

(1) Trump, MoDi Discuss

Trump and Modi "expressed concern about the political crisis in the Maldives and the importance of respect for democratic institutions and rule of law," the White House said in a statement. They repeated their commitment to Afghanistan's security, the statement added. Washington recently cut aid to Pakistan, India's nuclear-armed neighbor and arch-rival, over accusations it failed to root out Taliban and Haqqani network militants that have contributed to the long-running war in Afghanistan.

India has increased aid to Afghanistan in recent years and promised in 2016 to ship more arms, aggravating fears in Pakistan it will become wedged between two hostile nations.

The two leaders also addressed the plight of more than 680,000 Muslim Rohingya who have fled Myanmar since last year to Bangladesh after the Myanmar military cracked down in northern Rakhine State, amid witness reports of killings, looting and rape, in response to militant attacks on security forces.

Trump and Modi also addressed North Korea, the White House said. Washington has been leading diplomatic efforts to ramp up international pressure on Pyongyang over its nuclear weapons and missile programs, out of concern they may eventually enable North Korea to attack the United States.

Although India and North Korea maintain diplomatic offices in each other's capitals, New Delhi has banned trade of most goods with the country, except for food and medicine.

Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj met with U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson in October in New Delhi and defended India's ties with Pyongyang, saying some level of diplomatic presence was necessary to keep open channels of communication. (Reuters)

(2) Pakistani Taliban

Kandahar Police Chief General Abdul Raiziq this week said all terrorist groups operating in Afghanistan have safe havens in Pakistan. (Tolo news)

(3) US Launches

and the adjoining Pakistani tribal belt have sheltered ETIM militants.

"There will be no safe haven for any terrorist group," said General John Nicholson, who commands U.S. forces and NATO's Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan.

"We continue to strike them wherever we find them. We continue to hunt them across the country."

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid claimed Thursday U.S. airstrikes have targeted civilian areas in Badakhshan and insurgents have not suffered any losses. There was no independent confirmation of the claim. The Taliban often inflates battlefield details. (VoA)

(4) UN Concerned

increases poverty," said Malikyar, deputy chief of NEPA.

UN says in case of drought, Afghanistan will need 1.5 million tons of wheat.

"If there is a drought, if indeed there was a shortfall of 1.5 million metric tons of wheat or perhaps more, I have no doubt that the international community, be it friendly countries of the region, be it the donor community (would help)," said Lanzer.

"Less than 30 percent of the average rain fell in 24 of 34 provinces across Afghanistan from October to January, and I estimate the country will face a 1.5 million MT deficit of wheat this year," Lazer said in a twitter post on 5 February.

The Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) has said that the government has a stockpile of 240,000 tons of wheat in case of a drought in the next solar year.

"The level of rain and snowfall has significantly decreased compared to previous years, we have established strategic reserves in Herat, Kabul, Balkh, Kandahar and Pul-e-Khumri provinces. We will also work on the rehabilitation of the irrigation system. Drought poses serious harm to rainfed wheat crops," said Akbar Rustami, MAIL spokesman.

Agricultural products form a core component of Afghanistan's national economy. The country needs over six million tons of wheat every year from which, 4.5 million tones are produced inside the country and the remaining 1.5 million tons are imported from abroad. (Tolonews)

(5) Daikundi Farmers'

however, said due to the lack of processing factories, unlabelled saffron was sold in Daikundi, Kabul and Herat markets.

He asked the government to do more for promotion of saffron crop in districts and train farmers how to cultivate and look after the vital crop.

Benazir Hussaini, a female farmer, said saffron was a suitable crop for women to grow it and improve their economy.

Bomana Hedayat, another farmer, said she had been cultivating saffron over the past few years, helping her to become economically self-sufficient.

Agriculture officials say in order to promote saffron cultivation women will be provided with more experimental agriculture land pieces.

Saffron produced in Afghanistan recently earned global recognition for its taste and quality. (Pajhwok)

(6) Afghan, Pakistani

from Pakistan.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs said last week that the visit of the Pakistani delegation was followed by the Afghan ministers' visit to Pakistan.

However, the Pakistani government said the delegation visited Kabul to talk on the Afghanistan-Pakistan action plan. (Tolonews)

(7) Air Force

including 27 Daesh fighters were killed, 25 others wounded and four suspects were arrested.

The insurgents were from Taliban, Haqqani network and Daesh militant groups, the ministry said.

