections, because elections are key to any democratic society. It is up to Afghan authorities to decide exactly when, taking into account the security situation and all other issues. I think there are some lessons learnt from the parliamentary elections, which should be taken into account while Afghanistan now prepares for the presidential elections. I was assured when I visited Afghanistan a few weeks ago that the elections would be held," he said.

The NATO Ministerial will conclude with a meeting of all nations contributing to the Resolute Support training mission in Afghanistan.

The statement comes at a time that during recent weeks, the US has extended its efforts to bring the Taliban to the negotiating table, aimed at ending the 17-year-long conflict in the country.

US President Donald Trump has sought Pakistan's help, with Afghan peace talks in a letter to Prime Minister Imran Khan, the South Asian nation's information minister, Fawad Chaudhry, said on Monday.

Trump wants to end a 17-year-old war between Afghan security forces and the Afghan Taliban militants, who are fighting to drive out international forces and establish their version of strict Islamic law, accord-

ing to Reuters.

US officials have long been pushing Pakistan to lean on the Taliban leadership, which Washington says is based in the country, to bring them to the negotiating table.

"President Trump has written a letter," Chaudhry told Reuters. "He has asked for Pakistan's cooperation to bring the Taliban into talks."

Last month, Trump said in an interview Pakistan doesn't "do a damn thing" for the United States despite billions of dollars in US aid, adding that Pakistani officials knew of former al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden's location before his killing by US troops in a 2011 raid inside Pakistan.

Khan retaliates

In response to Trump's tweets, Khan also took to Twitter to retaliate:

"Trump's false assertions add insult to the injury Pak has suffered in US WoT in terms of lives lost & destabilised & economic costs. He needs to be informed abt historical facts. Pak has suffered enough fighting US's war. Now we will do what is best for our people & our interests."

Instead of making Pakistan a scapegoat for their failures, the US should make a serious assessment of why, despite 140,000 NATO troops plus 250,000 Afghan troops and reportedly \$1 trillion spent on the war in Afghanistan, the Taliban today are stronger than before, Khan said.

In addition, the US State Department has said the US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation, Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, will start another leg of his regional tour aimed at helping the Afghan peace process reach a conclusion. He will travel to Pakistan, Afghanistan, Russia, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Belgium, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar with an inter-agency delegation from December 2 to 20, the US Department of State said in a statement on Sunday.

"Special Representative Khalilzad will be in communication with President Ghani, Chief Executive Abdullah and other Afghan stakeholders to coordinate closely on efforts to bring the Taliban to the negotiating table with the Afghan government and other Afghans," the statement said.

On his last trip to the region in November, Khalilzad met with men and women active in civil society and peace efforts, members of the media, and other governmental and non-governmental officials, the statement added.

Last week, Khalilzad said that the Afghan people deserve peace as they have been at war for 40 years.

He said it would be good if there is an agreement with the Taliban ahead of the upcoming presidential elections.

"We are in hurry to end the Afghan tragedy," Khalilzad said in an interview. (Tolo news)

(5) Budgetary...

"I have worked for one year and almost \$100,000 is my investment but I have suffered between \$30,000 to \$40,000 losses and you (government) will, for sure, collect taxes from me for this investment of \$100,000 - four percent, while I have suffered \$30,000 losses," said Abdul Rahman Faizan, deputy head of Chamber of Mines and Industries, as he talked about businessmen who shared their problems with the authority.

The Ministry of Finance has allocated AFs 399 billion for the 1398 fiscal year's budget, 69 percent of which has been allocated for the standard budget while the remaining 39 percent has been allocated for the development budget.

According to the ministry, from the AFs 399 billion, AFs 275 billion will be allocated to the standard budget and the remaining will be put aside for the development budget.

The MoF figures show that 51 percent of the budget will be funded by foreign aid while 49 percent of it will be funded by national revenue. (Tolonews)

(6) Struggling...

anyone, even security officials and Pajhwok reporter who interviewed him, wanted to buy his children, he would sell them. A number of other IDPs living in Sahib Dad's neighborhood confirmed his story and said the displaced families from Badghis to Herat fled conflicts and drought and they were now forced to sell their children for survival.

