

(1) Uzbekistan Seeks...

thousands of jobs for the citizens of Afghanistan, Shakir Kargar noted.

The government of Afghanistan is actively seeking for investors for the economy of the country, after militants have intensified their attacks over the past years, said the report. (AKIPress)

(2) Political, Jihadi ...

Afghanistan conflict in Qatar, France and the United Arab Emirates.

The organisation arranged a conference in Islamabad last month on Pakistan-Afghanistan relations as well as the Afghan government-initiated peace process.

A Pugwash official in Kabul, Khalullah Sapi, told Pajhwok Afghan News about 40 political and jihadi leaders had been invited to the conference.

He said the invitees included Prof. Abdul Rab Rasool Sayyaf, Younus Qanuni, Karim Khalili, Hazrat Sibghatullah Mujaddedi, Pir Syed Ahmad Gilani, Haji Din Mohammad and several others. Sapi added the day-long gathering would confer on a 19-article resolution letter, suggested by Pugwash for peace between the Afghan government and Taliban. (Pajhwok)

(3) Japan Gives ...

in the presence of Public Health Minister Dr. Ferozuddin Feroz.

A joint statement said the agreement would be implemented in coordination with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The funds will support efforts by UNICEF and partners to provide critical vaccines for polio eradication

These vaccines would be available for free at all health facilities and through polio campaigns across the country, the statement added.

Ambassador Mitsuji Suzuka said: "Japan has long been supporting the Afghan people as one of the largest donors in the health sector and has paid particular attention to the need to protect children from both humanitarian and developmental viewpoint.

"For achieving self-reliance of Afghanistan, it is indispensable to nurture the future pillars of nation-building... Japan will continue to work closely with the Afghan government and international partners to help Afghanistan become self-reliant in the health sector."

Dr. Feroz said: "The government of Japan and UNICEF have been our main partners in immunisation over the years and we are grateful for the sustained investment by Japan, which has been critical to strengthening routine immunisation and polio campaigns across the country."

Receiving the grant, Khodro spoke about the success and challenges of this partnership for immunisation. "We have made tremendous strides in the right direction. Our partnership with the people and Government of Japan has made a critical difference to the survival of women and children in Afghanistan."

She added: "Child mortality rates have been almost halved over the past decade and the vaccination programme has contributed greatly to this success. Polio cases have also decreased from 20 in 2015 to 12 this year..."

At the ceremony, JICA Chief Representative Eiichiro Cho remarked: "Infectious disease control has been a priority area of JICA's assistance policy for Afghanistan. We believe access to quality vaccines is the key to realise universal health coverage."

The grant will fund the procurement of routine vaccines for an annual cohort of some 1.3 million children under one year of age. Vaccines include BCG against tuberculosis, oral polio vaccine for poliomyelitis, measles and Hepatitis B.

In addition some 2.5 million women of child-bearing age will benefit from tetanus toxoid vaccine purchased through this funding.

This donation will provide 36 million doses of vaccines for key campaigns in 2017 representing more than 30 per cent of the entire 110 million dose require-

ment in that year. (Pajhwok)

(4) ANA Officer ...

improvements.

"You should feel proud of what your team is doing here," Kaiser told Sharifi during their meeting. "You are creating the leaders of this country and officer bonds that will carry them in the future for good or for bad. As we move forward, I have a very strong message: There is a long-term commitment. There are many nations willing to support all Afghan institutions. We can all agree that education, training, and leadership development is key in the success of Afghanistan. I see the plan and it is a good plan, and we are here to support it."

The ANAOA is currently one of the three main institutions providing officers for the Afghan National Army. It is supported by a five-nation mentoring team led by the U.K.

"This is a good opportunity for the Afghan people. Thanks to the support and mentoring of the U.K., U.S., Australia, New Zealand and Denmark we have a five-year strategy for this academy. The objective with this strategy is for us to become competitive with other academies around the world," Sharifi said.

He also used the occasion to reiterate that the academy has already produced 1,999 officers, with 1,069 currently training - including 32 female cadets. He emphasized the cornerstone of ANAOA is to maintain a transparent, fair environment with ethnic balance and equal opportunity for members of all tribes and districts.

British Brig. Gen. Ian Rigden, commanding officer overseeing the campaign plan, also met with Kaiser to discuss the construction and academic capabilities based on the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst model - mirroring the British Army's leadership courses.

