

**(1) CSTO to ...**

together Presidents Vladimir Putin, Serzh Sargsyan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, Emomali Rahmon and Almazbek Atambayev. (Aki-Press)

**(2) Confusion ...**

are around 9.2 million, it is important to mention that these figures are for government schools and private schools, if we included students studying in our schools outside the country, the figure is estimated to be 9.7 million," he said.

According to Balkhi, currently up to six million children are attending 17,000 schools across the country. A total of nine million children are registered but 24 percent of them do not attend school.

"Our statistics are authentic. Eleven million were not enrolled - not even on the database of the previous government. The media was given the wrong statistics," Balkhi told TOLNews during an interview earlier this month.

On Monday, officials from the Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Woman Affairs (MoWA), Ministry of Information and Culture (MoIC), Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) and Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation, Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs (MoHRA) and Urban Development were summoned to the Wolesi Jirga (Lower House of Parliament) to report on their performance.

The cabinet ministers defended their performance in the Wolesi Jirga at a time when the majority of Afghans in the country are voicing concerns over the existence of endemic corruption and negligence by government departments. (Tolnews)

**(3) Senior Taliban ...**

and destructive activities in Kharwar, Charkh and Azra districts of Logar province.

In another statement, MoI said "In past 24 hours, Afghan National Defense and Security launched 22 Counter-Terrorism joint operations to clear some of the areas from terrorists and enemies of peace and stability of Afghanistan."

According to MoI, the operations were conducted in Kabul, Nangarhar, Kandahar, Zabul, Uruzgan, Helmand, Sar-e-Pul, Faryab and Kunduz provinces. "As a result 60 armed militants were killed, 18 wounded and 10 others were arrested by Afghan National Defense and Security Forces."

Afghan National Police also discovered and confiscated light and heavy rounds of ammunition during the operations.

The Taliban militants group including the Taliban insurgents has not commented regarding the reports so far. (KP)

**(4) China Provides ..**

provincial government, with the support of China and other friendly countries, local people could overcome the disaster and rebuild their homeland."

Sayed Abdullah expressed his gratitude for China's assistance on behalf of the government and people of Badakhshan province. He said Badakhshan was faced with harsh natural conditions and frequent natural disasters, which constantly caused great losses to local community.

During recent years, China has provided humanitarian assistance to Badakhshan many times and helped relieve the disasters effectively, which will never be forgotten by the Afghan people. (Pajhwok)

**(5) Taliban Changes ...**

Badakhshan said they are waiting for orders to launch winter operations.

"We have all forces on the front line waiting for orders and when we receive orders we will launch our operation," Wadoud added. Badakhshan local officials said that preparations are being taken for an operation to eliminate insurgents during winter.

"Soon we will launch operations and it is expected that within two or three days we will launch our local operation and Wardoj district clearance operation will be conducted in three months of winter," said Gul Mohammad Bedar deputy governor. Taliban has controlled Wardoj

and Yamgan districts for more than a year and are active in several other areas in Badakhshan. (Tolnews)

**(6) ACJC Court...**

Major General Abdulhai, a former prosecutor at the Attorney General's Office, accused of accepting a 50,000 Af\$ bribe, serve out a six year and two months jail term.

"You, Abdulhai son of Abdul Shokor are sentenced to serve two years and six months in prison on charge of taking a bribe," Rasuli said.

Abdulhai's defense attorney Abdul Farid Arabzada also said his client was innocent and submitted documents to the court in this respect. However, the judge upheld the earlier decision.

"If I am the culprit and if I have taken the money, then my fingerprints should be on the money, which they are not," Abdulhai said. (Tolnews)

**(7) A Week after...**

complained to the Balkh police headquarters against Zari police chief, Mohammad Akram, one of his bodyguards and some other individuals linked to him, but their complain went unaddressed.

According to information received by Pajhwok, the MoI had sent a delegation to Zari district on November 21 to investigate allegations against the police chief.

In its report, the delegation says: "Despite direct complaints shared with the Balkh police chief about sexual assaults, death threats, kidnappings and a murdering case against the officer and his bodyguards, the police chief did not take proper action." The report says the delegation consumed a long time initiating an inappropriate and non-professional investigation into the charges. The MoI and judicial organs should have taken action much earlier, it adds.

The delegation said: "The Balkh police chief must arrest the Zari police head and others complicit in the cases and hand them over to relevant organs to address the issue."

Earlier, Balkh police chief Col. Sayed Kamal Sadat said: "Despite the Zari district chief police head's retirement and replacement, he returned to duty without coordination with us. We don't know why it happened. There might be some political games behind the move."

