

(1) New Missio...

mission after 2014.

Regarding some neighboring countries' concerns why NATO was staying put in Afghanistan beyond 2014, Jacobson said it was because Afghans and their government had requested it.

"Terrorism is a common enemy to the world, that's why we will stand by each other." He said Resolute Support was only for the next two years and they would further develop plans for the remaining eight years.

"The Afghan government is at war against insurgents like the Haqanni network, Taliban and other groups and we would support it in this fight," he promised. (Pajhwok)

(2) Afghan Cabinet ...

ready expired.

The president at the London Conference on Afghanistan, on Dec. 4 stated that the cabinet would be introduced within two to four weeks.

According to local media reports, talks between President Ghani and the chief executive of the government of national unity has been continuing on choosing ministers to form the new cabinet.

Presidential spokesman Salazarai, according to local media, said that the new cabinet would be a professional and capable one to serve the nation.

Salazarai also stated that finding professional persons had been the reason for delaying the cabinet announcement.

Early last weekend, Hajji Mohammad Mohaqiq, the second deputy to the chief executive of the government, said that the important part of the cabinet including finance minister would be introduced to parliament within a couple of days probably on Monday.

However, the failure to introduce cabinet members has created rumors about developing differences between President Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah on selecting individuals to become ministers. Meanwhile, a spokesman for the chief executive, Jawed Faisal, ruled out any differences of opinion between the top two leaders over the selection of cabinet members, saying the ministers' nominees would be introduced to parliament for approval within days. (Xinhua)

(3) UN Worried...

old who lives in Kabul, and he is the only breadwinner of his family. He works from sunrise to sunset at a car shop in order to support his six-person household. Fardin wishes to go to school, but poverty has prevented him from that dream. "I am working here to pay the expenses of the house," Fardin told TOLOnews.

Thousands of children around the country are like Fardin. According to the most recent statistics, more than 14 million children in Afghanistan are engaged in hard labor. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled has said six million Afghan children have no access to education. (Tolonews)

(4) Japan Pledges ...

for the time being, so that the government could continue its duty to serve Afghan people, it added.

In addition, this aid would be a quick remedy for the Afghan government and its economy. This Non-project Grant Aid scheme has also unique aspect of the development.

In the signing ceremony, Ambassador Takahashi emphasized as follows that "I strongly urge that the national unity government

of Afghanistan will take the necessary reforms and fight against corruption in order to utilize the financial and human resources more effectively, to raise its revenue, and to secure proper implementation of the assistance by the international donor."

He said that he would like to express the strong support to the commitment showed by the government of Afghanistan in the late London Conference on Afghanistan.

The provided fund would be used by the government of Afghanistan to procure the necessary items abroad, such as fuels. These items would be sold by the government at the favourable price to the domestic market, and it allows the government to get certain amount of the revenues.

This unique scheme request the government of Afghanistan to save the certain portion of the revenue in "Counterpart Fund Account" and it will be utilized for the development project under the close consultation with the Embassy of Japan.

This Non-project Grant Aid scheme started in 2002, and the total amount of around \$282.5 million in current exchange rate, was provided by government of Japan in this scheme. Various development projects had been implemented by the Counterpart fund so far. For this year, both governments decide to further projects including the training of officials of the government, improvement of roads in local city and the national football stadium.

Japan has been assisting Afghanistan's nation-building efforts in various fields including security, health, culture, humanitarian assistance, agriculture, infrastructure and its capacity development. (Pajhwok)

(5) Afghan Carpe...

position.

Jabbarkhel said his company was honoured with the Arab Woman Award in recognition of its efforts at empowering Afghan women by generating work opportunities for them.

He said the Afghan carpet industry had a historic background, but its popularity was going down to government's negligence. (Pajhwok)

(6) Illegal Arm....

He said illegal armed groups would not be tolerated and such groups should respect and abide by the country's laws, otherwise they would be eliminated. (Pajhwok)

(7) Afghan Forces...

a tough challenge, certainly, but it's something that we are happy the Government of Afghanistan wants us to be a part of and wants us to be there with them," State Department deputy spokesperson Marie Harf told reporters at her daily news conference.

She said that the path "we are on to bring more American troops home - I think the president has said there are more American troops home with their families this holiday than any time since we've taken office, which I think is an extraordinary statement."

