(1) Ghani Calls ...

Danish also implied that Russia should not repeat the mistakes of the past. He said at the time of the invasion, the Soviet Union had not had a legitimate reason to invade the country.

Danish also said that extremism has always created problems in Afghani-

Abdul Rab Rasoul Sayyaf, a former Ji hadi leader, also made it clear that "no external force could defeat Afghani-

He said the Mujaheddin saved the country and that they are the guardians of Afghanistan.

Twenty-eight years ago, Soviet forces on this day withdrew from Afghanistan following tough resistance from the Afghan people and Mujahideen. The Soviets invaded Afghanistan on 27 December 1979 from both ground and air.

Soviet Union troops entered Afghanistan from different directions including Torghundi, Hairatan and Sherkhan borders. (Tolonews)

(2) Prof. Sayyaf ...

fearing internal factors could bring down the system. However, he did not go into details.

Addressing President Ashraf Ghani, he said: "I want you to pay serious attention to fighting financial, administrative and moral corruption -- the most misleading evils. Corruption has reached its climax. God forbid, we may suffer the fate of those infected with corruption."

The religious leader hailed the freedom of expression as a good principle, but warned against trampling on religious teachings. (Pajhwok)

(3) Procurement...

curement body's processes and strategies be studied one by one. He directed all state institutions to focus on such recommendations and principles for improved work procedures.

The meeting was attended by Vice President Sarwar Danish and representatives from finance, economy and justice ministries, SIGAR, parliamentary panels on budget commission and anti-corruption. (Pajhwok)

(4) Russia Mulls ...

"Similarly, neighboring Iran is providing support to the Taliban while also engaging the Afghan government over issues of water rights, trade, and security," he added.

Gen. Nicholson who is also the commander of the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission, made the remarks during a briefing to the Senate Armed Services Committee on Thursday.

(5) NATO Mission ...

from becoming a safe haven for international terrorists and there are many different international terrorist groups today in Afghanistan," said Stolten-

NATO is expected to convene its defense ministers meeting in Brussels on Wednesday where the alliance will discuss the overall security situation in the world including the situation in Afghanistan. (Tolonews)

(6) 69 Afghan ...

charity organization, arranges treatment in Germany for dozens of Afghan children each year.

The father of one child who left for Germany on Tuesday said his eightyear-old daughter went for orthopedic treatment. (Tolonews)

(7) Hizb-E-Islami

Istanbul hospital. No details were however given.

"Hizb-e-Islami leader does not have any health issues and he is currently in Afghanistan, the reports about his health are baseless; and the trip by the Hizb-e-Islami delegation to Turkey was a friendly trip," said Afghan.

Meanwhile, the High Peace Council (HPC) said that many of Hizb-e-Islami's operatives are willing to denounce violence and lead a peaceful life in some provinces. (Tolonews)

(8) Hekmatyar ...

was in addition to reports that a top Hizb-e-Islami delegation led by the group's political committee Ghairat Baheer and top negotiator Mohammad Amin Karim visited Turkey at the invitation of Erdogan.

But Hizb-e-Islami officials rejected the

claims. (Tolonews) (9) Moscow Expecte...

week's round for the first time. It is not yet clear which representatives have accepted the invitation.

The Russian side will be represented by special presidential envoy for Afghanistan Zamir Kabulov and Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Morgulov, reports TASS.

US not invited

"The essence of these talks is to get together all the countries that have at least some influence in Afghanistan: on the government, or on any informal level, on the armed opposition level, and to work out a certain consensus, so that these countries could implement it in their policies," says the Center of Contemporary Afghanistan Studies' Dmitry Verlhoturov.

The United States has not been invited to participate in the talks.

The exclusion of Afghanistan from the first round raised concerns among officials in Kabul as well as in the United States. (VoA)

(10) Iran Ready ...

20 years.

The total area of land used for poppy cultivation in Afghanistan had risen by 10 percent to 201,000 hectares (497,000 acres) in 2016, UNODC said. Opium poppy cultivation, a favorite activity of the Taliban, used to be limited to certain parts of Afghanistan; however, the surge in militancy and the government's loss of grip on security has allowed it to spread to other parts of the country, particularly the north. (IRNA)

(11) France Offers

for the Afghan government implementing priority development schemes, the minister hoped.

