

### (1) Russia Ready to ...

where we could really join our efforts with the United States. And if we achieved this joint work, these efforts could become more efficient. We can see a growing threat of international terrorism in Afghanistan. We can see the radical militant groups occupy larger and larger swathes of land at the northern border of Afghanistan," Putin said.

Putin said Russia is also ready to support Afghan security forces in maintaining security, especially in the north of Afghanistan.

The Russian president said security risks are increasing in Afghanistan and the Afghan government needs the support of the international community.

"We can see that the central government in Kabul needs support of the international community. And we are ready to provide such support, just like in previous years, including support in preparation of domestic personnel for the police and the military," Putin added.

Meanwhile, Afghan government urged countries in the region to act against the terrorism "responsibly".

"We expect all countries to act responsibly against terrorism, same as the Afghan government and Afghan forces. Any relations should be government-centric," said Shalhussain Murtazavi, President Ashraf Ghani's spokesman.

Analysts said considering Russia's influence in the region the possible cooperation between Moscow and US will be effective for Afghanistan.

"It will be effective for Afghanistan if Russia wants to cooperate with US in the fight against terrorism and create a coordination in the region," said Nader Shah Bahar, an MP.

Albeit Putin says that Russia and US's joint anti-terror efforts in the country will be more efficient, but it is not known whether the two countries will agree to work together on Afghanistan. (Tolonews)

### (2) HPC Team Tours ...

doors were open for reconciliation with militants should take maximum advantage of the situation.

He added the international troops would leave Afghanistan if the Taliban reconciled with the government. (Pajhwok)

### (3) IEC Gives ...

is moved forward properly," said IEC commissioner Maliha Hassan.

"In terms of the presidential decree, the selection committee is continuing its work and, as a result, one member of the IEC will be appointed to lead it," said deputy CEO spokesman, Jawed Faisal.

"One of the members is sick and he is out of the country for treatment. So far we have not done anything and the establishment of the selection committee is facing problems from a legal perspective," said Yusuf Rashid, a former member of the selection committee.

According to the IEC, the government has not done enough to enable the election commission to carry out its work rapidly.

"The election commission is facing a lot of shortages from a structural perspective. I don't think so that it will conduct the elections on time," said Naeem Ayoubzada, head of a transparent election foundation of Afghanistan.

"Perhaps because there are a lot of problems in the country on the government's agenda, there is a possibility that the election is not on the priority on the list," added Maliha Hassan. Election monitors have said that the IEC will not be able to pick someone as new chief in the face because of ongoing disagreements between the commissioners in the face of the pressure which has mounted on the election commission by the government.

Meanwhile, sources within the government have said that there is a possibility that a member of the IEC will also take the charge of the secretariat of the commission until such time as the fate of its secretariat chief is clarified. The IEC has expressed ignorance of the allegation. (Tolonews)

### (4) Japan Promises ...

education and other affairs of Nangarhar.

Mangal thanked Japan for executing 41 projects in various sectors of Nangarhar, 14 schools, two roads and three clinics.

The governor said 80 percent of the returning refugee families had settled down in Nangarhar, bringing under pressure various sectors of the prov-

ince.

The governor urged Japan to help his administration in rehabilitating the returnees.

The Japanese envoy pleased with director demand of assistance from the provincial government and promised to prioritize projects in areas of rural development, agriculture, livestock and energy in Nangarhar. (Pajhwok)

### (5) Afghan Women ...

CARE has remained committed to the country and its people. They have been consistently on the ground."

Acknowledging that Afghanistan continued to face enormous challenges, Mohib said his country had made tremendous progress. "Those challenges will continue to keep us awake at night sometimes and we will continue to try our best efforts.

"Today those challenges are more at par with the rest of the world has and they are more in common. Afghanistan is no longer an isolated country," he added.

Afghanistan was connected to all of its major neighbors, Central Asian republics, and Pakistan, he said. "Today we have air corridor with India. There are students studying across the world."

Former US ambassador Ryan Crocker spoke about the incredible progress Afghanistan has made in the realm of education, with over nine million students enrolled in school, at least 40 percent of them girls.

