

(1) Ghani Says ...

improve relations with Islamabad when he took office in 2014. Pakistan said while violence had increased in Afghanistan, blaming another country for it did not help.

Last year, Afghanistan suffered the highest number of civilian casualties and military related deaths in the world, Ghani told the Heart of Asia conference aimed at getting regional players together to help stabilise his country.

"This is unacceptable... Some still provide sanctuary for terrorists. As a Taliban figure said recently, if they had no sanctuary in Pakistan, they wouldn't last a month," he said.

Pakistan denies this and instead said it is itself a victim of terrorism and that fighters of the Tehrik-i-Taliban, one of the main groups carrying out attacks inside Pakistan, were operating from Afghanistan.

Sartaj Aziz, Pakistan's top foreign policy adviser, said it was true that there had been an upsurge in violence in Afghanistan. "We need to have an objective and holistic view rather to blame one country," he told the conference. The number of people displaced by conflict in Afghanistan this year has surpassed half a million people, the United Nations reported last month, the highest number since it began compiling such statistics in 2008.

On top of the Taliban, Islamic State has claimed responsibility for attacks targeting minority Shi'ites in Afghanistan where sectarian violence has been rare.

Ghani said there were 30 militant groups identified by the UN that were trying to establish a base in Afghanistan.

"I don't want a blame game, I want clarifications on what is being done to prevent the export of terror," Ghani said, calling it an undeclared war on Afghanistan.

"We thank Pakistan for their pledge of \$500 million assistance for reconstruction of Afghanistan. I hope you use it to fight terrorists and extremists in Pakistan." Pakistan had made the pledge earlier this year. (Reuters)

(2) Sending Afghans...

and not let anyone use Afghans for their own goals."

A number of other Meshrano Jirga members also asked the government to investigate the issue. Chairman Fazal Hadi Muslimyar said, "It should be cleared whether Iran has sent Afghan refugees to fight in Syria or others."

He also asked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to investigate the issue and share its report with the Meshrano Jirga and people.

If Iran was involved then its ambassador to Kabul should be summoned for clarification, he added.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also expressed concern over the issue and said investigations in this regard have been launched. Based on MEMO report, each Afghan fighting in Syria was paid \$500 as monthly salary, offered permanent residence in Iran and provided all other facilities by the Iranian government, the report said.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) has also previously said Iran sent thousands of Afghans to fight in Syria since 2013. (Pajhwok)

(3) 14 Nations...

the Government of Afghanistan. "We strongly call for concerted regional and international cooperation to ensure elimination of terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, including dismantling of terrorist sanctuaries and safe havens in the Heart of Asia region, as well as disrupting all financial, tactical and logistical support for terrorism.

"In this regard, we call upon all states to take action against these terrorist entities in accordance with their respective national counter terrorism policies, their international obligations and the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy 2006. Furthermore, we encourage early finalization of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism with consensus."

The declaration also called on the international community to further strengthen international and regional cooperation towards sustained efforts for a secure, stable and prosperous Afghanistan. In addition the declaration commended countries in the region in particular Iran and Pakistan for hosting millions of Afghan refugees.

gees.

"We call on all these countries to continue hosting the Afghan refugees until their sustainable repatriation and reintegration in Afghanistan can take place in a voluntary, safe, gradual and dignified fashion, in accordance with the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees to Support Voluntary Repatriation, Sustainable Reintegration and Assistance to Host Communities."

It stated there was concern for the recent spike of Afghan refugee returns and the challenges that this sudden influx brought with it.

"We therefore urge the international community to provide generous support and targeted assistance for Afghan refugees, returnees and host communities in the region, with emphasis on youth, education and livelihoods."

The declaration also stated that the concerned nations welcome and support Afghanistan's initiative in taking the lead in exploring a regional counter-terror strategy, in accordance with the established principles of the UN charter, which was agreed as necessary in Islamabad in December 2015.

It also stated the region was concerned about the increase in production and cultivation of opium in Afghanistan, the volume of drug trafficking and demand in the HoA region and beyond.

The declaration stipulated that this issue requires further eradication efforts and poses a threat to the socio-economic development, security and stability not only in Afghanistan, but also in the surrounding region and the world as a whole.

On the issue of peace in Afghanistan, the declaration stated that "we recognize that a politically negotiated settlement remains important for durable peace in Afghanistan. We reiterate our support to the government of Afghanistan in its efforts to advance an Afghan-led Afghan-owned peace process. We urge all Afghan Taliban groups and all other armed groups to enter into peace talks with the government of Afghanistan."

