

(1) Asia's Least...

country's economy, but what we have struggled to initiate was laying the foundation stone for permanent economic programs," said Sayed Zafar Hashemi, the president's deputy spokesman.

The report states that insecurity, poverty, endemic corruption and weak governance are the main reasons for hampering development in Afghanistan.

"Afghanistan's per capita income is at least \$779 USD, and this country is in lower levels according to investment. Meanwhile, the country's agriculture is dependent on rain water and it has problems with imports; when these characteristics are measured, they place Afghanistan on the lowest parts of the list," said Hasib Muahid, deputy head of Central Statistics Organization.

Meanwhile, reports indicate that there are many families in the country that struggle to meet their daily expenses, and some of the people travel to neighboring countries to work and help improve their family's financial well-being.

Ghuncha Gul - the mother of a young boy and two girls - is part of one such family that are tired of living in poverty. Her husband now works in Iran in order to feed his family.

She says her young son is serving in the Afghan National Army (ANA) and that he was wounded seven months ago but he has not received three months salary.

"My son was in the army and he was wounded in Helmand seven months ago. They have paid three months of this salary but he has not received the salary for the other three months. My husband has had to go to Iran for work," she said.

"We have not bought firewood and coal for winter. We are in this house for two months but we have not paid its rent so far," she added.

According to statistics, at least 39.1 percent of Afghans live in poverty - a percentage higher than last year. (Tolonews)

(2) President Ghani...

mittee needs to do their duties out of political shadows.

"Selecting new commissioners of the election commission is a big national responsibility and its seven members should focus on their jobs to hold transparent elections in the future," said Jan Dad Spin Ghar, head of Afghanistan election watchdog.

The selecting committee will submit a list to President that the government introduce new individuals to election commission. However, chairman of Independent Election Commission (IEC) says that he would not allow any new commissioners to begin work in IEC. Based on the principles of the Selection Committee, the members of this committee would introduce 21 persons for membership of Election Commission and 15 others for the electoral complaint commission. (ATN)

(3) Ghani Orders ...

General's Office (AGO) to assess the letters of those who have not cooperated and ensure they present themselves to the AGO.

Meanwhile, he directed police to take action and summon individuals who have not paid their loans so far.

In addition, Ghani ordered the Central Bank and the clearance committee in collaboration with the Finance Ministry to take steps to recover Kabul Bank's loans as soon as possible and return a significant amount of the loans to the Central Bank by the start of the next fiscal year.

Kabul Bank, once the country's largest financial institution, was badly shaken and collapsed in 2010 in one of the largest banking embezzlement schemes in the country's history.

The former chairman of Kabul Bank, Sher Khan Farnood, and CEO Khalilullah Frozi were sacked from their positions and arrested over the embezzlement of more than \$900 million USD in cash and assets.

Frozi and Farnood were sentenced each to 10 years in jail following a court verdict last November after they were found guilty of enabling the collapse of Kabul Bank - which is now run by the government. (Tolonews)

(4) MPs Want

through insecure districts of Afghanistan - including Herat, Farah, Nimroz, Helmand and Kandahar. The MPs suggest that residents of the concerned provinces and districts should be involved in securing their areas in order to help ensure the project's safety.

They also said the government should have extensive programs to make this dream work in war-weary Afghanistan.

"The government should leave no stone unturned to ensure the security of the TAPI project and we are sure

that the project will be implemented if this happens. No doubt, the project will benefit the country," said Lalai Hamidzai, an MP from Kandahar. Another MP Khalil Ahmad Shaheedzada concurred: "The government should not make the project governmental but it should make it people-owned. The project should be implemented with the help of tribal elders of different provinces."

The Interior Ministry meanwhile said the government is ready to implement the TAPI project.

"No doubt, this is a national project and the government will pay out all of its efforts to ensure its security. We are prepared for that and we have taken a number of plans in hand," said Sediq Sediqqi, spokesman for the Interior Ministry.

According to reports, more than 750 kilometers of pipeline will pass through Afghanistan. It will start in Kasht district in Herat province, and make its way through Farah, Nimroz and Helmand, ending up in Kandahar before crossing the border to Quetta in Pakistan.