Retired Army General Carter Ham also delivered remarks, telling guests of the importance of non-military components in overcoming insecurity and achieving lasting peace and stability. (Pajhwok)

### (6) Govt Asked ...

the administrative processes of our public services particularly for investors," said Shahzadgul Aryubi, the minister of communication and information technology.

Participants at the event regarded media websites and other internet sites as the main tools for digital marketing.

The deputy head of Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI), Mohammad Yunus Mohmand, said companies are faced with many challenges of using the internet for marketing.

"The price for internet services is very high. Students contact us and say they need internet for their lessons, but they cannot afford it," he said.

Meanwhile, representatives of private banks said they are at the forefront of using internet for their marketing.

"Customers can do their dealing by using their phones or computers. These plans ease the online dealing and it will improve the non-cash paying in Afghanistan," said Simrat Dutta, representative of a private bank in Kabul.

According to the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, at least eight million of Afghans have access to the internet provided by six big telecommunications companies and 50 internet services companies.

The minister of communication said at least \$3 billion USD has been invested in the information technology and telecommunication. He said the amount will increase to five billion USD by 2020. (Tolonews)

### (7) Resolute Support...

Cantone said his country continues to support Afghanistan.

"(Our efforts) continue with the responsibility of training, advising and assistance operations within Resolute Support mission and will continue in the future with the new initiatives for the development of the region in the field of infrastructures, health and education among other," he said.

Meanwhile, Afghan officials called the role of NATO forces, including Italian soldiers, important for Afghan forces on the battlegrounds and in trainings.

"The support of the Resolute Support mission is 100 percent required for the Afghan security forces in order to fight the enemies of this country together," said Gen. Mohammad Juma Adil, Commander of 606 Zone of Police in the province. (Tolonews)

### (8) Afghans 2nd ...

high number of victims. The casualties have increased to 1,943 people this year from 1,310 last year," said Islamuddin Mohammadi, head of Afghans Affected by Mines Organization.

According to the report, the ongoing war in the country has increased the threats from landmines and unexploded ordnance.

"The de-mining program in Afghanistan has so far defused at least 800,000 antipersonnel mines and almost 30,000 antivehicle mines," said Abdul Wa-

heed Lewal, head of a demining organization in Kabul.

A bomb victim, Amina Azami, says she lost her leg when she was nine in a roadside explosion.

"When my leg was chopped off, I was in bed for one and a half years because my both legs were injured in the explosion," she said.

The report shows that for 2016, the Monitor recorded 8,605 mine/ERW casualties, of which at least 2,089 people were killed.

Following a sharp increase in 2015, the casualty total in 2016 marked the highest number of annually recorded casualties in Monitor data since 1999 (9,228). This included the most child casualties ever recorded, and the highest number of annual casualties caused by improvised mines. Despite being weapons of war, mines/ERW mostly kill and injure civilians, who made up 78% of all recorded casualties in 2016, similar to past years.

The report says that in 2016 international donors increased their support for mine action, an umbrella term that includes clearance, victim assistance, risk education, stockpile destruction, monitoring, and advocacy.

Thirty-two donors contributed US\$479.5 million for anti-mine action in 40 states and three other areas, an increase of \$85.5 million from 2015. With contributions by affected states to their own national programs totaling \$85.0 million, global contributions to anti-mine action amounted to approximately \$564.5 million, an increase of nearly \$40 million compared to 2015.

In 2016, countries continued the labor-intensive work to make previously mined areas safe for use, reporting about 170 km2 of land cleared of landmines—a level similar to 2015—and the destruction of more than 232,000 landmines—a significant increase compared to 2015. In 2017, Algeria and Mozambique declared themselves free of landmines.

Among the 61 countries and other sovereignty-disputed areas that are known to have mine contamination. Of them, 33 are States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty, which calls for clearance of known contamination within 10 years. Only four of those appear to be on track to meet their deadlines: Chile, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mauritania, and Peru, the report adds. (Tolonews)

### (9) Ghani Orders...

identity card as soon as possible," Mohtaat wrote in a Facebook post quoting Ghani's order.