On connectivity, it stipulated that the delegates "acknowledge the crucial role of Afghanistan as a natural land bridge in promoting regional connectivity and economic integration in the Heart of Asia region, and we reiterate our strong support for Afghanistan's efforts to use its geographic location to enhance wider regional economic cooperation."

The declaration was adopted in Amritsar, India following Sunday's successful 6th Heart of Asia ministerial conference. The declaration was signed by 14 regional countries, including Afghanistan, India, China, Pakistan, Iran, Russia and Saudi Arabia among others.

In addition, the United Nations also adopted the declaration, which in turn was supported by numerous foreign countries and international organizations including NATO. (Tolnews)

(4) Terror Poses ...

of solutions, the prime minister said, calling for cooperative endeavours in Afghanistan to contribute to its infrastructure and institutional capacity.

"Afghanistan should be at the centre of our connectivity networks, not peripheral to them. On our part, we see Afghanistan as the hub for strengthening links of connectivity between South Asia and Central Asia.

"We cannot deny that the more connected Afghanistan is with the regional arteries of trade, capital and markets, the more assured would be its economic growth and progress. President Ghani and I have converged on the priority of strengthening trade and transport linkages with other partners in the region," said Modi.

"President Ghani and I have discussed additional measures for deepening our bilateral cooperation. We are making progress in developing plans for utilization of the additional 1 billion US Dollar earmarked by India for capacity and capability building in Afghanistan," he said. (Pajhwok)

(5) UAE Welcomes ...

security, peace, stability and counter terrorism," he said.

Over the last five years, he revealed, the UAE had contributed over US\$ 400 million in security, economic, humanitarian and development assistance to Afghanistan. He termed the Fatima bint Mo-

hamed bin Zayed Initiative (FBMI) for traditional Afghan carpet weaving project and development of the Afghan countryside as an example for sustainable development projects for empowering women. The FBMI, he explained, had employed nearly 3000 workers, 90 percent of whom are women.

Outlining other UAE-funded development projects, the official said the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development has provided US\$ 149.6 million for implementing a 4000 unit social housing project in Kabul. Also, Dubai Cares pledged \$ 1.3 million for primary education, pre-schooling development programmes and eradication of illiteracy in Afghanistan.

UAE projects in Afghanistan also included a \$ 27.8 mn Emirates Mine Clearance Program in Kandahar and other contributions to the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).

Officials and representatives of countries held deliberations on varied issues ranging from fighting terrorism, security issues, development, and cooperation at various levels between participating countries.

The Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process was launched in 2011 to encourage security, political and economic cooperation between Afghanistan and its neighbours. (WAM)

(6) Large Scale ...

in order to continue their insurgency. This year, however, it is believed that the Taliban will receive little money and that security forces have a chance to eliminate them.

"Aid from the Gulf region for the Taliban has decreased and they (Gulf countries) only support Haqqani Network," said Jawed Kohistani, a former military officer.

Reports also indicate that operations by the security forces in winter will put pressure on insurgents and that this will minimize the war during spring and summer.

"Security forces have always taken a defensive position. The winter operation should be launched to eliminate the insurgents and they should not be able to fight against security forces next spring," said Asif Seddiqi, a senator.

However, the lack of cooperation between security departments, poor war management, a weakness in the intelligence departments and challenges in air operations are perceived as challenges that security forces constantly face. (Tolnews)

(7) UNAMA Study ...

opportunities to communicate with their families through phone calls, letters, and visits. JRCs also notified families or guardians of significant changes in the juveniles' health."

UNAMA recommended however, that greater coordination by the JRC High Council, the Ministry of Justice and other responsible ministries was essential to ensuring that all juveniles in detention have consistent access to required medical services, including specialty services, as well as educational and religious instruction from qualified teachers.

The report also stated that there was a need to enhance physical safety and emotional well-being of juveniles in JRCs, that greater reliance should be placed on using "fit for purpose" facilities that reflect the unique needs of JRCs in terms of ensuring adequate recreational, living, and operational space to meet the educational and vocational needs of juveniles in detention.

"Efforts should be made to ensure that girls in detention have the same access to JRC facilities and services as boys. Additionally, to assist JRC management in adopting a more gender-sensitive approach, the Ministry of Justice should strive to achieve greater gender balance in JRCs' staffing by prioritizing the recruitment and retention of qualified female staff members," the report read.

"Consideration should be given to making re-entry assistance and follow-up with released juveniles integral parts of JRC internal operating procedures. Specialized programs should be developed to address the unique needs of juveniles who are themselves victims of violent, extremist radicalization." (Tolnews)

(8) Some Seminaries ...

were required to cooperate on the issue, he continued. Education Director Mohammad Abid, meanwhile, upheld the gubernatorial view, saying armed militants were trained at madaris not registered with his department.