Mohammad Nasim, a resident of Aabkari district of Badghis province and a representative of 352 displaced families in Herat, said they were assisted only once when the government paid them 6,000 afghanis in cash.

"We will sell our children if we do not receive help, we will use that money to migrate to Iran or Pakistan and get rid of these problems," he said.

While pointing to a graveyard, he said: "Let's go to that graveyard where children who died of hunger and miseries are buried."

Mohammad, another displaced person, said: "My two-year-old daughter is seriously ill due to coldness, I have no money to treat her. I am ready to sell her to someone for her survival."

He said children were always loved by their parents but problems the families suffered during displacement were as serious as compelled them to sell their beloved ones.

UNICEF recently in a report said 161 children were sold or given in marriages to drought in Herat and Badghis provinces.

UNICEF spokesman Alison Parker on last Tuesday in Geneva conference said that the Afghan children sold or married were aged between one month to 16 years.

He termed children's situation in Afghanistan as critical and said: "According to a survey conducted between July to October this year, families sold their children or engaged them to someone in order to pay their loans."

The report focused on children's situation in Herat and Badghis provinces says infant girls and girls aged up to 11 years were forced for marriage and boys aged above six years were also sold.

Herat local administration neither rejects nor confirms children's selling, but says such acts are against the law and families should avoid it.

Herat governor Mohammad Asif Rahimi said they did not have accurate information about the number of children sold. "It is against the law and a crime to sell children under any circumstances," he said. (Pajhwok)

(7) Japan Donates...

putting an end to polio."

H.E. Mr. SUZUKA, Ambassador of Japan, remarked that "Children are treasures that support the future of the country. They are our hope. We must protect our children's health with the utmost care. Japan has long history of cooperation for measures against infectious diseases in Afghanistan. When we try to get rid of diseases, prevention is the best measure to take. I sincerely hope that Afghanistan will become a comfortable country for babies as soon as possible. To this end, Government of Japan decided to keep implementing this project with the cooperation of UNICEF."

Japan has been assisting Afghanistan's nation-building efforts in various fields including security, infrastructure, agriculture, rural development, human capacity development, education, health, culture and humanitarian assistance. The cumulative Japanese assistance to Afghanistan since 2001 amounts to approximately \$6.6 billion. (Pajhwok)

(8) IEC to Announce...

October 21 elections in major provinces, it created some problems and votes were sent for recounting and re-investigation. This caused the election result sheets and forms to arrive late to the center. But now fortunately, these forms have arrived in Kabul from small and big provinces. The remaining 14 provinces will be announced by the next week," said IEC commissioner, Sayed Hafiz Hashemi.

"The results for major provinces such as Kabul, Balkh and some other provinces have been delayed because there has been large-scale fraud in these provinces where certain individuals were targeted, so they have been brought to the final and preliminary lists. This is because they are trying to prolong the process and create more grounds for fraud," said Naem Asghari, member of Free and Fair Election Forum of Afghanistan (FEFA).

Meanwhile, a number of observers have said that the recounting process is not transparent.

"The recounting is not carried out in transparent way," said one observer, Khawjah Abdul Sattar Sediqqi.

"They recount only one ballot box a day," added another observer, Abdul Mujib. (Tolo news)

(9) Policy to Legalize...

meeting that emphasized on prevention of civilian losses, the source said.

Civilian Protection Advocacy Group (CPAG) in a recent report said that around 450 civilians suffered casualties last month alone.

National Security Advisor Hamdullah Mohib praised Afghan security forces for their struggle against the enemies of Afghanistan and stressed on further coordination among defense and security foundations.

The NSC statement said the meeting also discussed the policy to legalize illegal armed men and groups and finally approved it in principle after discussions and exchange of views on the issue.