He further writes that the president has said that if the work of the joint committee does not give result on the legislative decree, the head of state will respect the decision of the committee and will consider the necessary reforms in line with the decision of the committee.

"Our department will kick off the issuance process of electronic identity cards in line with the direction of the president in the coming week," added Mohtaat. (Tolonews)

### (10) Pakistan Reports...

reply from the government of Afghanistan in this context is awaited," said Faisal. He added that the proposal was floated in early October following a meeting between Pakistani military chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa and Afghan President Ashraf Ghani in Kabul.

While the Afghan government has not yet publicly discussed the Pakistani proposal, Faisal welcomed Ghani's recently published comments in which the Afghan leader acknowledged receiving the document and indicating it could provide a basis for bilateral dialogue.

The spokesman also credited Bajwa's visit for groundbreaking talks between two military

"During that meeting the two sides agreed to place liaison officers at each other's army headquarters and also establish ground coordination centers, or GCCs," Faisal added.

Mutual allegations, mistrust Afghanistan and Pakistan share a nearly 2,600 kilometer, largely porous border and frequently accuse each other of not preventing militant terrorist activities on their respective soils.

The allegations and counter allegations have led to the deterioration of bilateral relations, causing mutual acrimony and tension, and undermining economic and trade cooperation.

While Kabul says Taliban sanctuaries on Pakistani soil prolong the war in Afghanistan, officials in Islamabad allege anti-Pakistan militants are using bases in Afghan border areas to plan

terrorist attacks in the country.

Pakistani Foreign Ministry spokesman Faisal again expressed concerns about the growing influence of the Islamic State terrorist group across the Afghan border. More than 43 percent of Afghan territory is either out of Kabul's control or is contested, the spokesman said, citing a recent report by the U.S. government agency, SIGAR (Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction).

"Such places in Afghanistan have been instrumental in attracting terrorist groups from all over the world. The presence of such groups not only pose a threat to the security and stability of Afghanistan, but also undermine the security of its neighbors and the region as a whole," Faisal noted.

The spokesman also said Islamabad has not yet decided whether to extend the stay of more than 3 million Afghans in Pakistan, including documented refugees and illegal economic migrants.

"The validity of the current proof of residence cards is due to expire on December 31, 2017. The government is contemplating all options to extend the validity of the cards or not. So far, no decision has been made," he said.

Pakistan blames the refugee population for serving as havens for members of the Afghan Taliban and anti-state militants within the country. Foreign Ministry officials say that without repatriating the displaced families to Afghanistan and strengthening border controls on the Afghan side, terrorist infiltration will keep causing mutual tension. (VoA)

### (11) Afghanistan Rejects...

spokesperson Mohammad Faisal, during a press briefing said that his country has shared a proposal to President Ashraf Ghani under the name of "Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Solidarity" which determines bilateral engagement between the two countries "through the working groups in the areas of political, economic, military, intelligence, and refugee issues". He confirmed that a formal reply from the government of Afghanistan is awaited.

But claimed that the two country had agreed to place liaison officers at each other's army headquarters and to establish Ground Coordination Centers (GCCs).

Afghan officials, blaming Pakistan for supporting terrorist groups and providing safe havens for the Taliban and Haqqani Network in its soil, say that Afghan-Pak relations are still tense.

"Pakistan wanted to infiltrate Afghanistan's army and intelligence since a long time in order to get benefit for itself. I will never believe that Afghan government would commit such a betrayal to let Pakistanis to have a center inside the Afghan army," political expert Ahmad Saidi said. (ATN)

### (12) State Bank to ...

currency in the money markets.

"Our net reserves have crossed \$7.4 billion or something. This is equal to the value of ten months of imports," said Khalil Sediq, governor of the Central Bank of Afghanistan.

"The important thing behind the increase in foreign exchange reserves is that it ensured the stability of the currency, it also creates a balance. If we know that our foreign exchange reserves have increased, then the value of Afghan currency should also keep its stability," said economic analyst Sayed Massoud.

According to the economic experts, increasing the level of domestic production and reducing the level of imports from abroad are among key factors that can help to increase foreign exchange reserves of the country.