"These schools have been built by local people and their teachers receive salaries from area residents. Most of such seminaries also train militants," he said.

Khaliqdad Akbari, the provincial council head, told Pajhwok Afghan News some madaris in Ghazni served as training centres for Taliban.

"This practice is a threat to Ghazni security and the government must prevent it," he stressed, suggesting the religious schools involved in such activities should be closed.

However, the Taliban spurned the claim as groundless. Their spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said militants were not trained at madaris. "These schools teach Quran and tafseer, producing religious scholars."

The education department says 32 madrasas had been registered with the government but some of them were inactive. But some unregistered madaris are also functional in the province. (Pajhwok)

(9) 'Pakistan Trying...

Afghanistan the way they had been supporting over the past 16 years.

Recently Russia's special representative in Afghanistan, Zamir Kabulov, talked about contacts between Moscow and Taliban and his statement drew strong reaction from the National Security Council (NSC), President Ghani's security team.

The Meshrano Jirga or Senate has called as interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs the contact between Russia and Taliban.

About Gen. Nicholson's remarks about corruption in Afghan security forces, Seddeqi said the menace remained a challenge. However, he said the MoI leadership and the government had taken some serious steps to fight corruption and had a strong will to eliminate it.

He said some changes had been brought to the anti-corruption campaign and the points Gen. Nicholson had mentioned would be accessed.

He said the system of logistics supply to Afghan forces was disorganized and corruption in security organs prevented timely supply of ration, ammunition and equipment to forces at their posts. (Pajhwok)

(10) Unknown ...

outlets quoted an unnamed security source as saying.

The source noted that the slain ISIL commander had Moroccan nationality and was responsible for the execution of a large number of Izadi women and females in Mosul.

In a relevant development in mid-September, informed sources announced that the official spokesman of the ISIL terrorist group in Mosul in Northern Nineveh was shot dead by unknown attackers.

"ISIL's Spokesman in Mosul Abu Isaac was driving his car in Central Mosul when a group of three gunmen ambushed him and opened fire on his car, killing Abu Isaac and two of his bodyguards," the sources said.

"Abu Isaac was transferred to the al-Adli hospital in Central Mosul, but he was already dead," they further added. (FNA)

(11) Watchdog ...

their jail. But now it is not known whether he is at the NDS or if he has been taken back to Dostum's house," said Eshchi's son Babur. People close to Dostum, however, reject the claims and say Dostum did not assault Eshchi.

"Eshchi is not a famous political figure that Dostum should have disagreements with. They want to damage the first vice president's reputation," said Mohammad Azim Qoyash, a senator.

A number of former military officers also said if Dostum had beaten Eshchi based on personal disagreements, it would damage his political reputation.

"Dostum is the second (most important) person in the country. If he has beaten Eshchi over personal disagreements, then it is oppression. But until the facts have been revealed, we cannot judge in this regard," said Zalmay Wardak, a retired military officer. (Tolnews)

(12) 37 Taliban,...

Taliban were yesterday buried after their funerals in which Kanda-

har police chief Gen. Abdul Raziq also participated.

Yesterday, security officials also said armed militants had killed 23 civilians, including women and children, in Nish district. Clashes broke out in Nish district five days ago after what local residents said hundreds of Taliban fighters entered the district from neighbouring Uruzgan province and attacked security posts and overran many. (Pajhwok)

(13) Afghan Teen ...

found between the victim and the alleged murderer, authorities said.

The murder made big news in Germany and was followed by another as yet unsolved crime on November 10 in the nearby Endingen forest, in which a 27-year-old jogger was found dead having also been raped.

So far, investigators have established no connection between the two murders.

News of the young Afghan's arrest triggered much reaction on social media with some people saying an ironic "thank you" to German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

The 62-year-old, who will next year seek a fourth term in office, has faced criticism for her previous open-door policy towards refugees, although more recently she has tried to curb the influx.

Germany received 890,000 asylum requests in 2015, although that rate slowed to 213,000 from January to September 2016 following a deal between the European Union and Ankara to stem the flow of migrants crossing from Turkey into the bloc.

Public anger about the number of refugee arrivals in Germany has been stoked by some high profile crimes involving migrants.

Last month, German police arrested seven Afghan asylum seekers on suspicion of repeatedly raping an Iranian teenager in a refugee camp.

During the last New Year's Eve celebrations, hundreds of women reported sexual assaults in Cologne and other German cities, with the attacks blamed largely on Arab and North African men. (AFP)

(14) 9 Insurgents ...

were lying at the scene. Security forces also recovered heavy and light weapons from the dead.