Many strongholds of the militants were destroyed and some vehicles belonged to terrorists were damaged during the operations, the statement added.

The operations were lunched in Nangarhar, Logar, Paktia, Uruzgan, Zabul, Herat, Farah, Badghis, Faryab, Baghlan, Takhar, Jawzjan, Nimroz and Helmand provinces, the statement said.

According to the statement, the military operations were carried out to ensure the safety of the people and clear the areas of militants. (Tolo news)

(8) Afghans Seeking

does not release details of the submissions it receives and only a handful of people have come forward to say they have filed complaints with it. No one in Afghanistan who has filed a case against U.S. forces has said so publicly.

One person who has spoken out is politician Ahmad Ishchi who says Vice President Abdul Rashid Dostum ordered his men to abduct, beat and sexually assault him in 2016.

"I hope the International Criminal Court grants me justice so I can regain my dignity," Ishchi told Reuters in his well-guarded office in Kabul, the Afghan capital.

Dostum, who is in Turkey, has not been charged with any offense and has denied the accusations. (Reuters)

(9) Politicians Warn

Abdul Rab Rasool Sayyaf, the reconciled cohort of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Mohammad Mohaqiq, the second deputy of CEO Abdullah Abdullah and senate chief Fazel Hadi Muslimyar.

The presidential palace in a statement said that the meeting was aimed to hold discussions on issues of national interests.

But sources say that the move is aimed by the government to create a grand council named as "Council of Elders".

"We can not summarize it only with the presence of a few people under the name of Jihadi leaders, because there are a lot of other Jihadi leaders who fought Jihad, I hope that the Afghan government does not follow only the names and it also welcomes its political opponents who exist in this country," said Gailani.

Until now there are no reports about the aims and objectives of such a council

But, an official from the Council for the Protection and Stability of Afghanistan said that any move to prolong the tenure of the present government is against the law.

"Discussions and talks which urge the creation of a council to prolong the tenure of government without holding elections is against the law and it is in defiance of political logics, it is also not in favor of the national interests of Afghanistan that we look at other options which violate the law," said Massoud Tarishtwal, spokesman for the Council of Protection and Stability of Afghanistan. (Tolonews)

(10) RSM Vows

accurate in hitting a target."

Bunch said militants fulfilled their 60 percent financial needs from growing, producing and smuggling narcotics and so far 36 narcotics processing factories had been destroyed.

"Militants have around 500 narcotics laboratories and the laboratories destroyed in air strikes cost the militants nearly \$33 million," he added.

In response to a question about civilian casualties in Afghan and foreign forces attacks, he said, "Civilian casualties have decreased in air strikes compared to the past and the reason is the strengthened power of Afghan forces who lead both the

ground and aerial attacks, they very accurately target the enemy, but sometimes both civilians and Afghan forces suffer casualties due to wrong intelligence information."

But in return, civilians mostly suffered casualties in Taliban attacks particularly in suicide bombings, he said.

Bunch said Afghan and foreign forces in Afghanistan had developed their military plans in consideration of security threats. The remarks from a RSM general come a day after seven members of a single family were killed in an air strike in Alishir district of southeastern Khost province. (Pajhwok)

(11) Over 3,500

troops had been injured in until September 2012, but there was no figure of injured soldiers from coalition countries.

According to the New US strategy military action against the insurgents would be increased. The new strategy also asked Pakistan to take decisive action against insurgents. (Pajhwok)

(12) Commanders

many wounded during a clash with security forces in the Maidanio locality of Mehtarlam, the capital of Laghman province, Faqiri said.

Security forces and civilians suffered no casualties during the operations, he concluded. Daesh and Taliban have not yet commented on the overnight incidents. (Pajhwok)

(13) Police Township

of this township are usurped by a number of retired and current officials of the Ministry of Interior (MoI)," he said without naming anyone.

"Whenever the MoI decides to issue proof of ownership to owners of the apartments, the grabbers prevent this process because they will lose the property," he said.

Talking on behalf of other protestors, Sabori asked the government to issue ownership documents to actual owners of the apartments.

Abdul Majid, a resident of the township, who said he was the heir of a martyred policeman, said a number of current and retired police officers had occupied 110 apartments in the township and the same officers had blocked the issuance of proof of ownership to the actual owners.

