

(1) MPs Reject...

Allah (God willing) within one or two weeks before the MPs leave for winter recess," said Finance Minister Eklil Ahmad Hakimi. (Tolonews)

(2) Afghanistan ...

While great progress had been made in Afghanistan, a better future for that country would not be possible without an inclusive peace process that involves Afghans from all strata of society, Tadamichi Yamamoto, special representative of the Secretary General for Afghanistan and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, told the Security Council on Monday. (Agencies)

(3) China, Britain...

institutions and improve delivery of much-needed infrastructure," the statement said.

"We will continue to work with each other and Afghanistan's regional partners, including the Heart of Asia -- Istanbul process, to help develop the economy, improve the security situation and implement the ambitious reform program being led by the Government of Afghanistan," the statement added.

According to the statement, both countries will also work closely together to prevent the flow of weapons and support to all terrorists, violent and extremist groups. China and the UK condemn terrorist acts against civilians, diplomatic missions and humanitarian and development workers.

"Such attacks are against the interests of Afghanistan and its people. Both our countries face threats from terrorism and have a shared interest in helping the Government of Afghanistan deal with the threat of international terrorists operating within its borders," the statement said.

Besides, the statement also mentioned that both sides recognize that humanitarian needs in Afghanistan are increasing. In particular, the rising numbers of internally displaced persons and Afghans returning from Pakistan and Iran will require immediate humanitarian assistance, as well as longer-term development support to integrate effectively.

"China and the UK are committed to working with humanitarian agencies to meet urgent, life-saving needs of the most vulnerable across Afghanistan," the statement said. (Xinhua)

(4) Call for ...

this trend and propounding alternatives to turn an economy that feeds warfare into a sustainable one," he said.

"Iran and Afghanistan have engaged in remarkable cooperation in the area of confronting the illicit drug trade." Khoshrou stressed that

the Islamic Republic continues to host thousands of Afghan refugees and even provides services to illegal immigrants. (Agencies)

(5) Some MPs ...

all complaints from people due to their heavy work, therefore the administrative board should pay attention to such issues."

He said some lawmakers were involved in illegal constructions. "Roads in different parts of Kabul, particularly in Pul Charkhi area are blocked when some lawmakers pass the area," he said. After Majidi's speech, a lawmaker from Kabul, Qudratullah Sahak verbally abused Majidi and accused him of taking extortions from the country's customs each month.

In response to Sahak, Majidi said, "I know you are a thief." The exchange of hot words between the two led to a verbal dispute but they were calmed down with interference from other lawmakers.

Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahim said lawmakers should not misuse their authorities given to them by the house.

He asked house members to present their evidence in support of their claims against other lawmakers so the house could investigate them.

However, he said lawmakers should not accuse each other in absence of credible evidence. (Pajhwok)

(6) 1,000 Afghans ...

support. Around 20 of these have gifted the opportunity to eligible family members, in many cases to daughters who would not have otherwise had the opportunity to attend higher education. (Tolonews)

(7) Afghanistan...

The first event was held in 2005 in Saudi Arabia where Afghanistan clinched a bronze medal by Taekwondo athlete Nisar Ahmad Bahawi.

In accordance with the eighth elective General Assembly of the Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation (ISSF) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, it was decided to hold the 4th Islamic Solidarity Games in Baku, Azerbaijan in 2017. (Tolonews)

(8) 24 Insurgents ...

said Afghan forces in the Bolan area of Lashkargah and Nad Ai district vacated some posts that were captured by the Taliban.

The insurgents also confirmed clashes in Helmand. But Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said none of the fighters suffered casualties in the past 24 hours. He claimed 13 security personnel were killed and eight of their tanks destroyed in the past 24 hours.

Helmand has been the scene of repeated gunbat-

les between Afghan forces and the Taliban over the past several months.

The Taliban were able to capture several areas of Lashkargah and a number of districts of the restive province.