Hakimi said 20.7 million euros would be allocated for the extension of a 44 kilometre power line from Mahmood Raqi, the capital of Kapisa, to Nijrab and Tagab districts.

A 40 kilometre high-voltage line will be extended from Nijrab to Naghlu Dam. The national electricity network in Kapisa has been expanded by 24 percent under a programme, sponsored by France.

He said 25.4 million euros would be spent on provision of improved seeds, fertilizers and cows to farmers, building and clearing water streams and cold storage facilities. (Pajhwok)

(12) Goal Should...

is the only way forward for the people of Afghanistan," he said.

All other policies including the troop numbers of the US Government should revolve around this objective, the Afghan Ambassador said in response to a question. The national security reasons that propelled the United States into Afghanistan 16 years ago are as urgent as ever, he said indicating that Afghanistan is still far away from being not to be a safe haven

for terrorist groups. In his remarks, Mohib spoke about terrorist safe havens in Pakistan. "I can't speak of security in Afghanistan without talking about terrorist safe havens in Pakistan," he said adding that this is the biggest cause of concern for Afghanistan and its war against terrorism. (Pajhwok)

(13) Roots of ...

that effort, our security forces are serving valiantly to enhance security, while defending and protecting our sovereignty, infrastructure and people against terrorism and violent extremism," he said. (KP)

(14) Collecting...

According to the officials, this measure is as per Article 39 of Da Afghanistan Bank and it helps to prevent wearing out of further banknotes in the market. The following features seen in a banknote will make it invalid:

Presence of a sticky material on the

Any writing or drawing on the bank-

Any stamp on the banknote Poorly folded, wrinkled banknote Moneychangers said the central bank had promised them extension in the time if failed to complete the mission

until March 21. (Wadsam) (15) Pakistan to ...

the theme for the upcoming summit that may decide on ECO's vision 2025; including the core principles of development, sustainability and regional integration.

The cooperation areas earmarked for the summit consist of trade, transport & connectivity, energy, tourism, economic growth & productivity, social welfare and environment.

At the gathering, Afghanistan will be represented by Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani. Presidents of Iran, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, the prime minister of Kyrgyzstan and deputy prime minister of Uzbekistan will also be in attendance. (Pajhwok)

(16) Pakistan Forcing...

largest unlawful mass forced return of refugees in recent times," the Human Rights Watch report says.

Both the U.N. and Pakistan denied the allegations. In an interview, Indrika Ratwatte, Pakistan's country representative for the U.N. refugee agency, said there was police harassment and arrests of Afghan refugees in mid-2016, particularly in the border province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but it was ended and refugees who returned, went home voluntarily.

"There were incidences of pressure and harassment especially in KP but they were addressed," said Ratwatte. "But does it amount to forced return. No. it doesn't.'

Still, the report was harsh in its criticism of the U.N. agency for not condemning what it insisted is Pakistan's forced return of the refugees.

Meanwhile, Pakistan cited security concerns for seeking Afghan refugees' return to their homeland, particularly after several brutal attacks by militants in Pakistan's northwest, which the government linked to insurgents hiding out in neighboring Afghanistan. The worst attack was in December 2014 against an army public school in which 150 people were killed, most of them children.

At its peak in the 1980s Pakistan sheltered an estimated 5 million Afghan refugees as Afghan guerrilla fighters battled invading Russian troops aided by the United States and other western countries. Today there are still 1.3 million registered Afghan refugees living in Pakistan, says Ratwatte, some of them for 37 years. Pakistan currently hosts the world's largest protracted refugee population, he said. There are hundreds of thousands of unregistered Afghan refugees living in the country as well. (VoA)

(17) Taliban Subject ...

Mujahid claimed the fighters had access to the biometric system in different areas, including Kunduz. But he said nothing about today's incident. Some months back, the Interior Ministry had spurned as groundless reports about Taliban's possession of the biometrics system. It had then called the movement's claim part of the propa-

ganda war. According to the ministry, the system has been divided into central and regional categories. The central part - closely guarded -- is maintained in Kabul. The system contains information about security personnel and offenders.