But the governor's spokesman, Munir Farhad, rejected accusations against Zari and said a rival of the police officer was trying to defame him. He said Zari had rejoined duty after requests from 500 elders and people of the district. (Pajhwok)

**(8) Taliban...**

compliance with a presidential order. We no longer receive revenue from it, while the mine is currently illegally extracted and the minerals trafficked through Panjsher province," he said.

Natiq added 692 shops built on the Faizabad-Baharak road had been closed due to bad road condition and as a result, no revenue was collected from the shops. He said closure of Ashkasham, Sheghnan and Nasi ports due to insecurity was another problem in the tax collection drive and the revenue department did not collect revenue from these ports.

However, Abdullah, a shopkeeper in Faizabad, said their income was very limited and could not even meet their daily needs. He said the revenue department collected taxes from 8,000 to 10,000 afghanis from each shopkeeper each year without considering their situation. (Pajhwok)

**(9) 'Afghans Failing ...**

Russia has expressed concern over the emergence of Daesh in Afghanistan.

Russia, China and Pakistan held a meeting in Moscow on Tuesday, discussing the security situation in Afghanistan. Stanikzai said Taliban were not a single group but an umbrella organization of a large number of foreign terrorist groups in Afghanistan.

He said it was not possible for Yoghurt fighters to reside in northeastern Badakhshan prov-

ince because there were no Taliban.

"There is diffidently someone who paved the way for them to reside there," he said.

"International terrorist organizations have access to plenty of resources; all terrorist groups are strongly supported by intelligence agencies of some countries and some internal figures instill extremist ideas into the country's youth."

Stanikzai said the Afghans would not be able to win the war until ideas of people were changed.

"Afghan security forces are unable to do everything, a strong national mobilization is needed to win the war in Afghanistan," he said.

He said not enforcing laws was another big problem because if the law was equally enforced, it would bring about peace to the country.

Despite having limited military resources compared to regional countries, the NDS has still the ability to obtain information about any kind of activities in the country, the spymaster continued.

Stanikzai confirmed weakness in controlling or preventing security incidents but said 100 percent prevention of such incidents was not possible even in developed countries.

He said the NDS was aware of the plot to attack the house of MP Mirwal. The attack was planned in madrasa of Mualvi Ahmad in Pakistan's Chaman border town, he said.

The facilitators of terrorist attacks and suicide bombers should be punished, he said, adding, "There has always been superficial judgment about such incidents, there is even need for reforms about facilitators in the judicial organs."

Stanikzai said Afghans had been in a difficult situation this year as militants tried eight times to capture some provinces.

"The Afghan forces are currently fighting both internal and foreign enemies. The enemy achieved nothing this year," he added.

Interior Minister Taj Mohammad Jahid said the enemy during the past nine months attempted to capture several districts, but failed to do so.

Clearing operations were ongoing in most provinces and the situation was in control of security forces, he said.

Besides training and equipping, the Afghan forces in the next four months would get needed preparation for fighting militant groups, Jahid said.

He also confirmed some weaknesses at lower level in police, but stressed reforms through a qualified team.

A number of commanders accused of corruption, failure in management and negligence have been removed, changed or introduced to the attorney's office, he added. (Pajhwok)

**(10) Residents...**

not respect anyone including women. They searched all people and stole jewelries and precious items from people's homes.

She said some families migrated to Shibebrghan, the provincial capital, after the Daesh attack.

Deputy Governor Eng. Abdul Rahman Mahmodi also said Daesh rebels torched around a hundred houses and killed 10 livestock in the district.

"We have sent a team to the area to investigate the incident and identify the affected people so they are later provided with aid," he said.

He said the incident was not new as in the past too, Daesh militants had committed such activities. (Pajhwok)

**(11) Risking Life**

the capital of eastern Kunar province, has arrived in Kama district, working in the rock mine.

Having failed to find another work, the 48-year-old told Pajhwok Afghan News: "It is a hard job, where one runs the risk of being killed any moment." He has to toil to support nine children. Khan alleged the mine owner had not provided them safety equipment and they faced multiple issues.

Ibrahim, 50, a resident of Khewa district, has been quarrying for the past 14 years. One of his legs was wounded in a rock-slide incident six years ago. Yet to fully recover, the man says a worker is killed or wounded every month. Dr. Mohammad Liaqat Adil,

AAFTU head, acknowledges that miners had been working under extremely difficult circumstances. The government had paid no attention to their plight, he alleged, saying hundreds of miners had been killed over the past few years.