"The British model focuses on leadership and military knowledge underpinned by character development," Rigden said. "At the core of any institution is the provision of the appropriate high quality infrastructure to enable them to achieve their mission and that is why we are building a state of the art facility so they continue training and inspiring generations of military officers who will lead Afghanistan toward a future of stability and security."

The construction is divided in three phases. Phase one, already completed, includes the National Defense University, the Marshal Fahin National Defense University headquarters, the National Military Academy, and the Garrison Support Unit. The second phase, currently underway, comprises the professional military education infrastructure with the Command and Staff College, Sergeants Major Academy, Foreign Language Institute, Joint Services Academy, Religious and Cultural School, and the Legal Branch School.

The third phase, also complete, included the obstacle course and athletic fields, classrooms, barracks, dining facility and gymnasium. The campaign plan also includes the Womens Participation Program, supported by the Resolute Support Senior Gender Advisor's team.

Ministry of Defense Senior Gender Advisor Maj. Jodi A. Bonnes was also present during the tour and highlighted the growth path in terms of female integration.

"ANAOA is a brilliant institution where Afghan women receive training to become officers. Currently, there are 64 Afghan women in ANAOA," Bonnes said. "After completing training women officers will be assigned to several career management fields, such as human resources, finance, medical, legal, inspector general, logistics, communications, intelligence, religious cultural affairs, and acquisition."

At the end of the visit, Kaiser described the project as a NATO joint legacy and urged leadership to never lower the standards of instructor's quality.

"I cannot stress enough that quality is the key we should pursue. Low quality degrades the pro-

gram. The fastest way to move forward is to have instructors of high quality. It is very important to hold those standards high and never settle for less than the very best," Kaiser concluded. (KP)

(5) Kabul Reiterates...

September, the Ghani administration, as part of its peace initiative, clinched a deal with Gulbuddin - a move seen to put the peace process back on track.

But Hizb-e-Islami has also called for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan, something legal experts believe could create challenges when it comes to lifting sanctions.

Some countries have already expressed dismay over the deal with Hekmatyar - which could make it difficult for the UN to lift sanctions.

"The UN security council likely would have a number of reservations on the issue of lifting sanctions, certain countries such as Russia, Iran and India have concerns about peace with Hizb-e-Islami," said political activist Ajmal Balochzada.

The UN member nations are allowed to submit a request for the removal of names of certain persons, but the governments need to clarify the main reasons for their decisions to the UN. (Tolonews)

(6) Police Blasted...

were faced with a shortage of medicine. The organisation twice transported medicine through the Nesh district of Kandahar to the Charchino town of Uruzgan and once through Ghazni province.

Rahmanzai explained they were unable to transport drugs through those routes due to security problems.

Public Health Director Dr. Khan Agha Miakhel confirmed the problem and said they had shared the issue with the governor, who ordered all relevant organs not to create problems for the organisation.

On the other hand, security officials denied preventing the transportation of drugs to district healthcare centers. Police chief, Brig. Gen. Wali Jan Sarhadi, said they never hampered the delivery of health services. (Pajhwok)

(7) Western Governments

"We would welcome the Afghan government's move to swiftly investigate these allegations."

The E.U., along with Australia, Canada, and Norway, also called for a "fair and transparent official investigation" into the reports of "gross human rights violations and abuses".

Dostum joined Afghanistan's National Unity Government in 2014 in a bid by President Ashraf Ghani to attract the support of his mostly ethnic Uzbek constituency, but allegations of past human rights violations have been a source of controversy.

Warring factions brought bloody chaos to Afghanistan after they forced the withdrawal of Soviet occupying forces in 1989. In the 1990s, many Afghans initially welcomed the rise of the Taliban who defeated and largely banished the "warlord" factions. (Tolonews)

(8) Fruit Orchards ...

project were provided by the World Bank and the rest by farmers.

The NHPL also trained farmers about the protection of plants, irrigation, paving the farmland, using fertilizers and managing plant diseases in Samangan, he said.

Khirkhwa said about 20kg fertilizers and improved alfalfa seeds were also distributed to each farmer in the districts.

Zainudin, 51, a farmer and resident of the Balahehar city in Aibak, the provincial capital, was happy about the services provided by MALI to him and said "I have planted apricots and grapes over five acres of land". He said improved plants had more production than ordinary plants.

