

(1) Afghans to...

at launching peaceful dialogue between Kabul and the Taliban, the statement added.

However, Siddiqui said any decision about lifting sanctions on the Taliban should come from the Afghan nation. He said delisting Taliban would be possible when the insurgent group shunned violence and stopped killing and joined the peace process.

According to Siddiqui, other countries couldn't represent Afghans or discuss and take decisions on removing the Taliban from the black list.

The concerns expressed by the three countries regarding Daesh spread in Afghanistan were baseless, he said.

Siddiqui said the Afghan Security and Defense Forces had crushed the group and had confined it to a small area. The group's infiltration has been brought to a halt.

Daesh was comprised of former Pakistani insurgents originating from Waziristan, who had earlier conducted destructive activities in the neighbouring country, he believed.

"Pakistan is trying to fool China and Russia in the name of Daesh and make the countries take decisions that Pakistan wants."

The three-way talks in Moscow also came under criticism at both houses of Afghan parliament on Wednesday.

The lawmakers said the talks on Afghanistan were interference in the conflict-torn country's internal affairs.

A day before the Moscow session, the MoI announced its opposition to the meeting and said such sessions were useless without Afghanistan's participation. (Pajhwok)

(2) MPs Ask ...

silent in defending legal right of its people and national sovereignty. He asked the government to announce a clear stance towards Moscow.

"The government should take steps and come up with a clear diplomacy for defending national sovereignty and ending the worries of people that Afghanistan will be another Syria next year."

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) also called the meeting on Afghanistan as 'worrying'. Ahmad Shakib Mustaghni, MoFA spokesman said, "Studying Afghanistan's situation without participation of Afghans—even if conducted with good intentions—on one hand couldn't help realistically assess Afghanistan situation and on the other sparked serious questions especially regarding the aim of such meetings." (Pajhwok)

(3) Moscow, Beijing ...

The statement is indicative of Sino-Russo plans to play a more proactive role in an Afghan peace process that has been stymied over the years by tensions between Kabul and Islamabad.

Kabul blames Islamabad for shielding the Afghan Taliban leadership and the Haqqani network. It has repeatedly asked Islamabad to exercise force against the Taliban for their refusal to enter into the dialogue.

The trilateral meeting in Moscow is seen as a major diplomatic success for Pakistan and signals increased cooperation between Pakistan and Russia.

The three nations have now convergence of opinion on how to deal with the conflict in Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(4) Constitution ...

zeal and spirit. He said organizations and individuals who had properly worked for implementation of the Constitution should be praised and appreciated.

Ghani urged the oversight commission to work for making the Constitution part of civil subjects at schools in an easy language. (Pajhwok)

(5) Dostum ...

government and the people. It will also increase the fracture among ethnicities," said Zekria Osuli, a law lecturer. A number of MPs meanwhile said the only way to overcome the issues is that talks are held between government leaders.

"This is against Afghanistan's national interests. I urge government leaders to address people's problems in this respect," said Helai Ershad, an MP. (Tolonews)

(6) MPs to ...

authority of the lower house and it isn't an act against the people or the government."

He added the house decision to impeach the ministers was aimed at improving the country's overall situation, including governance. The disqualified ministers could not work as acting ministers under the law.

"The government should respect the house and introduce candidates for the vacant ministerial portfolios as soon as possible," he said.

Well-placed sources say the Supreme Court (SC) has upheld the Wolesi Jirga's decision on unseating the seven

ministers, but the Presidential Palace said it was yet to be formally informed about the ruling.

Shah Hussain Murtazavi, deputy spokesman for the Presidential Palace, told Pajhwok Afghan News the Supreme Court had not informed the Palace about its decision on the disqualification of ministers. (Pajhwok)

(7) Special Forces ...

of Afghanistan," said Jahed. The interior minister did however voice concern over what he called a lack of modern weapons for police, suggesting that more needed to be done in this respect.

The MoI stated that at least 1,551 insurgents were killed and 653 wounded in the past nine months. The MoI also said police confiscated 487 kg of explosives and 863 types of weapons from insurgents.

"The special forces are prepared to offer sacrifices in any circumstance, in every region of Afghanistan, to maintain security and to foil the conspiracies of the enemies," said Sayed Mohammad Roshan Del, the commander of police special forces.