A resident of Arzo area, Mohammad Rahim, said they were asleep when the clash erupted and both sides used heavy and light weapons. He said security forces were now in control of the situation.

The Taliban confirmed the clash as their spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, claimed the fighters killed five Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers and wounded seven others.

He acknowledged the killing of only one fighter and injuring of three others. He said two security forces' tanks were also destroyed in the attack.

Ghazni is one of Afghanistan's insecure provinces, where Taliban have been in control of Nawa district over the past 11 years. (Pajhwok)

(15) Taliban Collect...

Deh Yak district, said Taliban had long banned the use of large screen mobile phones which they believed 'misguided' the youth.

A tribal elder in Ghazni City, the provincial capital, Haji Noorullah, told Pajhwok that mobile phone was a need in today's world and no one should prevent its use.

"Everyone doing this is not right. To me, it is an insult to people," the elder said of Taliban's ban on cell phone. He urged security departments to take early action about the matter.

Ghazni police spokesman Fahim Amarkhel confirmed the issue and said: "We have also received this information, but I would say Taliban had never done service to the people."

He said people should not keep mum over the Taliban's move and raise their voice against it. He said security forces were trying to address the issue.

A Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, said local Taliban officials had not yet confirmed the issue, but said the insurgents had banned uploading porn films in mobile phones.

He warned everyone found with such films in their phones would be awarded harsher punishment. Ghazni is among Afghanistan's insecure provinces. The Taliban have been in control of Ghazni's Nawa district over the past 11 years. (Pajhwok)

(16) ALP Man,...

said the uprising forces in Andar had been aided several times but they still tortured people.

A driver on the Paktika-Ghazni highway, Mohammad Alam, said uprising members and ALP personnel had many times robbed ordinary people and drivers. "If someone refuses to pay them, they beat him." He stressed security forces should arrest all those who tortured people.

According to Ghazni police, since the beginning of current year, more than 200 people have been detained, including uprising members and ALP personnel, over alleged mugging. (Pajhwok)

(17) Britain May...

in the future might be a good idea, certainly would be a good idea if it involved paying in," Johnson said, referring to the Erasmus student exchange program and Horizon program for research.

"(Paying in for single market access) is obviously something that David Davis is considering. That doesn't mean that a decision has been taken." (Reuters)

(18) Giuliani, Romney...

diplomacy," Dan Mahaffee, an analyst with the Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress, told Xinhua. (Xinhua)

(19) Syrian Army...

Human Rights said Saturday that the army has become in control of 60 percent of rebel-held areas in eastern Aleppo, adding that at least 300 people have been killed since the army unleashed the offensive on eastern Aleppo in mid-November.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said recently that at least 30,000 civilians fled eastern Aleppo toward government-controlled area in western Aleppo over the past few days.

Earlier in the day, the Syrian army captured the key neighborhood of Tariq al-Bab, which enabled the military forces to secure the road toward the international airport of Aleppo, which has been out of service recently and turned into a military base.

The army also captured the Karm al-Tarab neighborhood in the southern part of eastern Aleppo, killing many rebels. (Xinhua)

(20) Hamas Interior...

force strikes on security constructions, and how to evacuate and protect civilians," said Eyad al-Bozom, the Hamas-run interior ministry spokesman in Gaza.

He added that the maneuver also included schools, hospitals, medical centers, ministries and homes, with "around 15,000 police and security officers involved."

The security maneuver is part of a regular training for readiness of security apparatuses in any case of emergency, said Al-Bozom. (Xinhua)

(21) Thousands Protest ...

threatened to quit and accused Congress of trying to thwart their work by passing legislation that would allow prosecutors and judges to be charged with abuse of power.

A protester on Rio's Copacabana beach held up a sign reading "Congress of Thieves." (AP)

(22) UNAIDS...

to Child Transmission (PMTCT) Treatment in Nigeria.

The UNAIDS official added that the plan would also support the HIV testing of 3 million more pregnant women, and treat 75,000 newly diagnosed.

According to Jjuuko, UNAIDS welcomes the move to fast track treatment and the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV. (Xinhua)

(23) Iran Vows ...

"political negotiation, respecting the people's will and protecting the country's territorial integrity."

For his part, Lavrentiev called for further cooperation between Iran and Russia on regional issues and said that Russian President Vladimir Putin attaches value to "trust" between the two countries.

The Islamic republic, along with Russia, have emerged as the major allies of the Syrian government in its struggle against the militant groups who are seeking the overthrow of the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's government. (Xinhua)