

(1) Afghan Govt. ...

"We welcome that the strategy aims to strengthen peace and stability in the region especially through diplomatic means," it added.

The statement said the National Unity Government is committed to the principle of mutual respect and cooperation among states in the region.

"We have always worked and shall continue to do so for a peaceful region with increased connectivity for the shared economic development of our people in this region. To this end, we will continue to work with our neighbors close and far in the region," it added.

On Monday, Trump unveiled a new national security strategy, calling on Pakistan to take decisive action against terrorist groups operating on their territory.

"We have made clear to Pakistan that while we desire continued partnership we must see decisive action against terrorist groups operating on their territory and we make massive payments every year to Pakistan," Trump said. The strategy has harsh words for Pakistan, "since no partnership can survive a country's support for militants and terrorists that targets a partner's own service members and officials," a reference to Pakistan's support for elements of the Taliban that attack American targets in Afghanistan.

The strategy urges NATO's European allies to increase defense spending to two percent of gross domestic product by 2024. (ToloneWS)

(2) Violence Against ...

behind the growing incidents of violence against women in Khost Many such incidents happen in far-flung areas where most women are not aware of their rights.

"We don't have accesses to remote areas due to insecurity and the figures we obtain are small, there might be more incidents," Zarmena said.

Zainab Afghan, a women rights activist, said the best source to spread awareness regarding women's rights were ulema, tribal elders and media. "Some barriers exist in the way of spreading awareness among women in far-flung areas but if ulema, media and tribal elders play their role in this regard, it will be effective," she believed.

Earlier, Women's Affairs Director Dr. Malalai Wali had termed the women's situation in Khost as satisfactory and added 25 incidents of violence against females had been registered in the province this year. (Pajhwok)

(3) CEO Hails Iran, ...

members of the migrant communities. Undocumented Afghans, who are not formally registered as refugees in their host countries, face unique challenges both abroad and when they return home. Since the beginning of the year, over 500,000 undocumented Afghans have returned from Pakistan and Iran until 09 December 2017.

Addressing the participants, MoRR Minister Hussain Alemi Balkhi highlighted that "So far this year more than 528,000 refugees have returned from neighboring Iran and Pakistan while out of 500,000 internally displaced last year, over 100,000 have returned back to their places of origin within the country".

"For Afghanistan, migration is an opportunity. Five hundred thousand people returned to their homeland this year. We're here to help and we're ready for 2018" said Mr. Toby Lanzer, acting head of the United Nations in Afghanistan at the Migrants Day in Kabul.

Migrants face many challenges along their migration route. IOM's Missing Migrants Project reports that while more than 176,000 migrants safely reached Europe in 2017, over 3,000 migrants died on the way in their attempt to reach Europe. This figure compares to more than 387,000 arrivals in Europe in 2016, and over 5,000 deaths.

"It is a bitter sweet day remembering those who suffered or died, and those who have been successful", mentioned IOM Special Envoy and Chief of Mission Mr. Laurence Hart.

Returns of undocumented Afghans have decreased by more than 60% compared to last year, from 248,000 in 2016 to 95,000 until 09 December 2017. Returns of undocumented Afghans from Iran have decreased by 8% compared to last year, from 443,000 in 2016 to 407,000 until 09 December 2017. Since the beginning of the year, IOM has provided more than 104,000 undocumented Afghans with post-arrival emergency assistance at its Tran-

sit Centers in the four border crossing points with Iran and Pakistan.

On 18 December 1990, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the international convention on the protection of the rights of migrant workers and members of their families. International Migrants Day was officially proclaimed by the General Assembly in 2000. (Pajhwok)

(4) European ...

Expressing concern over the growing number of internally displaced persons, the resolution said Afghanistan was facing an unprecedented increase in returns from Pakistan and Iran. (Pajhwok)

(5) Cannot Ignore the ...

Mi-35 aircraft," the report said, adding that "The new South Asia policy highlighted our relationship with India and called on India to provide more assistance to the international efforts in Afghanistan." "The United States welcomes additional Indian economic, medical, and civic support to Afghanistan," the report concludes. (KP)

(6) Kazakhstan May

of necessary infrastructure for rapid products unloading. Kazakhstan had to attract more than 2 thousand of grain hoppers from other countries to cover the transport deficit. (Agencies)

(7) Germany could ...

terror" following the September 11 attacks. The mission is the largest Bundeswehr deployment ever, and also the one that has involved the most losses.