According to the provincial agriculture department, people created gardens over thousands of acres of land in Samangan under the NHLP supported by the World Bank in the past eight

years.

The agriculture officials say the NHLP aims to develop gardening and improve people's economic situation in Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(9) Kandahar ...

(UAE) as well.

He said according to statistics a 41 percent increase had been seen in the export of dried fruits in the current year. If the air cargo facility was provided, Afghan trader would be able to export products to European countries as well.

Beena called a recently inaugurated rail link with Central Asia vital to boosting Afghanistan's exports. He said that most of Afghani products, especially dried and fresh fruits, had a good market in Arab countries but the problems was an absence of a transit route.

Iran offered a shorter route to reach Arab countries, he believed, asking the government to discuss on the matter and persuade Tehran to provide transit facilities to Afghan businessmen.

Dried fruit merchants are happy with the increased exports this year. One trader, Haji Aziz, told Pajhwok Afghan News the main issues included a high customs duty imposed by Pakistan and the closure of transit routes on one pretext or another.

He said currently most of the fruits were exported to Pakistan and India, which then sold them under their own brand names and earned a lot of revenue.

He asked the government to facilitate easier exports and enable traders to send fruits to Arab countries, Europe and America. Another trader named Faizullah said the ACCI had repeatedly sought the air cargo facility. However, he added no foreign airline was ready to airlift Afghan fruits to international markets.

He asked the government to address the issue, because the country's exports were lower than imports, a huge loss for economy. (Pajhwok)

(10) Bamyán's Cave...

before going to sleep and suddenly started feeling unwell in the night. She said a scorpion was recovered from his clothes when people were washing his body that showed that the insect bitten him.

Hussain Dad Ahmadi, a Bamyán-based civil society leader, acknowledges the situation of cave dwellers is terrible. He wants the government to urgently alleviate their plight on a priority basis.

Unemployment is on the rise in the country, where educated and qualified individuals can hardly find jobs. Subsequently, the population of cave inhabitants is increasing. No one would like to live in a cave, he says.

Mohammad Hassan Asadi, a member of the provincial council, confirms thousands of Bamyán youth have migrated to European countries due to growing unemployment and poverty. The government's inability to generate jobs, negligence of the agriculture sector, lack of long-term development projects and insufficient foreign investment are the main reasons behind poverty and migration of youth.

He views life in caves as a last resort or those who are bereft of shelters. Most residents come to the Bamyán City in quest of work, but they return disappointed, the public representative comments.

Mohammad Alim, a father of two sons and a daughter, has built a wood-and-metal door to his subterranean residence. There is an old carpet and some blackened utensils inside his home of sorts.

"I pin no hopes on assistance from a government that itself is reliant on international assistance," he says stoically. If the government really wants to help them, it should build houses and provide jobs for cave people.

Governor Spokesman Abdul Rahman Ahmadi said over 50 percent Bamyánis lived under the poverty line including the cave-dwellers who had been suffering from poverty and oth-

er problems.

He claimed the government provided help to the people living in caves. In 2004 as many as 120 families were provided with shelters and this year 20 families were provided with shelters, he added.

He said the local government tried to coordinate distribution of assistance so that deserving families could get the assistance. Ahmadi verifies most of these people area jobless. The provincial authorities, having provided the housing facilities for 21 households because, cannot do more than that, the spokesman maintains.

Mohammad Afzal, a resident of Bamyán City, blames the government for failing to create employment opportunities. He said only the well-connected and qualified people could get jobs.

The man alleges the poor, who stand no chance of finding work, are forced at times to sell their belongings to arrange money to feed their families.

Labour and Social Affairs Director Rahmatullah Alawi says only 208 people from Bamyán were employed in provincial government offices this year. He has no statistics on private-sector appointments.

Alawi adds more than 80 people apply for a single vacancy in Bamyán, showing 80 percent of educated people are jobless in the province. The government has no funds to create jobs. Only 20 women living in caves have been selected for tailoring courses.

Based on a survey conducted early this year by the Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Afghanistan Human Rights Commission and the provincial government, 146 families are currently living in caves. But the number of cave people has since increased.

Many Bamyán statues are carved into the sides of cliffs facing the provincial capital -- home to the world's oldest oil paintings. The city, with a population of 39,915, is known for its cave dwellings.