They called on the government to define a comprehensive strategy to make that foreign exchange reserves are used properly. (Tolonews)

### (13) Jamiat Delegation ...

party has not announced its stance in this respect.

The delegation's trip to Balkh happens amid reports which said President Ashraf Ghani has dismissed Noor. Other reports said the Balkh governor has resigned from his post. (Tolonews)

### (14) Snowfall Adds...

are living in the area for the past seven years.

"We did not have firewood until yesterday. My children are feeling sick and the doctors have advised to keep them warm. How can we keep them warm? We do not have food and life is getting difficult as the weather gets cold," said Fawzia, member of a displaced family.

Moalem Khan, member of a displaced family, said the cold weather brings more problems to them.

"We were living in Kunduz and came here seven years ago. We live under tents. We are faced with numerous challenges," he said.

"We live here for the past 13 years, but no one has ask about us so far. I work in the (Kabul) municipality. My salary is not enough for my family," said Abdul Kabir, a resident of the area.

Recent statistics of the United Nations show that more than 390,000 people have been displaced in the country due to war and insecurity since the beginning of this year.

Out of the total number, only 93,000 people have been displaced in the eastern Nangarhar province of whom a big number are living under tents in Jalalabad and Kabul cities and are waiting for humanitarian aids. (Tolonews)

### (15) Don't Release ...

government plan to give the TTP spokesman clemency.

The bench is hearing a petition filed by the father of one of the several students shot dead by Taliban militants in the 2014 attack on the Army Public School (APS) in Peshawar. (Tolonews)

### (16) Heavy Casualties ...

. Some areas were retaken from the rebels.

He recalled the capture of 10 foreign militants in Logar's Azra district, saying the guerrillas in Paktika provinces had also suffered big reverses. The fighters had lost the ability to fight against the security forces face to face and had resorted to planting landmines.

During a clash in the Andar district of Ghazni, the security personnel killed 255 insurgents, wounded 169 and captured 11 others, the commander said. Reporters were shown weapons, vehicles, motorcycles and other equipment captured from the Taliban.

Abdul Malik Zazai, Paktia provincial council head, said: "Airstrikes on rebels and their hideouts have been productive. Militant movements have been reduced and their important members killed." (Pajhwok)

### (17) Hundreds Flee...

joined them on Tuesday night (Dec 12). He had said Karim defected to the Taliban along with several fighters.

The Taliban also confirmed Karim had joined the movement along with 40 fighters. The defection happened after Karim entered an armed clash with another uprising commander Ibrahim.

Following a clash between the two, the area was captured by Taliban, but the clash is still ongoing in Tabar area west of Sancharak district centre. Some 6,000 families reside in the area.

However, the Sar-i-Pul governor had denied Karim joined the Taliban, saying the clash between the two uprising commanders provided the insurgents the opportunity to attack and overrun western parts of the Tabar village. He had said security reinforcements were dispatched to the area.

Mualvi Naqibullah, a resident of Tabar area who has come to Sar-i-Pul city, the provincial capital, said many inhabitants of the area fled homes due to the war and took refuge in nearby villages, the provincial capital and even neighboring provinces.

He said his family along with 30 other families moved to Sar-i-Pul city and were currently residing in friends' homes.

Mualvi Noor Mohammad Baik, a provincial council member, said hundreds families had fled the area seeking refuge in neighboring villages and Jawzjan and Balkh provinces.

Karima, a displaced woman, said: "We, women and children and one man were able to flee homes in three vehicles. We have no money or food. The government has so far taken no step to assist us." Zulkha, another displaced woman, said: "Many women and children are facing various issues but no one comes to help them. And many other families are still trapped in the area." Another resident of the area, wishing anonymity, told Pajhwok over the telephone that a woman was also killed in the ongoing fighting and a second woman and two children injured. Khalil, provincial police chief, said the operation had been slow because the Taliban used homes as bastions and civilians as human shields.

"However, the fighting is intensely underway." According to Mohammad Azim Qoyash, a Meshrano Jirga member, said five civilians had been killed so far in the ongoing clash in Tabar area. Residents said also four civilians had been injured. (Pajhwok)