Only a few special individuals can access the data. At the regional level, the biometrics system would be operated only in emergency situations.(Pajh-

(18) Pakistan Refutes

historical context in which Pakistan and its people have been generous and gracious hosts to millions of Afghans for over 37 years now. With dwindling international assistance and attention over the years, Pakistan has shouldered this huge responsibility largely on its own, providing shelter, education, health care and livelihood opportunities to our Afghan brothers and sisters despite severe strain on our limited resources. That hosting millions of refugees for a protracted period has had political, security, socio-economic and environmental implications cannot be over-emphasized.

As a host country, Pakistan's exemplary role has been recognized and appreciated by the international community. This has also been repeatedly acknowledged by Afghanistan and the United Nations including at the highest levels. Indeed the Government of Pakistan works closely with the Government of Afghanistan and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees including under the framework of the Tripartite Agreement and the internationally endorsed Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR), which follow a holistic approach and an attainable roadmap for protection and durable solutions for Afghan refugees through regional and international cooperation.

It is pertinent to mention that voluntary repatriation is a shared priority, which together with sustainable reintegration in Afghanistan, and support to host communities constitute the three pillars of the SSAR.

Pakistan believes that return of Afghans to their homeland in dignity and honour will go a long way in promoting durable peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region. There is wide recognition as well in the international community on the imperative of addressing this protracted refugee situation.

For years, led by UNHCR, and supported by Afghanistan and Pakistan, emphasis has been laid on creating the pull factors, socio-economic development and livelihood opportunities in Afghanistan to facilitate voluntary return and sustainable reintegration of Afghan refugees. The importance of enhanced international assistance has been continuously advocated in that regard. We also acknowledge and welcome the ownership of the Afghan Government towards the displaced Afghans, especially the encouragement by the Afghan leadership for the refugees to return and the arrangements for their reintegration including land and other provisions. These are among major factors contributing to increased repatriation witnessed in

The enhanced cash grant, an initiative

of UNHCR supported by Afghanistan and Pakistan, is a positive, necessary and rational step aimed primarily at catering to initial requirements to helpanchor the refugees who opt to return voluntarily. In fact there is a need to sustain and diversify such initiatives, besides investing more in development programmes and livelihood opportunities in Afghanistan, for an environment conducive for voluntary

We expect and urge the members of the international community to step up and fulfill their obligations towards Afghan refugees through solidarity and burden sharing.

Notwithstanding any isolated or individual incidents, there is no policy of coercion on part of Government of Pakistan. The Government also remains mindful of its responsibility to ensure security and vigil against suspicious elements, unlawful activities and the menace of terrorism, including through improved and regulated border management.

Pakistan is committed to safe and voluntary repatriation of Afghan refugees in the best interest of the two countries and the region. The Federal Cabinet has just recently approved important decisions about Afghan refugees including extension of stay of registered Afghans till 31 December 2017, and renewal of the Tripartite Agreement on voluntary returns. This testifies Pakistan's longstanding commitment to welfare of Afghans and their dignified return to their homeland. We remain in regular touch with the Government of Afghanistan and the UNHCR with regard to all aspects of management and repatriation of Afghan refugees. Meeting of the Tripartite Commission is scheduled in Islamabad on 15th February. We hope the international community will also shoulder its responsibility towards a durable solution of the protracted Afghan refugee situation.

(19) Russia Hits ...

said the groundless claims were echoed by Senator John McCain whom Moscow branded as a well-known "Russophobe".

Acknowledging that the security situation in Afghanistan was lamentable, Nicholson sought several thousand troops in addition to the existing 8500-strong, US military contingent to address the current problems.

"He must have forgotten that there were about 100,000 US troops there not long ago who also failed to mitigate the situation," the statement add-

"All of this is reminiscent of the futile attempts to accuse Russia of their own failures in Afghanistan. This is likely to help him gain favour in certain circles in Washington but will hardly improve the depressing security situation in Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(20) 300 Crime ...

nine cars, four motorcycles, three number plates, \$245,000 and 344,000 afghanis cash during the period, Rahimi said, adding 20 light weapons, seven 107mm shells and four magnetic

bombs were also seized. The detainees were paraded before journalists at the press conference but they were not allowed to talk to media. Four detained kidnapers were also shown to media persons as well as the seized weapons, narcotics and alcoholic drugs.