Adil said some disabled individuals had been working in the rock mine. If not helped by the government, they might lose their lives, the trade unionist warned.

Eng. Abdul Hakeem Sherzad, director of works and social affairs, said they had discussed issue of labour safety with the mine owner. But unemployment forced the individuals to work in a difficult environment, he added.

But the governor's spokesman, Attaullah Khogyani, said no complain had been lodged in this regard by workers. If they formally complained, he hoped, the department concerned would come to their help.

He admitted multiple problems were encountered by workers. However, he continued workers had agreed to the terms and conditions of their job and the government could not take action without a formal protection request from miners.

Under Afghanistan's labour law, an individual should work eight hours a day, with all safety measures in place and minimum possible workload. (Pajhwok)

**(12) Balkh: 50 ...**

curriculum in the past.

This year, 50 students graduated from Pashto literature and they included non-Pashtuns as well. He said speakers of other languages could also study Pashto literature. Rahmatullah, 36, a Dari speaker, was among the graduates.

Culturists in Balkh believe the new batch of graduates could serve Pashto language and rehabilitate losses the language suffered in the past.

Baryalai Jalalzi, a member of the Balkh Art Movement, said they were working for Pashto language development over the past 10 years.

He said a Pashto General Library was functional in the province, from where Pashto print and radio media outlets broadcasted their programmes. In addition, Pashto writers held weekly meetings in the library.

He said post-graduate studies in Pashto literature would further strengthen educational and cultural activities in the province. (Pajhwok)

**(13) 4 Killed in...**

of the two groups to establish and strengthen their presence.

The Ghazni representatives also said the ISIS loyalists and Taliban insurgents have started to expand their foothold in Nawa district.

According to the Office of the Chief Executive, the elders of Zabul have said thousands of ISIS militants have arrived in Khak-e-Afghan district.

The ISIS militants have reportedly arrived with their families and are fully equipped with the area turning into an entry point for the foreign insurgents. (KP)

**(14) Man Spraying...**

we rejected his proposal because he was a militiaman."

After the rejection of his proposal, the man entered to his house one night along with his brothers and sprayed acid on his three daughters and wife, Mumtaz claimed.

"I was also tied and beaten up by the persons," he said, adding the harm resulting from the attack on her daughters and wife was still visible on their faces and hands. (Pajhwok)

**(15) Taliban Torch ...**

their escape good.

Police had launched their investigation into the arson attack to identify and arrest the perpetrators, the official said.

Meanwhile, police seized 30 kilograms of opium from a vehicle in Behsud district and arrested a suspect, Amanullah, in connection with the seizure.

Police spokesman, Lt. Col. Hazrat Hussain Mashriqiwal, said Amanullah wanted to smuggle the drugs to Jalalabad city from neighbouring Laghman province. (Pajhwok)

**(16)AAF Helicopter ...**

on the helicopter.

A senior Air Force official confirmed the accident but said technical problems led to the crash.

He said the helicopter had been badly damaged but there had been no casualties.

This is the third Air Force helicopter to crash in two months in the country. (Tolnews)

**(17)Tajikistan's ...**

Laeq, a resident of Darqad district, identified the victims as Rozuddin and Ahmad Jan. The two tried to smuggle drugs to Tajikistan, he alleged, putting at 10 the number of smugglers, who responded to Tajik police fire.

He claimed a one Tajik security guard was also killed in return fire. (Pajhwok)

**(18)TTP-Linked...**

Kalashnikovs, 20 pistols, and 20 mortar rounds, machinegun and three walkie-talkies, which had been seized during separate operations in Kabul and others provinces.

DIAG zonal head Brig. Gen. Ghulam Farooq Parwani told Pajhwok Afghan News that the MoI's counterterrorism department had confiscated the weapons in different parts of the country and surrendered them to the Ministry of Defense. (Pajhwok)

**(19)US, Russian...**

conversations are crediting both sides with putting aside much of the public animosity, which has included Washington's accusations of Russian war crimes in Aleppo and Moscow's charges of American support for terrorist groups such as al-Qaida.

Much of the talk has concerned the two nations' immediate operations. (AP)

**(20)Scores of...**

conservative bloc. The new conservative party will be formally launched on Jan. 24, 2017.

The divisions both in the liberal and conservative blocs would complicate an early presidential race.

The bill to impeach President Park was passed with an overwhelming support. Local media said the constitutional court could rule on the bill by mid-March, before which two of the court's nine justices retire. If the motion is justified, a presidential election must be held within 60 days. (Xinhua)

**(21)Syrian Refugees...**

autonomous region or worse, an independent state, along the border with Turkey.