Currently, some 1,000 German soldiers have remained on in the country, mainly to train Afghan forces.

Three-month mission extension At its peak, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) had about 150,000 soldiers from all over the world. Now, only about 17,000 soldiers remain, 10,000 of whom are from the US.

Washington has been pressuring Germany to send more troops as the international coalition grapples with the ever-tense security situation, but Berlin has been hesitant to do so until a new German government is formed.

Last week, the Bundestag voted to prolong country's mission to Afghanistan by three months in order to allow a new government enough time to consider a longer extension.

Germany has been without a government for 85 days, as Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats (CDU) have struggled to find willing coalition partners. (DW)

(8) Fate of 750 ...

Prisoners involved in crimes related to internal security and drugs could be transferred to provincial jails.

He said the death row prisoners often went on hunger strike and demanded their transfer to provinces. Kohistani added: "We don't have the right to keep an inmate in prison beyond completion of the sentence but there are some inmates whose jail terms have ended but they are waiting for their cases to be processed."

He acknowledged problems existed in the delivery of health services to prisoners and said these problems would be resolved in two years.

Kohistani said tens of women caught while transferring drugs to inmates had been arrested and referred to AGO for further investigation.

He said central prisons had the capacity to accommodate 5,000 prisoners, but currently 10,000 prisoners were kept in the facilities. The prisoners in Kandahar and Herat also faced overcrowding.

He added 138 jail officials had been suspended over misuse of authority, corruption and other issues and referred to the judiciary for investigation.

Currently, 30,000 inmates are being kept in 36 prisons and 190 detention centres of the country.

Deputy AGO Abdul Fatah Azizi said the implementation of death penalty needed a more careful approach and thus the executions had to be delayed. He rejected torture issue and added no incident of torture had been reported. (Pajhwok)

(9) Bribes, Strongmen...

transport companies with collecting 20 afghanis from each vehicle in coordination with the Ministry of Transport.

Drivers say those who pay money to traffic police or their vehicles belong to powerful individuals can pick passengers frequently on any route compared to those who do not pay.

Roads and strongmen

The Mirwais Maidan area of Kota-i-Sangi is the scene of unruly traffic and has no bus stand for passengers. Many vehicles, most of them Mercedes model that belong to strongmen, drive on the wrong side to pick passengers, often leading to chaotic scenes.

Javed, a driver on the Mirwais Maidan route, said the stand for vehicles transporting Kampani passengers located area near Spin Ghar Hospital, but these vehicles drove on the opposite side of the road for hundreds of meters to take passengers from the Kota-i-Sangi bridge, the main square in the area.

He said these vehicles violated traffic rules but they were never fined because they belonged to strongmen.

"Police do not prevent this illegal practice, if we take passengers five times a day, the vehicles of strongmen will take them eight times a day," Javed said.

He said half of the vehicles on the route belonged to strongmen and the remaining half to ordinary people who had to wait for hours to find passengers.

This reporter was talking to a traffic police official in Kota-i-Sangi when a driver entered his booth and demanded his vehicle's number plate that was taken by traffic police for not paying 300 afghanis as fine.

"Do not make me emotional, please give me the plate, the vehicle belongs to the commander," the driver told the traffic police without giving details. However, the traffic police did not give him the plate.

When a driver was seen driving on the wrong side of the road and was asked about the reason, he said: "What should we do. All drivers do this as our bosses tell us to go even on the wrong side."

He said first bribery should be prevented and added drivers paid bribe to traffic police on daily and weekly basis to allow them to go to on the wrong side of the for a kilometer.

A traffic police officer in Kota-i-Sangi area, who wished to go unnamed, said around 80 passenger vehicles belonged to former jihadi commanders and strongmen.

He said these vehicles drove on the opposite side from Sara-i-Herati area to the main square of Kota-i-Sangi by force and collected passengers anywhere without their turn.