A hub of trade for much of the second millennium CE, it once served as the meeting ground between the East and West. Its remarkable archaeology is a blend of Greek, Turkish, Persian, Chinese and Indian influence.

The city was part of the Buddhist Kushan Empire in the early centuries of the Christian era. The area was conquered by the Ghaznavids in the 11th century. In 1221 the city and its population were completely wiped out by Genghis Khan.

Famous all over the world, the Buddha statues were blown up in March 2001 by the Taliban, who called them un-Islamic. At one point in time, 2,000 monks meditated in caves among the sandstone cliffs -- a huge tourist attraction. (Pajhwok)

(11) Electricity Being ...

take one-year to complete One sub-station will be set up in Wazi Zadrán and the second in Ismailkhal district." The governor said 32 megawatts of power would be extended to 40,000 families in Khost.

A civil society activist, Zahid Shah Angar, said currently one kilowatt of power was accounted for 60af but the new transmission line would spur economic development.

"Electricity is itself a step towards development, it will help us modernize our agriculture and make progress in key affairs." The electricity being extended to Khost is imported from Turkmenistan. The project follows great improvement in the power supply from Kabul to central Logar province and Gardez city. (Pajhwok)

(12) Takhar Mawlawi ...

last week that women were deficient and the most shameless people in the world. Meanwhile, the new head of the council, Mawlawi Massoud-ul-Haq Haqnawaz, who was appointed on Monday after Samad was fired, said women form half of society and they must be respected. (Tolonews)

(13) 25 Militants...

of the country where six of 14 districts are completely under

the Taliban control and the Afghan forces only control centers of a number of other districts. (Pajhwok)

(14) ISIS Commander...

the loyalists of the terror group in this province.

The increased raids, usually involving drone strikes, by the US forces followed a broader role granted by the Obama administration earlier this year.

The broader role was granted amid concerns that the loyalists of the terror group are attempting to expand foothold in the country and turn the eastern Nangarhar province into a regional operational hub for its fighters. (KP)

(15) UN Chief ...

reform to make the United Nations "nimble, efficient, and effective," and to "focus more on delivery and less on process; more on people and less on bureaucracy." (Xinhua)

(16) UN Pays...

diplomats, and all those who amidst the tortuous struggles, conflicts and strife of difficult days, hold fast to belief in the universal rights, infinite potential and the beauty of humanity."

"On behalf of you all, I wish the deputy secretary-general and Mrs. Kerstin Eliasson many years of happiness upon their return to Sweden," the Assembly president added during his tribute remarks before the 193-member body.

Maythong Thammavongsa, deputy permanent representative of Laos, on behalf of the Asia Pacific Group, introduced the draft resolution to the assembly. (Xinhua)

(17) Spanish PM ...

with the US president-elect, Donald Trump, who showed his sincere affection for the Spanish people."

Rajoy will travel to New York on Dec. 19 to attend a session of the United Nations Security Council. But the Spanish government said that at the moment there are no plans for a meeting between Rajoy and Trump. (Xinhua)

(18) Turkey Detains...

Tuesday continued to detain members of a pro-Kurdish political party in the wake of deadly suicide bombing. (AP)

(19) Chinese Envoy "All member states, particularly developed countries, should further enhance the support for technical cooperation to ensure that adequate resources are available to the agency," he added. (Xinhua)

(20) Iraq Must...

made by the Iraqi people, government and armed forces in thwarting foreign plots and fighting terrorism.

"The Iranian nation and government will stand by the oppressed people in the region, including Iraq and Syria, in this fight [against terrorism] and will spare no efforts in this regard," Rouhani said. (Presstv)

(21) CPEC to Address...

"Our private sector and entrepreneurs should be more forthcoming to bring value addition in the industrial parks to be established in each province under the mega project. We also have to reorient our training programs in order to meet the workforce demand in the industrial parks," said the advisor. (Xinhua)

(22) Turkmenistan...

hydrocarbon gases, ensuring production of various advanced chemical products with high added value and high export potential - polymeric materials, synthetic fibers, large volume organic chemicals, synthetic detergents, superficially active substances.

The complex for production of polyethylene and polypropylene with an ethane cracker unit is already being built in the town of Kiyan in the Balkan province of Turkmenistan and a plant for production of gasoline (GTG) is being built in Ovadan-Depe town of the country's Akhal province. (Trend)