Habiba, 45, the widow of a martyred police officer, said she had received an apartment in the township, but not any documents to claim ownership.

She also demanded the ownership documents from the government and said she would never give her apartment to someone else.

Brig. Gen. Fazal Karim Sadat, chief attorney at the MoI, also said officials who had grabbed apartments in the township were behind prevention of issuing the ownership documents to the families of the martyrs.

"Those whose interests are at risk are preventing this process, the residents of the township can task a delegation and I would support it to share the issue with the minister," he said.

A MoI official, who wished to go unnamed, said the previous minister had formally shared the issue with the Cabinet. The Cabinet last year formed a mixed commission to assess the grabbing issue and share its report, but the commission did not share its findings with the Cabinet. (Pajhwok)

(14) Kabul Rally

the title of terrorist to Pashtun was not acceptable to them. We the youth of Afghanistan support the Pashtun Long March in Pakistan --- Pashtons are not terrorists but terrorism had been imposed on them."

He said the youth of Pashtons were ready to support Pashtons on the other side of the Durand Line.

The unprecedented protest sit-in by the Pakistani Pashtuns entered a 10th day on Friday in Islamabad, despite assurances from the country's prime minister to meet their demands.

A meeting between representatives of the Pashtun Quami Jirga and Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi failed to convince the protesters to end their sit-in in the federal capital, the Pakistani media reported. The premier had assured tribal elders of employing all resources to arrest suspended SSP Rao Anwar involved in the killing of Naqeebullah Mehsud in a staged police encounter in Karachi on January 13.

However, the jirga members at the protest venue were widely divided some as some elders convinced with the assurances favoured wrapping up the dharna, but a majority strongly opposed the idea. Naqeebullah Mehsud was killed in what later proved to be a fake police encounter in Karachi. With the case being heard by the Supreme Court, Rao Anwar has been hiding to escape justice. Seen by some as a new political awaken-

ing among the long suppressed ethnicity, the protest has been unprecedented.

Pashtun national leader and former senator Afrasiab Khattak had said the protest stemmed from the oppression of the Pashtuns.

Pakistani media quoted the protestors as saying they would continue their peaceful protest until their demands were met. (Pajhwok)

(15) Afghan Forces

and Badakhshan and other parts of the north (of Afghanistan) were very successful, and another good point of the operations was that they resulted in no civilian casualties."

The foreign forces showed the heavy military equipment at the base and said they will use them to target terrorist strongholds.

"Our mission here is to "reign denial" and support operations of Resolute Support," said Jonathan James, a US Army soldier in the east of Afghanistan. He said the reign denial is the night operations conducted at night in order to prevent civilian casualties.

This comes after a US Air Force B-52 bomber recently increased its strikes against insurgents in the north of the country after focused air raids in the south.

The latest airstrike of the US B-52 bomber targeted Taliban hideouts, their fighters and stolen Afghan National Army vehicles, according to US forces in Afghanistan.

The airstrike has reportedly targeted Taliban strongholds, training camps and drugs processing centers in bordering areas between Afghanistan's Badakhshan with Tajikistan and China.

Footage made public shows how the US B-52 bomber targets two narcotics centers of insurgents in Helmand province - in the south of Afghanistan.

The recent move by the US Air Force was the first in the past 14 years in which a B-52 bomber targeted northern and north-eastern parts of Afghanistan.

Jawzjan provincial officials - in the north of Afghanistan - confirmed that a B-52 airplane targeted Daesh centers in which 25 fighters were killed.

Analysts said the B-52 airstrikes targeted areas which are difficult for ground forces to access and areas outside of government's control. (Tolonews)

(16) Ghani Hopes

historical importance of this march traces back to the great proponent of non-violence, Bacha Khan, whose philosophy was based on the non-violent ideology," he added.

He called on media outlets to help the protest in voicing their grievances and demands and presenting their true image to the world.

"After the tragedies of Kabul, I had remarked that Afghans and the people of this region should align against terrorism. I consider the #PashtunLongMarch a response to those remarks and a wake-up call against fundamentalism," he tweeted. He said the protest is a positive initiative against fundamentalism "that morally binds on each one of us to support them". Following the murder of a young shopkeeper in a gunfight with Karachi police last month, thousands of Pashtuns, living in the tribal belt, rallied against the move, seeking justice and an end to the oppression against them.

The rally started more than 10 days ago. Since then, they have been observing a sit-in protest.