Although statistics about fatalities among police special forces are not clear, officials have confirmed that two officers were killed during the American University of Afghanistan attack in August. (Tolonews)

(8) Winter ..

music of Afghanistan.

"They will hold concerts in Zurich, Geneva (Switzerland) and then in Germany. And later, they will return home," he added. (Tolonews)

(9) Attacks on...

on the overall security situation and lauded the role of security forces and the sacrifices they have rendered in war against terrorism. (Pajhwok)

(10) Pugwash Shares...

specified and further discussed, the statement said, adding comments, suggestions and advice were more than welcome.

Pugwash is a nongovernmental organisation, which can only propose ideas and recommendations; it cannot organise negotiations. Pugwash said it was aware of the fact that the desire for reaching a peace agreement was universally shared by the Afghan public opinion. Peace was an extremely urgent need, it concluded. (Pajhwok)

(11) Over Half a...

hosted the displaced. Kunduz, Uruzgan, Farah and Helmand produced the highest numbers of displaced people in 2016, while those receiving the most were Helmand, Takhar, Farah, Kunduz, Kandahar. That the same or nearby provinces appear in both lists show that many people seek safety near their homes.

October was the worst month. There were simultaneous assaults by the Taliban on several provincial capitals: on Kunduz city (see AAN reporting here), Farah city in the west, Faryab's Maymana in the north and Helmand's Lashkar Gah in the south. Over a third of the yearly total fled in this month alone, with 213,000 people (31,402 families) on the move. (More in-depth information on displacement is available from an interactive UNOCHA 'dashboard'.

The northeast The highest number of displaced persons was recorded in the northeast region (Badakhshan, Takhar, Kunduz and Baghlan), where over 198,000 people - 28,354 families, fled from conflict. Almost half of them - 93,500 people - fled their home province in October 2016. However, there were other monthly peaks - 30,000 in January and 21,000 in July 2016.

Almost three-quarters of all those displaced in the northeast were from Kunduz province (116,000 from Kunduz district and more than 25,000 from Dasht-e Archi district). While most stayed within the same district (eg over 61,000 in Kunduz district), a considerable number moved to other provinces. For example, over 51,000 people displaced from Kunduz moved to Taloqan district in Takhar province and more than 25,000 to Pul-e Kumri district in Baghlan province. The south

The second highest number of displacements was documented in the southern region (Kandahar, Uruzgan, Zabul, Helmand and Nimroz), where over 164,000 people - 23,867 families (mainly from Helmand and Uruzgan provinces) were on the move. The peak months in the south were August and September, when more than 36,000 and 37,000 people, respectively, were on the move along with March (over 22,000) and October (over 20,000 people). More than a quarter of all those displaced in the south (46,000 individuals) were relocated from Tirinkot district of Uruzgan province (which saw a massive Taliban assault in September. Some

remained displaced within the district, but over 22,000 individuals fled to Dand district of Kandahar province. Almost 30,000 people from Nad-e Ali district in Helmand province were displaced, and more than 17,000 of them fled to Lashkar Gah. In the southern region, the conflict seethed throughout the year, resulting in some level of displacement in almost every month of 2016 (the lowest recorded displacement was in June - 2,904 people - possibly related to Ramadan).

The west The region seeing the third highest number of displacements was the west (Farah, Herat, Ghor and Baghdis). Here, 90,000 people (13,176 families) fled their homes. More than a half of them (around 51,000 people) fled from Farah district alone. While the majority remained displaced within district boundaries, around 11,000 moved to Herat district. However, the district of Farah also received people from the districts of Gullestan (around 2,000 people), Balabuluk (around 3,500 people) and Bakwa (a couple of hundred people). Over 56,000 people - in the west fled in October 2016.

Annual displacement trends 2016 has been the highest year for IDP numbers 'on record', according to UNOCHA. This requires a word of caution; the records on the number of IDPs in the country prior to 2012 are scarce and unreliable. The estimated number of IDPs for the period 2001 to 2009, or earlier periods are patchy, variable and, for some periods, non-existent. A 2015 study by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), which is part of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and the leading source of information and analysis on internal displacement worldwide, offers a rough picture on IDP numbers in Afghanistan since 1978. According to the study, "by the mid-1990s more than 400,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) were living in camps near Jalalabad, Mazar-i-Sharif and Herat."