Helmand has 13 districts, with six of them under Taliban control. The Afghan forces control only district centres of many towns. (Pajhwok)

(9) Marine Jailed...

seriously injured by gunfire from an Apache helicopter sent to provide air support, and the marines found him in a field.

Footage from a helmet-mounted camera of another marine in his unit showed Blackman shooting the Afghan prisoner in the chest at close range with a 9mm pistol. (BBC)

(10) 13 Taliban ...

make comments on the situation. Karimi also added that the operations launched on Tuesday would continue until the troubled province is cleared of insurgents. (Xinhua)

(11) Mullah Imam ...

was arrested after a complaint was lodged by the family of the child.

According to Nasiry, the Mullah Imam has confessed to his crime during the initial investigations.

Ghazni is located in the southeastern part of the country and is among the relatively volatile provinces besides criminal incidents are reported occasionally from the province. In another incident, a man stabbed his wife, apparently due to domestic violence having links with the alleged adultery.

The local officials said the woman succumbed to her injuries sustained from the repeated stabbing by her husband.

The officials further added that the husband of the victim has been arrested and he has also confessed to his crime during the investigations. (KP)

(12) Three Militants...

of the insurgents were also destroyed during the raid, the statement said.

Kandahar, the birthplace of Taliban militants, has been the scene of violent insurgency over the past more than a decade.

Meantime, Abdul Ali Shamsi the deputy to Kandahar provincial government in a security meeting on Wednesday termed Taliban as a defeated terror network and called upon security forces to check the activities of terrorists elsewhere in the relatively restive province. (Xinhua)

(13) Woman Raped ...

violence against women. They also called on government to ensure the alleged rapist is arrested and prosecuted.

"According to the woman, the issue took place eight months ago but we are concerned that our sub-departments in the districts are not working as this incident occurred eight months ago but it has only now come to our atten-

tion," said Khadija Yaqin, the department head.

However, Baghlan police said they would follow up the case and arrest the suspect soon.

"We have just issued an arrest warrant for the person and we have ordered the district police to find the accused person," said Mohammad Nasir, Baghlan police CID officer.

This comes after several cases of violence against women have been reported in Baghlan in the past month, according to the women's affairs department - which in turn has warned government that unless the issue is tackled, more incidents will occur. (Tolonews)

(14) Germany's Refugee...

making an effort to integrate in our country."

The Islamic State terrorist group claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement later Tuesday, saying, "the person who carried out the truck run over attack in Berlin is a soldier of the Islamic State and carried out the attack in response to calls for targeting citizens of the Crusader coalition." (AP)

(15) Obama Bans...

statement.

"They reflect the scientific assessment that, even with the high safety standards that both our countries have put in place, the risks of an oil spill in this region are significant and our ability to clean up from a spill in the region's harsh conditions is limited," he said. Obama believed "it would take decades" to fully develop the production infrastructure necessary for any large-scale oil and gas leasing production in the region. (Xinhua)

(16) Syrian Refugee ...

said. According to the official data released from the Greek government, more than 20,000 refugees and migrants have landed on Greek shores since March. (Xinhua)

(17) Obama Signs...

Rep. Leonard Lance, R-N.J., the lead author of the new law in the House of Representatives. "Online reviews and ratings are critical in the 21st century, and consumers should be able to post, comment and tweet their honest and accurate feedback without fear of retribution." (AP)

(18) Italian Coastguard ...

countries, humanitarian groups, and from the EU-NAVFOR Operation Sophia.

"This UNICEF designation fills with pride all of our 11,000 women and men," Coastguard Admiral Vincenzo Melone said at the ceremony.

"It is proof of the commitment of our staff in a highly dramatic scenario such as the central Mediterranean."

A cooperation agreement to strengthen support activities to unaccompanied minor migrants was also recently signed between

UNICEF-Italy and the coast guard, officials said. (Xinhua)

(19) Arab, EU ...