During the past week, many emotional speakers talked about their grievances and urged the Pakistani government to act on their demands.

Naqeebullah Mehsud was accused of having links with terrorist groups. Later, an investigation found no evidence against him.

This caused the massive protests which started from the North Waziristan and continued through to Islamabad.

The protest is rarely reported by the Urdu language Pakistani media.

According to an article in The Diplomat, the key demands of the protestors are:

Swift justice for Naqeebullah Mehsud as well as arresting and punishing the police officer who allegedly kidnapped and killed him;

Remove all the landmines from Waziristan and the rest of the tribal belt;

Produce all the so-called "missing persons," who have allegedly been taken into custody by the state security agencies;

Remove the security check posts, where tribesmen have to prove their identity each time they

And put an end to frequent curfews on the movement of locals in the name of security. (Tolo news)

(17) Kabul to Bring

institutions to ensure the fate of Afghan prisoners be determined in line with the

bilateral agreement with Iran.

"So far over 617 Afghan prisoners have been transferred to Afghanistan where they will complete the remaining judicial processes in accordance to the Afghan laws. Currently, there are about 5,124 Afghans in Iranian prisons," said Ghani.

But the general directorate of prisons and detention centers has said that currently there is not enough space in local prisons to hold so many inmates.

"The agreement had been signed ten years ago, unfortunately it was not implemented. But now the agreement is being processed. Based on the agreement, Afghan detainees will be transferred to Afghanistan," said Minister of Refugees and Repatriations Sayed Hussain Balkhi.

The 617 Afghan prisoners already transferred to Afghanistan had been arrested in connection with murder, drug smuggling and other crimes.

"The honorable president had directed the Chief Justice and the attorney general to determine the fate of these detainees in one or two weeks and legal decisions must be taken in line with the agreement signed between us and the Islamic Republic of Iran," said general Shah Mir Amirpour, head of the communication department of the general directorate of prisons and detention centers.

"Those who have confessed to their crimes must be dealt with according to the laws, but those who were arrested under different pretenses, the government must deal with them with honesty and complete impartiality," said Asif Sediqqi, a senator.

Based on the statistics of Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations (MoRR), currently over 800,000 Afghans are living illegally in Iran while nearly one million other Afghans live there legally. (Tolonews)

(18) Nangarhar

deteriorated and militant groups such as the Taliban, Daesh and others enjoyed free movement.

"When we raise our voice, the provincial official accused us of pressuring them. If we don't pressure them they will start theft. If there is nothing wrong with you, if you are not involved in corruption so why should you become under pressure," he questioned.

He said local officials often accused powerful individuals for insecurity but the fact was that security officials were not qualified and violated orders from the centre.

Governor spokesman Attaullah Khogyani spurned the claims of PC head and said the security situation was improved currently and asked the local representatives not to create hurdles in government anti-corruption drive. (Pajhwok)

(19) Military Operations

Khwaja Ghar district of the province. However, the security forces have not provided further details about the operation and casualties of security forces during the operations. (Tolonews)

(20) Women Products'

display included different varieties of clothes, food items such as sauces, jams, medicines, dairy products, cakes, sweet, jewelry and electric products.

The ACCI head for women said 30 businesswomen had put their products on display in 30 stalls at the show and people could see them today and tomorrow.

Mohammad Younis Momand, ACCI deputy head for business products administration, said women needed support to promote their businesses and products.

He asked people to use domestic products because it could promote local production and industry.

Zarafat, a businesswoman and owner of Sandwich Sabz Company, said she launched her business three month backs by producing food items.

Her company produced different types of sandwiches of high quality and beneficial for health.

Similar exhibitions have already been inaugurated in Herat City, Mazar-i-Sharif, Jalalabad and Kandahar City. (Pajhwok)

(21) Govt, Jamiat Likely

of Afghan Civil Society Forum, said.

Last week, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) said the international body wants the government-Jamiat rift to be resolved as soon as possible.

"Responding to requests from the parties involved, UNAMA is engaged in looking to support a peaceful resolution at the earliest possible time. As a political mission mandated to support conflict prevention, UNAMA uses its offices to prevent violence and promote stability.

The international community is committed to assisting Afghanistan hold credible elections in 2018. We trust that all Afghans are doing all they can to ensure the polls happen this year," UNAMA spokesman Liam McDowall told TOLONews. (Tolonews)