Following the Taleban's rise to power in 1996, another million people were displaced. By 2002, according to IDMC, 1.2 million people had been displaced inside Afghanistan. The data for the period 2002 - 2010 are inconsistent and therefore not quoted. (Agencies)

(12) MP, Brother, ... from central Bamyan province, his son and driver had been wounded in the explosion. The wounded were rushed to hospital, he said, without revealing their condition.

Meanwhile, resident Mujtaba said the blast took place near Al-Zahra Mosque. The powerful explosion, which jolted the city, was heard in many parts of the capital.

The resident said the roadside bomb had been placed under a culvert and exploded when the representative's vehicle was passing over it. The blast was so powerful that it damaged the MP's vehicle, he added. (Pajhwok)

(13) Iran Must be...

meeting, conference or deliberation on Afghanistan which does not include the country itself and its key neighbors like Iran, will not be fruitful.

"The sovereignty of Afghanistan as an independent country must be recognized and it should be made part of deliberations in future," he said.

"The main thing is how to deal with insurgency, how to deal with militancy, how to deal with violence, how to end the conflict in Afghanistan. This is the most important issue and for this, no one seems to have any applicable formula so far," Rustam Shah Mohmand said. The former ambassador, however, said that new Afghan peace process without the US will not work because America is one of major stakeholders in the country as it has over 10,000 troops in Afghanistan, it controls the most important bases in Afghanistan and it provides critical economic and military assistance to Afghanistan so it needs to be included.

"Last time when Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG) including the US, China, Pakistan and Afghanistan started to deliberate on the issue. The US, on one hand, was trying to engage with Taliban at the same time it was conspiring to kill the Taliban leader so that process was fizzled out."

The expert on Afghan affairs said the principle demand of the militants in Afghanistan is the withdrawal of foreign forces and how these troops will be withdrawn. (IRNA)

(14) 171 Drug ...

a hostel building on Nangarhar University campus, reconstruction of six canals in districts, a factory and others. He said 1400 drug addicts were treated this year.

However, residents of Nangarhar, particularly of Jalalabad, the provincial capital, said the provincial officials had failed in preventing drugs cultivation and trade in the province.

They claimed poppy was being cultivated in most districts of Nangarhar

and the drugs were openly sold in the provincial capital, where the population of addicts was on the increase.

Obaidullah, who lives in Angoor Bagh area of Jalalabad, said a specific area near a famous square. "Talashi Chawk" was full of drug addicts. "Who brings them heroin. If addicts can find it, why not the government?"

A student of the Nangarhar University, Jawad Sapi, who was staring at the addicts, remarked drugs were destroying the youth and it was due to government's ignorance. He urged the government to pay serious attention to the menace of drugs.

A member of the provincial council, Zabihullah Zmarai, did not agree with the version of provincial officials and proposed a practical anti-drugs campaign at district level.

He said they could not get rid of narcotics until drugs were cultivated in districts. "The government says everything is fine, but the ground reality is different. Forget about other places, the Amir Shaheed garden is full of drug addicts."

The governor's spokesman, Attaullah Khogyani, said the governor was serious in finding solution to the question of drugs.

He said the governor had directed all the departments concerned to intensify their efforts at preventing cultivation, use and trade of narcotics.

To a question about the increasing number of drug addicts, Khogyani said their focus was on drug peddlers and steps had been taken to collect and shift to hospital drug addicts. Residents said the number of addicts has alarmingly increased in Nangarhar, especially in Jalalabad. (Pajhwok)

(15) Military Operation...

from the district said government should pay further attention to their safety and defuse mines that have been planted in parts of their district to target security forces. (Tolonews)

(16) Mullah Omar ...

the habit of meeting with diplomats especially with foreign diplomats during the time of occupation when he had millions of dollars of bounty on his head."

According to the group "It is plausible that this diplomat has made such assertions for his own fame or that he was duped by some individual."

This comes as Taliban's top commander Mullah Mansoor Dadullah confirmed earlier in August last year that Mullah Omar did not die naturally but was assassinated, confirming the reports suggesting Mullah Omar was mysteriously killed in April 2013 in a hospital in Karachi city of Pakistan.