The policy would be presented again to another NSC meeting for a final approval. Malicious activities against the government and ordinary people have recently increased by illegal armed groups and the government has also taken some steps for controlling them.

The government recently arrested illegal commanders in Faryab, Uruzgan and Farah provinces.

The latest arrest of an illegal commander by Afghan forces took place in Takhar province on Sunday.

A few days earlier, another illegal commander from Maidan Wardak province was detained but was released later on

guarantee. (Pajhwok)

(10) Khalilzad Resumes...

Khalilzad met with men and women active in civil society and peace efforts, members of the media, and other governmental and non-governmental officials, the statement added.

He stressed that all Afghans must have a say in creating a sustainable peace for Afghanistan. The United States remains committed to supporting the Afghan people's desire for peace, and to facilitating a political settlement between the Afghan government and the Taliban that ensures Afghanistan never serves as a platform for international terrorism again, the statement said.

Last week, Khalilzad said that the Afghan people deserve peace and that they are at war for 40 years.

"We are in hurry to end the Afghan tragedy," Khalilzad said in an interview with US's PBS news agency.

He said the US wants a peace that is worthy of the sacrifices that have been made in the past 17 years.

"We believe that the war factions, including the Taliban, they are saying that they cannot win the war and the Afghan government says that they want a political settlement. We say that we want a political settlement. We lead the international forces that are in Afghanistan so given that, it would be a moment of opportunity," he said.

Khalilzad said that it would be good if there is an agreement with the Taliban ahead of the upcoming presidential elections.

"Ideally, of course it would be good to have an agreement with the Taliban first and then have the presidential election because then the Taliban also participate in a possible election or whatever roadmap that the Afghans agreed to," he said.

He said that a possible delay in elections will be a decision by Afghans.

On Pakistan, Khalilzad said the US wants Afghanistan to be at peace with itself and with its neighbors. (Tolo news)

(11) Iran's Stance...

Touching upon the US allegations against Iran, Qasemi said that Washington has always been making accusations against Tehran.

Efforts to spread Iranophobia and weaken Iran are among the American officials' clear policies, the diplomat added.

The US officials are talking about Iran's missile program, which as they claim can reach some targets in Europe, while Iran and Europe are holding serious negotiations about bilateral cooperation after the US May 8 exit from the Iran Deal despite the world's disagreement on the issue, the spokesman noted.

"The US did not expect such a situation," Qasemi said.

US tried to create tension in relations between Tehran, its neighbors and Europe in order to isolate Iran, but the American policy practically ended in failure, he said. Repetition of anti-Iran accusations will be described as US fury at its unsuccessful policies on Iran, Qasemi stressed. (IRNA)

(12) High Raw...

Haji Nasratullah Zahir criticized the government and said it was creating problems for traders instead of providing them with facilities.

Imports of goods which are locally produced is another major problem, affecting the market of domestic products, he said.

Citing an example, the trade said PVC pipes were produced in the country but they were also imported from Iran.

Zahir said it was government's responsibility to provide facilities for industrialists and prevent imports of goods produced inside the country.

He also complained about problems in imports of agricultural products and fruits and said in the past importing a tractor from Iran would cost 800,000 afghanis but now it cost 1,300,000 afghanis.

"I wanted to export 20 tons of pomegranates to Germany through Islam Qala port, but bureaucracy in the government delayed the exportation for 14 days and the fruits rotted," he said.

He said the industry and agricultural areas could not improve until the government provided needed facilities to investors. (Pajhwok)

(13) New Mazar...

10 individuals. He also urged Khurrami to bring reforms and address issues in the earliest possible.

Deputy governor Mohammad Bashir Tawhidi stressed the need for joint work in order to remove corruption and bring changes and people should be facilitated.

He said the municipality's affairs were somehow satisfactory but more work was needed in this regard. He called on the newly-appointed mayor to stop illegal activities of powerful individuals.