The Turkish troops and Ankara-backed Syrian rebels are trying now to take al-Bab from the IS, with next targets being Manbij and Raqqa, the de-facto IS capital, as announced by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Saturday.

As the news of more Turkish deaths broke, Turkish columnist Yilmaz Ozdil became one of the most vocal in denouncing the Syrian refugees being sheltered in Turkey. (Xinhua)

**(22)Turkish Army ...**

operations around al-Bab had gained intensity, he said, emphasizing that the Turkish Armed Forces had showed great sensitivity to avoid civilian casualties.

Some 1,900 square kilometers in northern Syria have been cleared of IS as part of the Operation Euphrates Shield, the spokesperson said.

During the past week, hundreds of IS targets have been eliminated, and 226 IS militants have been killed, Kalin stated.

Kalin added that Some 44,000 people have been evacuated from Aleppo and taken to Idlib, while Turkey aims to extend a cease-fire to all of Syria, Kalin said, citing an upcoming meeting in Astana where the issue will be discussed. (Xinhua)

**(23)Fighting in...**

forces on Sunday, injuring five soldiers, said Andriy Lysenko, a spokesman for the ministry.

Meanwhile, insurgents said government troops carried out 189 attacks on their positions, using tanks, grenade launchers and small arms. (Xinhua)

**(24)Not Much...**

Al-Shuja'a, a politics professor at Sanaa University, said the talks

supposed to be held in Amman means that one of the road-blocks to the peace process in Yemen -- the Houthi-Saleh alliance's refusal to go to Riyadh for talks -- has been removed.

"But there are two problems with these talks -- the first is that the quartet is saying the Yemeni factions will seek a deal for de-escalation, not an end, to the conflict; And the other is that it seems Saudi Arabia and its international backers are concerned about security on the Saudi border, not the war and its horrible consequences in Yemen," he said.

"Actually, foreign and regional players are working on a solution for Syria. Their main concern seems to be how to fight terror. They seem to be afraid that if terror spreads in Yemen, it will add to the worsening situation in the region," he said. (Xinhua)

**(25)\$30bn in CPEC ...**

Chinese companies working on CPEC, a new security force has been formed, he added.

He said China and Pakistan together will defeat all anti-CPEC forces, adding that participation of high level officials from the provinces in JCC is the symbol of national unity and commitment. (Monitoring Desk)

**(26)Iran in Talks...**

and the five Security Council permanent members plus Germany came into effect in January. (Xinhua)

**(27)Russia Wants ...**

land that straddles Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, is considered to be the heart of Islamist militancy in Central Asia, whose main target is Russia. (Reuters)

**Estonian PM Maintains Commitment to NATO**

TALLINN - Estonian Prime Minister Juri Ratas on Tuesday maintained the Baltic country's commitment to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Speaking at a joint press conference with visiting U.S. Senator John McCain, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Ratas said that NATO's support is very important for "not only our state, but also our people."

He termed Estonia as "a very initiative member in NATO," making commitment to strong support of negotiation and cooperation between the European Union (EU) and NATO, and the defense finance of 2 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), as well as other programs in defense policies.

McCain, who led the visiting delegation of U.S. Senators, appreciated Estonia's continuing commitment to NATO. He noted that he was convinced that America's relationship with NATO will remain the same after Donald Trump was elected as U.S. president. He added that however, more NATO partners will be urged to maintain the 2 percent threshold, as NATO is facing different aspects of challenges in terms of regional security including cyber security, which was discussed during his one-hour meeting with Ratas at the prime minister's office. (Xinhua)

**Main Flight Recorder of Crashed Russian Tu-154 Retrieved**

MOSCOW - The main flight recorder of the Russian military Tu-154 aircraft that crashed Sunday into the Black Sea has been retrieved from the wreckage, the Russian Defense Ministry said Tuesday. In the next few hours, the recorder, also known as the black box, would be delivered to the Central Research Institute of the Russian Air Force near Moscow for specialists to decode, the ministry said in a statement. The search operation in the crash area continued on Tuesday involving 45 ships, 15 submersibles, 12 planes and five helicopters. Over 3,500 people are currently participating in the mission, including 192 divers, the ministry said.

So far, 12 bodies and 156 pieces of body parts have been found and delivered to Moscow for identification, according to the ministry.

At a distance of 1,700 meters off the shore and at a depth of about 30 meters, pieces of the wreckage have also been found, including parts of the fuselage, engines, as well as various mechanisms and units, it said, adding that this debris has been transferred to the investigating authorities. (Xinhua)