Mansoor Dadullah is the brother of the former senior Taliban commander Mullah Dadullah who was actively operating in southern Helmand province before he was killed during an operation in Helmand province in 2007.

The Afghan Intelligence - National Directorate of Security (NDS) earlier said Monday the Taliban supreme leader Mullah Mohammad Omar was mysteriously killed in a hospital in Karachi city of Pakistan.

Mullah Omar's death was first confirmed by a splinter group of the Taliban - Afghanistan Islamic Movement Fidayi Mahaz, which claimed that he was assassinated Mullah Akhtar Muhammad Mansoor and Gull Agha.

The group's spokesman Qari Hamza said last year Mullah Omar was killed two years ago in the month of July. (KP)

(17) 2,000kg of ...

the judiciary.

According to him, over the past one year, 51 drugs factories were destroyed and over 300 different types of weapons captured from them. (Pajhwok)

(18) Fresh University...

She said despite limited opportunities for women in Faryab, she wanted to serve and disallow her four years of efforts to go in vain.

Feroz Uzbek Karimi, deputy vice chancellor of the university, said 1,366 students, including 494 females, had received graduation degrees in different disciplines.

Governor Syed Anwar Sadaat told the graduates that huge sacrifices had been made for the gains so far obtained during the past few years.

He said security forces had rendered great sacrifices to enable the youth to avail education opportunities. (Pajhwok)

(19) Bonded Labourer ...

afghans from the factory owner to pay other debts. The family has since been working to return that amount.

He has been unable to pay back the debt. "We are given 600 rupees per 1,000 bricks. My two sons and I lay 2,500-3,000 bricks daily. This amount we spend on meeting family needs and the loan remains unpaid."

Ahmad's son Wahid is also busy working laying bricks along with his father. With skinny hands, the boy prepares clay for bricks and later helps his father lay bricks all day long.

Like other Afghans, they take meals thrice a day. The difference is that Gul's family eats bread with green tea in the morning, potatoes or other vegetable in lunch and the same food in dinner.

After the Eid-ul-Adha, Wahid has eaten meat only once in a wedding ceremony. After that he has not even seen it.

The teen says he is extremely pained to see other boys of his age going to school as he works in the brick kiln.

"I see my dreams shattered, unable to go to school because of poverty. I want to study and become a doctor or an engineer," he comments.

He works more than nine hours a day. They boy says he stops working in the evening, too tired to play or study.

They will have to be content with hard labour till they repay the kiln owner's debt or save enough money so that his father could find start some other business.

Frustration writ large on his face, Wahid's father says: "I had no option but to borrow 60,000 afghanis from the owner and now we have to work for him." (Ahmad and Wahid are not real names).

On the other hand, the kiln owner vehemently denies forcing the family into bonded labour. Instead they claim providing them with shelter and work opportunities.

Haji Malyar, in charge of the Malyar Bricks Factory, says he lent 60,000 rupees to the family to resolve their financial problems. He will never ask them to work once he got back his money.

Director of Works and Social Affairs Abdul Hakim Sherzad acknowledged dozens of families were working as bonded labourers in brick kilns in Surkhroad district. Their children are involved in hard labour and deprived of education.

His department arranges discussions every month on how to rescue the children involved in hard labour and provide them with education.

Bricks factory owners, the director admits, exploited such workers by giving them small amounts in wages and ask them to make additional bricks in return for the accommodation facility.

The number of child labourers in kilns increases in the winter and declines in the summer season. According to a survey, he says, the number reached 1,800. But another study puts it at 2,200.

Meanwhile, the Afghanistan Independent Human Right Commission (AIHRC) expressed concern over child labour and said children going without education and entertainment had a bleak future.

Ghulam Hussain Bewas, an AIHRC official, said they had created education and entertainment facilities in 15 brick kilns in the province to make sure such get access to children education.

Provincial officials also acknowledged child and bonded labour in brick kilns. The governor's spokesman, Attaullah Khogyani, said some families had deliberately put themselves in this situation.

He added detectives had been tasked with conducting a survey of such families so that they were given necessary help.

Mohammad Asif Shinwari, spokesman for the Education Department, said children working in brick kilns were deprived of education. He, however, explained they had set up 30 village schools for them.