Abdul Haq Khurrami, a resident of Khurrami district of Samangan province, has previously served in Mazar-i-Sharif and some other provinces' municipality departments in the past 10 years. He received his bachelor's degree from Kabul University's economy faculty. (Pajhwok)

(14) Rise in School...

"It is heart-wrenching to see mounting attacks on education in Afghanistan, putting at risk the progress made over the past 17 years, particularly in supporting girls' education," said Diya Nijhowne, GCPEA Executive Director. "It would be a travesty if years of dedicated work, not to mention billions of dollars of aid investment, is allowed to unravel."

Between 2001 and 2015 there was a nine-fold increase in the total number of children going to school in Afghanistan. However, more than 3.7 million children, including 2.2 million girls, remain out of school, and these numbers have begun to increase in recent years. Provinces with higher levels of insecurity also have higher rates of children out of school, particularly girls.

In 2018, schools are being targeted for attack at some of the highest rates since 2011. In the first five months of this year alone, the government recorded 870 attacks on schools, threats or intimidation against students, education staff or facilities, or fighting by armed forces and groups in the vicinity of school grounds. Approximately 1,000 schools are currently damaged, destroyed, occupied by non-state armed groups or Afghan and international forces, or are closed because of conflict.

GCPEA's paper urges the Government of Afghanistan, international donors and agencies, and all parties to the conflict to do more to reverse the trend of increasing attacks on education, including by supporting implementation of the commitments in the Safe Schools Declaration.

This Declaration is a political commitment to protect education in armed conflict that has been endorsed by 82 countries, including Afghanistan. The Declaration includes commitments to strengthen monitoring and reporting of attacks on education; restrict the use of schools and universities for military purposes; and increase resources allocated to investigating attacks and prosecuting perpetrators.

GCPEA also calls for gender-responsive implementation of the Safe Schools Declaration to take into account the different ways in which women and girls are impacted by attacks on education, including by considering GCPEA's guidance, What Can Be Done to Better Protect Women and Girls from Attacks on Education and Military Use of Educational Institutions?

"As Afghan and global leaders gather to enhance Afghanistan's development and security, above all they should call on all parties to the conflict to respect the fundamental right of every child to education, and to strictly refrain from attacking education," added Nijhowne. "Schools and universities must be places of safety for students, where they are free to learn and develop the skills to build a brighter future for Afghanistan."

The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack was formed in 2010 by organisations working in the fields of education in emergencies and conflict affected contexts, higher education, protection, international human rights and humanitarian law that were concerned about ongoing attacks on educational institutions, their students, and staff in countries affected by conflict and insecurity. GCPEA is a coalition which includes United Nations agencies and non-governmental organisations. (Monitoring Desk)

(15) IARCSC Introduces...

transferred from a project basis to the official budgets of the relevant government ministries and agencies.

The IARCSC will bi-annually assess the performance of staff recruited through TAGHIR. Failure to meet the commitments will result in a loss in percentage of a line ministry and agency's new staffing allocation and/or discontinuation of project financing of a percentage of its existing positions. Similarly, if a line ministry and agency does not complete development and approval of its strategic staffing plan for targeted capacity 'surge' by agreed dates, it will begin to lose a percentage of its initially allocated positions to the 10 percent pool. The IARCSC will develop a mechanism for this purpose ahead of project implementation.

TAGHIR will implement creative solutions (enabled by the amended Civil Servants Law), including a hard quota of 10% for women of all new recruitments for each priority line ministry and agency. This is intended to help ensure that at least 10% or aggregate 150 positions of all newly recruited and retained positions under the project are held by women. In addition, civil service positions already held by women under CBR will be sustained by TAGHIR. (Pajhwok)

(16) Taliban Plant...

district and now our residents face with many problems."

He asked the government to take action for transferring goods to the district and breaking the blockade.

"The economic situation in Pasaband is critical as people even do not have access to primary items," he said.

Pasaband district shares border with southern Helmand province where intense clashes between Afghan forces and Taliban take place. (Pajhwok)