But the US also had a plan to end the war in Afghanistan and bring its soldiers home, while maintaining its relationship with Afghanistan on counterterrorism and training, she explained.

"One of the two responsibilities we will have going forward under the BSA is this training and advising to help the Afghans continue to get on their feet," she concluded. (Pajhwok)

(8) Iran Resolved ...

Iran's Deputy First Vice-President for Rural and De-

veloped Areas Development Seyed Abolfazl Razavi said Do-Kouhaneh border market near Nehbandan, Eastern Iran, is a proper gate for development of trade with Afghanistan.

He went on to say that efforts will be made to remove impediments and prepare the ground for activation of this border market.

Razavi said Do-Kouhaneh border market has ample potentials for being turned into one of the major gates for export and import with Afghanistan.

There are too many commonalities between the two friendly nations, including language, religion, culture and history.

Iran is one of the most important donors to Afghanistan, which has kept its promises to help to the reconstruction of the war-ravaged country. Iran has built several roads, power transmission lines, border stations and many other infrastructure projects to better link the two nations.

Iran has also contributed more than \$50m annually to Afghan anti-narcotics efforts during the last five years. (FNA)

(9) ISIS Trying...

allegiance to DAISH.

These commanders in their statements said will act upon the orders of Abubakar-Albaghdadi, IS's announced Amir.

As per the reports of the Pakistani Media a delegation of DAISH has also visited the group's commanders in Pakistan.

DAISH who was fighting the Iraqi and Syrian government from years appeared to occupy more areas in these countries since June.

The group is now trying to be more powerful with more supporters and occupation than Al-Qaeda. (KP)

(10) Govt. Has...

of Afghanistan had reached the conclusion the new government lacked the political will to promote good governance.

He strongly criticised the government for failing to announce the cabinet in three months. The lawmaker said the government should make it clear to the masses it was afraid of powerful individuals and could not introduce the cabinet.

"Or that it (the government) wants to play with people's will. Leaders of the government must visit ministries and see what atrocities acting officials are meting out to the poor Afghans," Zakria observed.

His colleague from western Faryab province, Bashir Ahmad Tanj, also criticised the delay in cabinet formation and said: "This patience will be acceptable to the people if the government forms an experienced cabinet uninfluenced by political groups and other factions."

Tanj believed if the security sector ministries were distributed between the two campaigns, there would be confrontation in various matters and as a result, problems would be created for the people.

Ghulam Farooq Majrooh from western Herat province also said the government lacked a strong will to introduce cabinet nominees and had disheartened the masses.

"The masses braved hundreds of threats and voted for a developed and stable Afghanistan, but this government gave them hostility in return instead of goodwill."

He said nothing had been done for the wellbeing of the people after the new government's formation. The MPs insisted the government should introduce the cabinet composed of ex-

pert, truthful and clean people at the earliest.

Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahim said the government should respect the august house and law and should introduce cabinet nominees for a vote of confidence.

"I once again address the honourable president and chief executive to introduce the cabinet and stop testing people's patience." Ibrahim said the government must put an end to the problems being created for people by acting officials.

The lower house had previously given the government a week's time to introduce the cabinet and had warned of a unilateral decision if the nominees were not sent to the house until Saturday. (Pajhwok)

(11) Concerns...

signed with the US and NATO had been ratified by the parliament, Feldman said, hailing the reopening of the Kabul Bank case.

After presenting an impressive reform agenda at the London Conference, the Ghani administration won pledges of continued international support, the diplomat recalled. (Pajhwok)

(12) Wolesi Jirga...

said most of house commissions had rejected the draft budget and some even suggested a discussion on the issue with the Ministry of Finance.

Of the 158 Wolesi Jirga members present during the session, only three approved the draft but the rest voted against it by raising red cards.

The Ministry of Finance says the general budget is worth \$275 billion and development spending \$183 billion -- 70 percent coming from foreign aid.

Under Article 98 of the Constitution, the general and development budgets are prepared in light of Meshrao Jirga recommendations before it is sent to Wolesi Jirga for a final decision. (Pajhwok)

(13) President ...

Tawab Ghorzang said he had learnt from social media about the removal of Wahidi. But he added the Presidential Palace had not yet commented on the changes.