On the completion of the three-year programme, children could be enrolled in mainstream schools. (Pajhwok)

(20) BNP-M Seeks...

of life and death for the party. A census in the present circumstances would consign displaced families to a future of insolvency and deprivation, it warned.

Participants said the presence of Afghan refugees was fuelling extremism, Talibanisation and sectarianism in the province. They questioned the rulers' soft corner for the Afghans. (Pajhwok)

(21) Afghanistan Loses...

India following 2012 and 2014 games. According to AFF officials, the Afghan team had lost 12-0 in 2012 games and 11-0 in 2014 games.

The second match will be played against Bangladesh on 29th of December.

The Afghanistan Women's National Football Team Coach Kelly Lindsey told reporters on Monday that the Afghan team is having necessary preparations for the championship and the Afghan footballers are appearing with better moral in the games.

However, she said the Indian team a strong opponent and Afghanistan has never recorded a victory against India as she said it would be interesting to

play alongside them in Group B.(KP)

(22) 10 Dead, 9 ...

have been killed and eight others wounded in separate clearing operations on the outskirts of Alishang district, Sarhadi Zwak, the governor's spokesman said.

One militant and four suspected individuals had been held during the offensive that continued until early morning, he said. (Pajhwok)

(23) US Embassy ...

giving support to terrorist groups including Daesh, YPG and the PYD. It's very clear. We have confirmed evidence, with pictures, photos and videos," he added.

The embassy statement denied the accusations.

"The United States government has not provided weapons or explosives to the YPG or the PKK. We repeatedly have condemned PKK terrorist attacks and the group's reprehensible violence in Turkey," the statement added. (Xinhua)

(24) Ukrainian Army...

ammunition for its Armed Forces.

In the previous two years, Ukraine has increased its military spending in response to the conflict in the eastern part of the country between government troops and pro-independence insurgents.

The conflict, which started in April 2014 and claimed some 10,000 lives so far, has slightly eased this year despite sporadic clashes. (Xinhua)

(25) Number of ...

week a failed asylum seeker who had sworn allegiance to the Islamic State militant group killed 12 people when he rammed a truck into a Christmas market in Berlin, fuelling growing criticism of Chancellor Angela Merkel's immigration policy. (Reuters)

(26) Turkish Troops ...

supports the terrorist groups, including the IS and the Syrian Kurdish forces.

"The anti-IS coalition forces accused us of supporting Daesh," Erdogan told a press conference in Ankara on Dec. 27, using the Arabic acronym for IS.

"Now they've all vanished and they're supporting terrorist groups including Daesh, the YPG and the PYD. It's very clear. We have solid evidence, in pictures and videos," he said. (Xinhua)

(27) EU Provides ...

Acute malnutrition rates in Sudan are amongst the highest in the world and the highest in the Middle East and North Africa, with on average 16 percent of children under five years old affected by global acute malnutrition, it said.

"Around two million children suffer from acute malnutrition annually, including over 550,000 who are affected by severe acute malnutrition and at real risk of dying," it said.

The Sudanese government and the UNICEF Country Office have recently announced several national programs addressing malnutrition and reducing children's mortality rates, through affording employment for families and communities thereby supporting the children's best interests. (Xinhua)

(28) Pakistan's Fourth the participants and the Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) on timely completion of the project and thanked the China Atomic Energy Authority and the Export-Import Bank of China for extending technical and financial support to the endeavor. (Monitoring Desk)

(29) Iran Flexes ...

drones belonging to the U.S. navy not to approach the airspace of the military exercise. Over the past three days, the air defense has given warnings to 12 aircraft of trans-regional countries to stay away from the country's airspace, Gen. Abbas Farajpour, the spokesman for the war game, was quoted as saying by Tasnim. (Xinhua)

(30) Tajikistan...

sides held cooperation talks, reports Avesta news agency. Participants of the meeting also raised issues of necessary support of the Tajik experts in the international exhibitions and fairs in Uzbekistan. (AKI Press)

(31) Turkmenistan ...

member in October 2012, enabling issuing of e-UNLP, the electronic form of the United Nations laissez-passer. In December 2014, ICAO self-reported the PKD as having 45 participating member countries.

In 2015 the German Bundesdruckerei (German Federal Printing Office) has won the request for tender of the ICAO to provide the ICAO PKD. (AKI Press)