The implementation of TAPI will earn Afghanistan up to \$500 million USD a year in transit duties and the project will also help Afghanistan purchase 1.5 billion cubic meters of gas for thirty years at a reasonable price. The gas will be utilized in Hajigak iron mine and at the Mes Aynak copper project. Economic analysts say the implementation of TAPI can leverage extended economic, political and commercial ties within member states, which include Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India (Tolonews)

(5) MPs Summon ...

and left the session.

A delegation with 9 members were assigned to review the processing of exemption of fuel taxation on Afghan security forces and ISAF from Hairatan and Aqina ports, the delegation have found more than 2000 pages of documents which are indicating corruption in those ports.

The delegation member Urfanullah Urfan, First Secretary in the Wolesi Jirga has said, "there is exemption of taxation on Afghan security forces, ISAF fuels while entering in to the country, during the process there is huge corruption has taken place, hundreds of millions of dollars are robbed, there is a private company named Jero Kim which is being led by a Pakistani national is robbing huge amount of money."

The documents which are accessed weren't reviewed and decision hasn't made yet on the aspect.

Wolesi Jirga Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahim said, "due to lack of information and poor readiness we dismiss the officials and delay the summoning process for the future."

A number of the law makers have criticized the poor performances of the speaker and other related to the case, saying this is against the law. MP Kamal Nasir Osuli said, "this is against the law and principle of the house."

It's not fair wasting the Ministers time for doing nothing, such kind of issue should be finalized within the committee Kabul MP Abdul Qadir Zazia said.

Unfortunately the heading committee in the house has taken hasty decision, it's totally wasting of time Ghulam Farooq Majroh Herat representative said. Earlier MPs have claimed that Ministers are being summoned due to their personal interests. (ATN)

(6) Violence is...

insurgent attacks rose this year, causing increased casualties among Afghan security forces, the report said. It said that while Afghan forces have demonstrated a will to fight and to learn from their battlefield mistakes, the Taliban's resilience has made the security situation fragile in key areas and at risk of deteriorating in other places.

The report, the latest in a series of regular Pentagon updates on the war effort, also said the Taliban-led insurgency has been emboldened by the U.S. transition from direct combat operations to a train-and-advise role. The U.S. now has about 9,800 troops in Afghanistan, some of which are involved in counterterrorism missions.

"The resilient Taliban-led insurgency remains an enduring threat to U.S., coalition, and Afghan forces, as well as to the Afghan people," the report said. The report also said al-Qaida, which used Afghanistan as a base from which to launch the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, has a "sustained presence" in eastern and northeastern Afghanistan and remains a threat to the United States. It did not estimate how many al-Qaida fighters are in the country.

Security is threatened by a host of insurgent and extremist networks, including the Taliban, the Haqqani Network, and to a lesser extent al-Qaida as well as an Islamic State affiliate that

the report said is openly fighting with the Taliban for establishment of a safe haven.

In an Associated Press interview Tuesday in Kabul, Gen. John F. Campbell, the top American commander in Afghanistan, said "foreign fighters" from Syria and Iraq who are supporters of the Islamic State are trying to establish a base in the eastern city of Jalalabad. He said there also are indications that these IS supporters in Nangarhar province are trying to consolidate links with Islamic State leadership in Syria and Iraq.

The biggest setback during the period covered by the Pentagon report was the Taliban's brief takeover of the northern city of Kunduz, which Afghan forces abandoned abruptly in late September but recaptured several days later with U.S. military help.

It was during the battle for control of Kunduz that a U.S. AC-130 gunship repeatedly attacked a hospital run by the international medical charity, Doctors Without Borders, which says 42 patients and others were killed in the assault. The U.S. military has said the attack was a mistake caused by a combination of human error, technical faults and other circumstances. (AP)

(7) Govt. to Focus ...

the fiber optic internet network.

"Technology makes knowledge easier, faster and more effective," said President Ghani.

He added that his administration would focus on establishing the necessary infrastructure for the knowledge of technology.

Afghanistan celebrates the National Information Technology Conference annually since 2005 with collaboration from the Berlin Technical University. (Wadsam)

(8) Latino, Afghan ...