"Whenever a traffic police officer tries to stop or fine such drivers, several men laced with knives and bayonets come late in the evening and threaten us, police also do not help us," he said. He rejected taking money from drivers and said: "Kota-i-Sangi is one of the worst and busiest areas in Kabul that has six illegal stations, only strongmen command here and working here is so depressive."

Mohammad Ayub, a driver on the road between Kota-i-Sangi and Chahrahi Qambar area, said: "We wait for hours to find passengers but some drivers by paying money to representatives of people with disabilities and traffic police take passengers from anywhere without their turns."

He said they had several times complained to the traffic police manager of the area but the problem remained. Some people say drivers who take passengers without their turns pay 1,400 afghanis to traffic police or someone from (representatives of people with disabilities) who manage traffic on weekly basis.

Akhtar Mohammad, a driver in Deh Dana area of Kabul, said hundreds of drivers took passengers without their turn by paying money to traffic police. "Gangsters and bullying figures have several times denied me my turn by force and snatched passengers, no one hears our voice," he said.

He said: "Police fine me 300 afghanis if I pick passengers from Senama-i-Pamir, Shah Do Shmashira area, while other drivers who regularly pay them money take passengers without fear and nobody prevent them," he said.

Salem, another driver on the Shah Do Shmashira Bridge who violated the turn and tried to pick passengers, said: "The traffic police take 100 afghanis daily and 700 afghanis weekly for allowing to pick passengers."

He said if he waited for his the turn, he would only make six rounds and if violated the turn, he could make nine rounds.

Hameedullah, who drives on Darulaman, Deh Dana and Doghabad line, acknowledged traffic police took bribe. He said: "If I violate the turn, I can get up to ten rounds but I respect the turn, I cannot get over eight rounds." Offering bribe to choose the shortest

line Ahmad Jan, a driver from Shah-i-Do Shamshira Station on Doghabad line, said vehicles on the line had been told to transfer passengers until the last station in Da Dana and Doghabad areas.

But vehicles belonging to disabled individuals were allowed to take passengers on the shortest route for the same fare, he added and alleged the disabled fed bribes to traffic police.

He said the drivers who offered bribes could move around quickly and during the evening time they picked and dropped more passengers.

"We often fight with these drivers but we cannot stop them from giving bribe to police," he added.

Mujibullah, a disabled man who has been assigned with collecting taxes from vehicles using the Shah-i-Doshamshira station, said they took 10 or 20 afghanis from vehicles against each turn according to the destination they covered. He rejected taking additional amount from drivers.

Traffic officials near the Shrine of Shah-i-Do Shamshira rejected extortion or taking bribe from drivers.

Marking vehicles of those offering bribe

Mohammad Qasem, a representative of the disabled people and one of the vehicles organizers near Senama-i-Pamir, said over 260 vehicles on the Arzan Qemat, Bagrami and Kart-i-Naw line had been registered with him.

He said some vehicles picked passengers without parking on the line as their drivers gave bribe to traffic police.

He added last year over 12 vehicles who offered bribe to traffic police were attached symbols to be identified. "We told the traffic police why these vehicles are taken money, they responded by saying "you have nothing to do with them."

Conductor of a vehicle in Senama-i-Pamir said as long as traffic police were not paid money, they would allow anyone to pick passengers beyond turn. Police spokesman Baseer Mujahid said police would investigate complaints regarding the alleged offering of bribes by drivers to traffic officials. (Pajhwok)

(10) Afghanistan 'Third ...

that some countries which are not at war have become as dangerous for reporters as war zones, with 46 percent of deaths occurring in such places in 2017, as against 30 percent the previous year.

Syria was the deadliest country for journalists, with 12 killed, one more than in Mexico where many journalists have "either fled abroad or abandoned journalism."

The overall downward trend did not apply to women, as 10 female reporters were killed this year, double the previous year's total.

RSF said many of the female victims were "experienced and determined investigative reporters with an abrasive writing style."

Behind Syria and Mexico, the deadliest countries for reporters were Afghanistan, where nine journalists were killed in 2017, and Iraq where eight perished. With four journalists gunned down, the Philippines was Asia's deadliest country.