A month ago, Kabul police claimed arresting 286 crime suspects. (Pajhwok)

(21)30,000 Unregistered ...

of vehicles had legal documents and most of the undocumented and RHD vehicles were being smuggled to Nimroz in spare-parts in containers and then transferred to the city.

"Each container brings four and five vehicles which are dismantled abroad The vehicles after being cleared at Nimroz customs as spare-parts are brought to Zaranj and then reassembled and then presented to the market," he added.

A police official, wishing anonymity, said five to six containers loaded with such vehicles entered Nimroz on a daily basis.

He said the government should first prevent smuggling of vehicles. "We are awaiting orders from the central government whether to register RHD vehicles or not."

"The distribution of car numbers and documents is directly linked to the order of President Ghani and local officials and even the ministry couldn't permit legalizing of RHD vehicles." He agreed most crimes in Nimroz were conducted using unregistered vehicles; but did go into details.

Meanwhile, Col Zarin said about five years ago some 3,800 vehicles were given temporary permits for five years in line with a Cabinet decision. As the period had ended, measures would be taken as per directives from the central government against unregistered vehicles, he said.

Fazal Ahmad, a resident, said: "Un-

documented vehicles move freely in the city. Their prices are very low as a corolla model car without documents is bought at around 100,000 to 150,000 afs, thus many people use these cars. However, the same model cars with documents can be hardly found for 400,000afs."

He said kidnappings, robberies and terrorist activities were conducted using vehicles lacking documents. The government should take serious steps in impounding such cars, he added.

Mohammad Aman Barak, a civil society activist, said the number of undocumented vehicles in the province had reached the extent that their collection would be a difficult task.

"Many residents could not afford to buy a registered vehicle, which is expensive. As a result, the unregistered vehicles have good market."

Governor Mohammad Sami said he had shared the issue with officials in Kabul and they were currently awaiting orders from the authorities concerned about action against unregistered vehicles.

Undocumented vehicles not only exist in Nimroz but in all provinces including capital Kabul. (Pajhwok)

(22)Import of ...

analyst Mohammad Mazari Sultanzada said the marble industry could have a positive impact on the domestic economy if it is supported.

"The marble industry is important for Afghanistan. Marble makes up an important part of the country's exports," he said. (Tolonews)

(23)16 IS Militants ...

yet to make comment.

Government forces launched major operations against IS insurgents in Nangarhar province on Sunday. (Xin-

(24)Forced ...

Kabul and then to the civil hospital in Ghazni, but he was beaten during treatment. "So I decided to return to the life under the bridge." He said it was not possible to treat drug addicts

Another addict, who belonged to central Maidan Wardak province but refused to provide his name, was sitting with his three drug addicted brothers. "I am tired of life," he said.

Taking a puff, he told Pajhwok Afghan News: "I went to Iran 10 years ago." did not find a job in Iran but became a drug addict there." "I don't have land, home and wife, I have nothing, so I consume drugs," he said, denying ever taken to hospital for treatment."

Khan Mohammad, another addict, said he was once taken to hospital for treatment. But he was given a type of tablets that caused him severe headache and he was also beaten during the treatment. "That's why we flee from hospital and return to this place because we see this life better." Rahimullah, who owns a shop near

the river, said doing business had become a taunting task for him due to the presence of drug addicts. He said the individuals under the bridge often tried to steal things and find food and drugs for themselves.

"The wives of some addicts beg and visit their husbands under the bridge to give them money," he said, asking the government to do something about the addicts.

Drug addicts rehabilitation hospital head Dr. Mohammad Ismail rejected if doctors at their hospital had ever beaten addicts during their treatment. He said a large number of addicts had been treated but they returned to the habit due to the increased joblessness

in Ghazni. He said the government should provide jobs to rehabilitated addicts in order to reduce their number in Ghazni. Local officials say nearly 40,000 individuals are addicted to drugs in Ghazni and their number could increase if not paid attention. (Pajhwok)

(25) Dejected Paktika husbands are selected while their wives are left out. As a result, both are denied the opportunity to travel to the holy land," he argued.