Another IDLG official, who did not wish to be named, confirmed the removal of Wahidi, who served as Herat governor for one year and four months. (Pajhwok)

(14) Dozens of ...

recruitment of Afghan fighters to assist the military on the ground in key battles, according to International Business Times.

According to reports, some 3,000 Afghan nationals have been deployed to take part in the ongoing Syria conflict. The Afghan militants are fighting on both sides of the Syrian war, in support of the Syria Bashar al-Assad and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) militants.

Informed sources in the Afghan government have also confirmed that the number includes Iranian-backed Shiites fighting a proxy war in support of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and against Islamic State and other rebel groups. The participation of Afghan militants in Syria war has sparked concerns among the Afghan officials some will return to fight in Afghanistan under Islamic State's banner. (KP)

(15) Congress...

US Counternarcotics Efforts in Afghanistan," by Senate Caucus on international narcotics control provides recommendations for Congress and the Obama administration to counter illicit activities and corruption surrounding the Afghan

drug trade.

"The Afghan drug trade funds the Taliban, fuels corruption and creates major public health challenges," said Senator Dianne Feinstein.

She said that Afghanistan could become a narco-state without an effective, comprehensive and coordinated counternarcotics strategy, coupled with unprecedented levels of international cooperation.

"If we don't act, Afghanistan's drug trade could undermine hard won gains and US investments and threaten the safety of the citizens of Afghanistan and neighboring countries," she added.

Noting that opium production in Afghanistan has rapidly increased as the US military presence has been reduced, Senator Chuck Grassley said the report outlines the critical need for the Obama administration to put plans in place now to support continuing counternarcotics efforts without the current level of security provided by the United States.

"The administration should provide Congress with a comprehensive, multi-agency, workable strategy before any more gains made over the past 13 years are lost," Grassley said.

The report recommends that the United States work with the Afghan government to account for the inherent challenges that have previously stymied US efforts to produce and implement a long-term, interagency counternarcotics strategy and develop goals and metrics to measure progress.

It recommends the US to encourage additional countries to support counternarcotics programs in Afghanistan and provide resources to help better interdict narcotics leaving Afghanistan.

The report calls on the US to strengthen the rule of law in Afghanistan by developing an interagency anti-corruption strategy; providing training and support Afghan counternarcotics units vetted by the Drug Enforcement Agency; and expand the vetting process to include select members of the judicial sector.

It urges the US to ensure scarce resources are prioritized to support effective interdiction efforts over eradication and fund alternative livelihood programs that focus more intensely on non-farm income. (Pajhwok)

(16) US, Germ...

announced Wednesday.

"The United States will be in the lead to train, advise and assist in the south and east of Afghanistan. Germany will be in the lead in the north. Italy in the west. And Turkey in the capital," Stoltenberg wrote in an article published by Afghan news agency Pajhwok.

According to Stoltenberg, the mission will consist of 12,000 personnel, and 28 NATO allies will contribute to it in different ways.

"Our mission is based on a request from the Afghan government and the Status of Forces Agreement between NATO and Afghanistan," Stoltenberg said. The NATO chief also stated that the alliance will contribute to the financing of the Afghan forces, while Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani pledged that the funding would be handled efficiently and transparently.

In September, Afghanistan signed a long-term security agreement with the United States and NATO, authorizing the presence of 9,800 American and at least 2,000 NATO troops in the coun-

try after the end of 2014. The bloc's International Security Assistance Force mission was officially terminated earlier in December.

According to NATO, the Resolute Support mission will not involve direct military assistance and will concentrate on training and assisting the Afghan military and providing guidance for the country's government institutions.

In late November, reports emerged in the US media that President Barack Obama had secretly authorized the country's troops in Afghanistan to carry out operations against Taliban insurgents. (Sputnik)

(17) Dangam ...

Afghan forces to push back the Taliban militants from Dangam.

The Dangam fighting between the security forces and militants has entered the twelfth day where mountainous areas and forests have been making troubles for the forces to clear the area from insurgents. (Tolonews)

(18) Russia to ...

held in the Russian Embassy in Tehran in the presence of Levan Dzagharyan, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Islamic Republic of Iran, and UNICEF Representative to Iran, Ezio Gianni Murzi, as well as the UN Resident Coordinator, Gary Lewis, and a number of UN representatives, including UNHCR a key partner in this project.