RSF said there was a drop of six percent in the number of journalists detained, with nearly half of them held in just five countries, China, Turkey, Syria, Iran and Vietnam.

RSF added that 54 journalists are currently being held hostage by groups such as Islamic State and the Houthis in Yemen.

"Almost three quarters of these hostages come from the ranks of local journalists, who are usually paid little and often have to take enormous risks," RSF said. "The foreign journalists currently held hostage were all kidnapped in Syria but little is known about their present location." (ToloneWS)

(11) AUAF Launches ...

it believed in the University's mission, and would support it through different corporate social responsibility giving, the statement added.

Annie Pforzheimer Deputy Chief of Mission for the Embassy of the United States of America, congratulated AUAF on its successful partnerships through a video message and added: "Private philanthropy propels institutions like AUAF forward, and AUAF will propel Afghanistan. In other words, Afghan businesses are contributing to a peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan by supporting higher edu-

cation including through scholarships. QGC is one of the nation's largest Afghan owned companies. It is a major player in different product lines and services, from construction services to fuel supply, from transportation to hospital services - among others.

Mr. Farid Ahmad Noori, Executive Advisor to QGC said: "Qasemi Group is committed to strengthening its long lasting relationship with AUAF." He encouraged other stakeholders in the private sector to join forces and invest in institutions that produce the human capital needed to put Afghanistan on the path to development and excellence.

Following the 2016 attack on the University, AUAF came back better and stronger with the motto of Education Will Prevail; with the support of the Afghan community, particularly its private sector, it is carrying out that creed every day. In a message that was read by Mr. Sareer Barmak, His Excellency Wais Ahmad Barmak, the Minister of Interior, said: AUAF's story is an Afghan story. It is the story that we will always get back up after we fall. (Pajhwok)

(12) 'Government is

Kabul resident said.

"Last week the oil was cheaper but now it is expensive although the customs charge is decreased," Mohammad Hafiz, Kabul resident said.

"Prices have not dropped although the customs charges have decreased. The government should monitor the situation and the costs should decrease," Mahbob Shah, Kabul resident said.

Deputy head of custom and revenue department at finance ministry Najibullah Wardak said in the last week fuel had been imported under the new custom charge.

According to Wardak, currently, the customs charges on one ton of fuel have been decreased by \$150 USD.

"In all our custom systems, the customs charges decreased from 12 to 6 percent," said Wardak.

Despite consecutive efforts, TOLOneWS was not able to get a comment from the Fuel and Gas Importers Union.

Earlier the union welcomed the changes in customs charges and said the fuel cost will decrease in the markets. (ToloneWS)

(13) Airport to Ge...

in these projects if the government resolved existing problems in the way of investments in the construction sector. "The construction companies are ready and have the ability to invest jointly with the government if the government resolves our challenges on investments," said Kamal.

Currently, Hamid Karzai International Airport is one of the busiest airports in the country. ACCA officials said although Japan in the past years has spent millions of dollars in standardizing the airport, the new buildings are and terminals are necessary. (ToloneWS)

(14) Teen Married ..

Ahmadi confirmed the girl had been tortured and there were deep wounds on her body.

Dr. Sheema said: "Fresh signs of torture are visible on her body. She suffered a lot from her front side. They severely tortured her."

Bismillah, district police chief of Dolina, confirmed the incident and said the girl's mother-in-law, father-in-law, husband, and sister-in-law had been arrested.

"The incident happened in Phan village, we took necessary steps and arrested the perpetrators and sent them to the central police headquarters," he added. (Pajhwok)

(15) Afghan Forces ...

broke out between rival militant factions Daesh and Taliban, affecting civilians.

Around 12,000 families were displaced from the areas as a result of the militants' infighting. (Pajhwok)

(16) 2 Herat Customs...

upon completion of the inquiry. The two officials are being investigated amid growing concerns about corruption in the Customs Department of Herat.Saad Khatibi, Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) head, expressed concern over widespread corruption in the administration of the Customs Department, saying the government should take serious steps against the menace.Earlier, President Ashraf Ghani during a visit to Herat had said financial and administrative corruption was prevalent at Afghanistan's ports, especially Herat customs duty department. (Pajhwok)