America is comparable to the activities of global reserve systems of the criminal world supporting trafficking in Africa, Central America, and Central Asia. The volume of emissions and investments of these centers into the global criminal network stands at \$3 trillion over the last 15 years," Viktor Ivanov said.

This is comparable to Russia's gross domestic product for 2014 of \$3.5 trillion, he added. (Sputnik)

(9) Daesh

allegiance to Daesh were "disenfranchised Taliban" from both sides of the border, Campbell said. But, he added, "they've been reaching out. I'm sure there are folks who have come from Syria and Iraq - I couldn't tell you how many but there are indications of some foreign fighters coming in there. "But they don't have the capability right now to attack Europe, or attack the homeland, the United States. But that's what they want to do, they've said that's what they want to do," he said.

During the summer months, Taliban and Daesh loyalists fought fierce battles in the far eastern districts of Nangarhar, with residents reporting a range of atrocities, including arbitrary imprisonment, forced marriages for young women, and beheadings.

The Daesh loyalists have said they want to absorb Afghanistan into a larger province of its "caliphate" called Khorasan. Campbell said the group wants to establish a base in Nangarhar's provincial capital, Jalalabad "as the base of the Khorasan province" and "work their way up into Kunar" province immediately north.

The first credible reports of a Daesh presence in Afghanistan emerged earlier this year in northern Helmand, though recruiters believed to have had links to the leadership in Syria were killed by U.S. drone strikes in February, reported AP.

The presence in Nangarhar became clear in the summer, when Daesh loyalists launched battles against the Taliban in the border regions. For months, the Afghan forces - occupied with fighting elsewhere - had let the two groups fight each other, Campbell said. "If the Taliban and ISIL [Daesh] want to kill each other, let them do it," he said, using an alternative acronym for the group.

He said that control of the four districts - Achin, Nazyan, Bati Kot and Spin Gar - had seesawed between the two groups.

The revelation in July that the Taliban's founder and leader, Mullah Mohammad Omar had been dead for more than two years has led to deep fissures in the leadership, and infighting between rival Taliban factions that Campbell said had left hundreds dead. Campbell, who took control of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan in mid-2014, said splits among the Taliban, who have been trying to overthrow the Afghan government since their regime was driven from power in 2001 by the U.S. invasion, could make the fight even harder in 2016.

"The prize really is Kandahar, that's their strategic goal," he said, referring to the southern province from where the Taliban emerged after Afghanistan's vicious civil war ended in 1996. Neighboring Helmand province, where most of the world's opium is produced, is currently the scene of fierce battles for control of strategically important districts, including Marjah. Taliban fighters took control of the northern city of Kunduz in September, for just three days before the Afghan military, backed by U.S. forces, pushed them out.

Campbell said he did not believe the Taliban had planned to hold or govern Kunduz, but the psychological impact of the city's fall had been enormous. Jalalabad, he said, "is not going to fall." (Tolonews)

(10) Rula Ghani...

she decided to stand by Afghan women and work within the community to create a better environment for women.

She said insecurity and instability over the past few years has resulted in the increase of violence against women and that she is there for Afghan women to help them overcome violence against them.

"In order to know what is going on around us, we announced that our doors are open for women. I thought one or two people will meet me in my office [on a daily basis] but I witnessed a growing number of visitors, and even 345 groups of women visited my office in the first six months of this year. They talked with me, offered their recommendations and then I gave them hope," the first lady said.

She praised President Ghani's efforts to improve women's lives and to ensure justice for them, but said she is very upset about the recent stoning of a girl in Ghor and about the continued violence against women and children in the country.

"If the president wants to do politics, he does not consult me on that. I trust him [President Ghani] and I believe that he is a wise and talented person and what he does is correct," she said. Public appearances by the first ladies of Afghanistan over the past two decades have been rare but Rula Ghani has changed this - from day one when she stood by the president as he took his oath of office in September last year. (Tolonews)

(11) Saudi Invites ...

Malaysia, Pakistan and Gulf Arab and African states were mentioned. Shi'ite Muslim Iran, Sunni Saudi Arabia's arch rival for influence in the Arab world, was absent from the states named as participants, as proxy conflicts between the two regional powers rage from Syria to Yemen. The United States has been increasingly outspoken about its view that Gulf Arab states should do more to aid the military campaign against Daesh based in Iraq and Syria.