Allah Dad, a nomadic Kochi, also complained his community was not granted its due rights. Five or six Kochis were sent to Hajj annually, but that did not suffice, he remarked.

Director of Hajj and Religious Affairs Maulvi Zabtullah Kharotai acknowledge the Paktika Hajj quota was insuf-

But the issue had been shared with the Ministry of Hajj, he added, hoping the problem would be resolved.

More than 1,800 residents of Paktika have applied for Hajj this year, but only 334 will be able to perform the ritual.(Pajhwok)

(26)3 Insurgents ...

he claimed. Afghan Local Police have been deployed to the villages cleared. Meanwhile, a resident of Ahmadzai area said: "Security forces are now in control of many important villages of Tagab. On Monday, the bodies of two (Xinhua)

fighters were sent to Nijrab district, from where they had come to Tagab for fighting." (Pajhwok)

(27)Cost of Black ..

and nut sellers, this has led to fewer Afghans buying the product.

"People are buying less pine nuts because the price is high. Even I don't take pine nuts home," said one retailer, Abdul Satar.

"In the past every shopkeeper could sell 15kgs of pine nuts in a day, but now they can sell only about 1kg," said another retailer, Halim. (Tolonews)

(28)Afghan Citizen...

blocked the driveway.

The protestors were warned multiple times to let the vehicle through. but police said in arrest affidavit that Askaryar and others got violent and started shoving police officers. (Pajh-

(29)UNSC Urges...

to prevent them.

Noting that international counter-terrorism cooperation -- especially in the area of critical infrastructure -- has been limited, Maria Luiza Viotti, Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, called on all international community to unite in a coordinated response and outlined the importance of a coordinated response comprising all actors and stakeholders. (Xinhua)

(30)Trump National...

(31)Russia, U.S. ...

a law banning private citizens from engaging in foreign policy, known as the Logan Act. (Reuters)

countries to enhance and strengthen this partnership.

"We hope that we can build more productive dialogue with Washington's new administration in that matter ... Against the background of unprecedented terrorist's activity, life itself will make us put aside our political disputes and eventually open and honestly cooperate in the matters of counter terrorism," he added. (Xinhua)

(32)Trump Vows

security issues facing the United States. On Monday, the Pentagon strongly condemned the DPRK's ballistic missile launch and vowed to "take all necessary measures to deter and defeat threats to U.S. and ally territories and citizens."

'The North American Aerospace Defense Command determined the missile launch did not pose a threat to North America," said Jeff Davis, a spokesman for the U.S. Department of Defense. "We also worked very quickly with our Japanese and South Korean allies to make sure it did not pose a threat to them either."

On Saturday, Trump vowed U.S. support to Japan in a hastily called joint press conference with visiting Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in

"I just want everybody to understand and fully know that the United States of America stands behind Japan, its great ally, 100 percent," Trump said. (Xinhua)

(33)Syrian Army ...

announced last month that it had blown it up.

Earlier this month, the IS also said it detonated pipelines around Hayan. With daily production of three million cubic meters of gas, Hayan field is the largest facility feeding electricity in central and southern Syria.

The facility's establishment cost the government over 280 million euros (about 297 million U.S. dollars). (Xin-

(34)Iraqi Airstrikes...

The jet fighters also bombarded three more IS sites in Qaim and the nearby Akashat area, leaving 40 IS militants and 24 suicide bombers killed, the statement added.

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, known to his supporters as Āmir al-Mu'minin, is the Caliph of the self-proclaimed Islamic State, which announced the establishment of a caliphate on June 29, 2014. The extremist militant group captures some areas in western and northern Iraq as well as part of neigh-

boring Syria. (Xinhua) (35)Pakistan Says...

U.S. relations.

"The discussions speak of a multiplicity of factors both military and non-military that contribute to the existing stalemate in Afghanistan. Therefore, singling out Pakistan and pinning the entire blame on Pakistan for the situation in Afghanistan is neither fair nor accurate, nor is it borne out by the ground realities," he said in a statement issued late Monday.

The spokesman said his country has been successful in destroying and eliminating the command and control structure of terrorist outfits operating from Pakistan-Afghan border.