United Nations Security Council to bear its responsibility to restore peace in Syria and the EU to use its political weight to put an end to the crisis. (Xinhua)

(20) At Least

started to be on fire. People came running out on fire," Walter Garduno said.

"People were alight -- children," he added before trailing off.

From a few kilometers (miles) away, the multiple explosions that started at 2:50 pm (2050 GMT) almost looked festive, alight in blue, red and white. They were anything but.

Of the 31 confirmed dead, "26 (died) at the scene and five in hospitals," local media reported Mexico's chief prosecutor Milenio Alejandro Gomez as saying. (AFP)

(21) French Military...

Hollande stressed Wednesday the defense budget has increased during his term.

"We now have the necessary resources to meet our goals," Hollande said following the weekly Cabinet meeting. (AP)

(22) Pak PM...

Honour after the Bosnian Prime Minister personally received Nawaz Sharif.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif reached Bosnia Herzegovina on a three-day official visit on Tuesday. (Monitoring Desk)

(23) Iran President ...

the issues of terrorism and insecurity in the region as well as unity among the nations concerning regional issues.

During his day-long visit to Armenia's capital Yerevan on Wednesday, Rouhani will hold talks with Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan on the expansion of cooperation, and senior Iranian and Armenian officials will sign several trade and economic cooperation documents. (Xinhua)

Japan, US Announces Okinawa Training Area Return

TOKYO - Over half of U.S. military northern training area in southern Japan's Okinawa will be returned to Japanese control on Thursday, announced Japan and the United States on Wednesday.

The U.S. will return to Japan about 4,000 hectares of land of the U.S. military training area on Okinawa's main island, announced Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and U.S. Ambassador to Japan Caroline Kennedy.

Kennedy said the land return "demonstrates our continuing commitment to reducing our impact on the citizens of Okinawa while maintaining our deterrence commitment to the entire nation of Japan."

The handover of about 4,000 hectares at the site

was agreed by Japan and the United States in 1996, with a prerequisite of the relocation of helipads in the training area. The construction of new helipads was completed in mid-December.

The land return came as the U.S. military in Japan resumed use of its Osprey planes Monday afternoon, less than a week since a major accident occurred off Okinawa. (Xinhua)

UN-Backed Campaign to Immunize 800,000 Children Launched in Iraq

UNITED NATIONS - Federal and regional authorities in Iraq, together with the UN Children's fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO), have launched a 12-day campaign to immunize some 800,000 children under the age of five against polio, rubella and measles, a UN spokesman told reporters here Tuesday.

"The campaign started on 19 December and targets children in Anbar, Salahaddin, and Kirkuk governorates, as well as newly retaken areas in Ninewah governorate, including displaced children living in camps," UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said at a daily news briefing here.

The campaign forms part of the vaccination strategy in the context of the ongoing Mosul operations; some 45,000 children affected by the Mosul operations will be receiving vaccines. Iraq was removed from the list of polio-infected countries in May 2015, but there remain resurgence risks due to surveillance and immunization coverage gaps in conflict zones, the spokesman said.

"This will be the first time in two years that some of these children are receiving vaccines," Dujarric said. (Xinhua)

Trump Portrays Berlin Attack as Onslaught Against Christians

ANKARA - Two suicide bombers blew themselves up during anti-terror operations in the Turkish capital Ankara early Saturday, said a local news agency. The terrorists were reportedly planning a car-bomb attack in Haymana, a southern district in the city. They refused to surrender and triggered the bomb after anti-terror police told them to lay down their arms, said Dogan News Agency. The local agency did not say if casualties were involved in the bombing. The terrorists were most likely from the outlawed Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), said Ercan Topaca, a local governor at the explosion spot in Haymana, adding that the identity of the female bomber has been confirmed and the investigation remains on going. On Oct. 7, police in the city of Aksaray in the Central Anatolian region of Turkey detained a PKK militant as the suspect of the Oct. (AP)