In a rare news conference, 30-year-old crown prince and Defense Minister Mohammed bin Salman told reporters on Tuesday that the campaign would "coordinate" efforts to fight terrorism in Iraq, Syria, Libya, Egypt and Afghanistan, but offered few concrete indications of how military efforts might proceed. (Tolonews)

(12) Govt. Entities ...

than 488 million afs and IDLG more than 345 million afs.

Tawhidi said they were working on a contract with NATO under which the alliance would pay the debts of the Interior Ministry and the prisons directorate.

"We have already informed these departments and have sent copies of correspondence in this regard to the Presidential Palace, the Ministry of Finance and the office of Administrative Affairs, but this time we decided to inform public regarding the issue," he said.

He said if a department did not pay electricity bills, the amount would be deducted from the department's budget through the Ministry of Finance.

In addition to government departments and ministries, there are some powerful people and government officials refusing to pay electricity bills and they owe nearly 1 billion afs to DABS. (Pajhwok)

(13) Govt. Urged...

the special needs of women and girls during conflict, repatriation and resettlement, rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction.

"We urge the government to fulfill its promises on implementing the UN resolution and as per their [NUG leaders] promises during presidential campaigns. They should increase women's roles in politics, governance and leadership," said Zahra Spehr, a civil society activist.

Reports say that the Netherlands has invested \$12 million USD on the implementation of the resolution in Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, Netherlands Ambassador to Kabul Henk Jan Bakkeron accused the Afghan ministries of Defense and Interior for not being interested in implementing the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325.

The ambassador said the resolution needs a strong political will to be adopted and that he does not see such a will in the Defense and Interior ministries.

"The implementation of the Action Plan 1325 requires strong political will from the government. Within the relevant security ministries, and most of all the ministry of interior and the ministry of defense, I see a lack of awareness, motivation and enthusiasm for the implementation of the national action plan," the ambassador said.

Meanwhile, Gender Concerns International said the budget invested for the implementation of the resolution should be spent wisely by Afghanistan and the international community. (Tolonews)

(14) SCO Essential...

source of insurgency, the Taliban, al-Qaida, Islamic State and like-minded groups, goes unchecked.

"In my opinion all the SCO members, especially China, can facilitate Afghanistan to embrace durable peace and security by investing in development projects to create job opportunities. Lasting peace in Afghanistan can benefit the whole region including China," Mohammad Taqi Hashimi, a political analyst, told Xinhua.

As a major founding member of the SCO and the second economic power in the world, China can help Afghanistan achieve lasting peace and security by investing in economic projects in this country and by influencing countries in the region, the analyst said.

"Afghans prefer to see Chinese investment instead of seeing NATO-led troops in their country," said the analyst who is a university professor in the eastern Ghazni province. "A military presence means violence but an economic presence and investment in development projects means peace and prosperity."

Established in 2001, the SCO now has six members - China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Iran and Mongolia are observers; while Turkey, Belarus and Sri Lanka serve as dialogue partners with the organization. (Xinhua)

(15) China Donates...

expressed his gratitude to China. He said that Afghan people and government were thankful to China for its continuous assistance in the socio-economic development over the past years.

"I want to express our appreciation and gratitude to the Chinese government and people for the support China has been providing to Afghanistan since the earthquake took place. China was the first to provide aid to Afghans on that hard time," Barnak said.

According to the agreement, the 1 million U.S. dollars will be specifically used for victims' resettlement and the cash will be officially handed over to Afghanistan before the end of January next year. (Xinhua)

(16) Afghanistan,...

at regulating acquisition of goods and services based on the principles of openness, transparency and non-discrimination.

The decisions on the two countries' accession were made by WTO members in October and November correspondingly. Liberia and Afghanistan will bring the total number of LDCs who joined the WTO since 1995 to nine. (Sputnik)

(17) Daesh Militants...

Culture Department is not aware of the radio station, the provincial governor's spokesman Attaullah Khogyani said that efforts have been started to get the station off air.

"We are not aware about the radio station which is broadcast in insecure areas," said Aworang Samim the information and culture department head.