"In spite of existing financial and economic problems, the Russian government has found the opportunity to support the Afghan children in Iran. These means will contribute to the considerable efforts that the Iranian authorities are making to accommodate Afghan refugees and Children," Russian amabassador said at the event.

"I would like to sincerely thank the Government of the Russian Federation for its very generous contribution," said UNICEF Representative in Iran, "a contribution that will provide additional financial support to the already generous programmes run by the Iranian authorities for Afghan children." (IRNA)

"People expect from their government to act on their promises," MP Sayed Ali Kazimi said. "The consequences of not acting on promises will affect the security, economic and political sectors."

(19) Russia ...

over years will not require our response again."

"For our part, we have been doing our utmost to support all programs for upgrading and rearming Kyrgyzstan's armed forces," Shoigu said. "The necessary contracts have been concluded and we are already in the process of providing advanced Russian military hardware for the Kyrgyz army."

Also on Tuesday, Shoigu met with his Tajik counterpart, Lieutenant-General Sherali Mirzo. Against the backdrop of the international coalition's force withdrawal from Afghanistan the Russian and Tajik armed forces should brace for any march of events, including the most negative one, Shoigu said.

"With this in mind, we believe it is essential to pay priority attention to enhancing the combat potential of the Tajik Armed Forces and the 201st Russian military base. We are determined to furnish support for Tajikistan in maintaining its security further on," Shoigu promised, reports TASS. (AKIpress)

(20) Man Detain...

also seized 10 kg of hashish that was skillfully placed in a vehicle, parked at the side of a road. Police are looking the vehicle's owner. (Pajhwok)

(21) 1 Killed, 6 ...

last night when a Corolla car crashed into a truck, wounding five people including a woman. He blamed the crash on reckless driving.

The second accident took place in the Larghan village on the outskirts of Aibak, the provincial capital, on the Samangan-Balk highway in the morning.

As a car smashed into a motorbike, the motorcyclist was killed and the car driver injured critically. The injured were taken to Samangan Civil Hospital. (Pajhwok)

(22) Taliban...

last five days. "The situation of patients is deplorable. If the highway is not reopened at the earliest, many patients could die."

A Taliban spokesman, Qari Yusuf Ahmadi, rejected if the fighters had closed the road for local residents. He said the Taliban had kept blocked the road for security forces over the last 10 years, but convoys travelled it and came under attack from rebels. (Pajhwok)

(23) Andar

Taliban, however, have not yet commented in this regard. (Tolonews)

(24) Public...

the major promises of the NUG to the nation.

Creation of security strategy and retake of confiscated land and properties were the other major commitments of NUG that have not been fulfilled so far.

"There have been only few gains in foreign policy while the remaining major commitments of the unity government have not been fulfilled," said Sayed Masoud, an economics professor at Kabul University.

The problem persists between the two leaders of government and their teams, Masoud added.

"People expect from their government to act on their promises," MP Sayed Ali Kazimi said. "The consequences of not acting on promises will affect the security, economic and political sectors."

On the other hand, the citizens strongly criticize the government for delaying the formation of cabinet, saying the government departments led by the acting ministers and acting heads are neglecting people's issues.

They warn that the public trust in the government will fall more if the issues remain unaddressed.

Security stability, fight against corruption, reconciliation with armed oppositions and creation of employment opportunities are considered the major tasks to be carried out by the unity government.

Security agreements with U.S. and NATO, reopening of Kabul Bank case, receiving China's support in peace process, gaining support of world countries in Brussels, London and SAARC conferences and ratification of access to information law are mentioned as the achievements made so far by the government. (Tolonews)

(25) Drone ...

Mashriqiwal said joint security forces on Wednesday conducted search operations in Momand Dara and Ghanikhel districts.

The operations involved hundreds of security forces, who established a security outpost at a highest altitude. Elsewhere, security forces carried out a search operation in the Nijrab district of central Kapisa province. Provincial police chief Brig. Gen. Khwaja Faqir Ahmad Siddique told Pajhwok Afghan News two insurgents were killed and as many injured during the operation. (Pajhwok)