"This radio is broadcasting from across the border and we had talks and maybe we reach a good result and remove the radio," said provincial governor spokesman Attaullah Khogyani. He did not however clarify who the talks had been held with.

This comes after the U.S and NATO Commander in Afghanistan, Gen. John Campbell, on Tuesday warned of the increase in Daesh supporters in Afghanistan. (Tolonews)

(18) ANSF Seize...

the material was hidden in 20 bags sent by the Haqqani network from neighboring Pakistan.

A hardline militant group aligned with the Taliban, the Haqqanis are blamed for some of recent spate of large attacks across the country, particularly in Kabul.

The attack on Friday, involving four Taliban suicide bombers, lasted for more than 10 hours during which two Spanish security officers, and four Afghan policemen, were killed.

The government of President Ashraf Ghani has come under increasing pressure as the Taliban insurgency, aimed at expelling foreign forces and bringing down the Western-backed government, has spread since NATO ended its combat mission last year. (Reuters)

(19) Pilot of ...

was shelled in Afghanistan's Faryab province controlled by Taliban on November 24. After sending a distress signal, the helicopter made an emergency landing. There were 21 people - 18 passengers and three crew members - onboard the rotorcraft. Afghan security officers reached the crash site to find four dead bodies. The rest were seized by Taliban gunmen. A video with the hostages was posted in the internet on the following day. (AP)

(20) Afghan ...

repatriation of Afghan refugees, to cope with the threat of more terrorism.

"Since then, the government is chasing those who are living here illegally," he said.

The government of Pakistan is weighing a proposal to extend the stay of Afghan refugees until 2017. The government granted an extension of three years in 2012 which expires on Dec. 31 2015.

"Registered Afghan nationals are likely to be allowed to stay in Pakistan until December 2017 but those living illegally will be forced to return," officials at the Ministry of State and Frontier Region (Safron), told IPS.

The Afghan refugees who have Proof of Registration (PoR) cards could be allowed stay in the country. So far Pakistan has given three extensions to the refugees and a fourth was in the pipeline.

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government which hosts a bulk of the refugees due to its proximity with Afghanistan is opposed to their further stay.

"Afghanistan has become peaceful country now and the refugees should be sent home as soon as possible. The Afghans are involved in crimes, such as murder, kidnapping for ransom and thefts etc," KP Information Minister Mushtaq Ahmed Ghani said.

Last month, the KP government wrote a letter to the federal government asking it to ensure that refugees go back by the end of 2015. (Agencies)

(21) Turkey Says...

possible." Ties between Ankara and Moscow have soured after Turkey shot down a Russian fighter jet on Nov. 24 near the border, saying that it violated Turkish airspace. (Xinhua)

(22) Ukraine to ...

aged power lines located in Ukraine's southern Kherson region. The autonomous republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol were affiliated with Russia in March 2014 following a referendum recognized by Moscow, which Kiev rejected, saying it was unconstitutional. (Xinhua)

(23) Abe, Gates ...

rate on the single task of strengthening global healthcare infrastructure. Making basic medical care available to those in developing countries is likely to be announced as one of Japan's major foreign policy drives forthwith and means to raise funds to globalize the UHC framework and train more medical staff to deal with emergency health incidents, such as the Ebola virus epidemic, were traversed at the conference. (Xinhua)

(24) Calls for...

views. Amnesty International said in a statement late Tuesday that the shooting of members of the Shiite group in Zaria "must be urgently investigated ... and anyone found responsible for unlawful killings must be brought to justice."

"Whilst the final death toll is unclear, there is no doubt that there has been a substantial loss of life at the hands of the military," said M.K. Ibrahim, director of Amnesty International, Nigeria. (AP)

(25) Germany...

the government official said at a formal government briefing ahead of an EU summit on Thursday and Friday. Britain's push for EU reform will be addressed at a summit working dinner on Thursday evening.

The German official expected this week's summit to lay the foundations for an agreement on EU reform next February. Limiting benefits that EU migrants to Britain are entitled to is the most contentious among Cameron's demands. Pressed on the benefits issue, the German official said: "We will be very helpful." (Reuters)