

(1) Dostum Barred...

of 10th police district of Kabul on Monday night also tried to arrest the bodyguards of Dostum, but they failed to do so. However, the government then ordered Kabul garrison to prevent Dostum from going to his office and take his bodyguards to justice, the source said. Another government source said that a large number of security forces from different security organs this morning shut the office of vice presidents and deputies of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

The source said that Dostum's residence was surrounded because he did not respect the AGO's letter that requested him to hand over his nine bodyguards involved in the crime. Deployment of a large number of new bodyguards was another reason of Dostum's siege.

A number of garrison and defense security forces equipped with heavy weapons were deployed around the first VP's home on Monday night.

Meanwhile, roads passing to Dostum's home in Sherpoor area were closed for traffic but pedestrians were allowed to move.

A number of 101 Asmayee Police Zone's quick reaction forces were also deployed to the area.

Eshchi, a former Jawzjan governor, was rescued by intelligence agents on December 10 after 16 days of captivity. His sons had claimed Gen. Dostum had a verbal clash with their father.

Later on, Dostum's bodyguards allegedly kidnapped him. He claimed he was tortured, beaten up and sexually harassed during his captivity. After claims from Eshchi, the AGO formally sent letters to Dostum, asking him to cooperate with investigative team or send his representative to submit a reply. However, Dostum showed no reaction to AGO's letter.

Later on, the AGO ordered security organs concerned to detain nine bodyguards of Dostum who were involved in the case, but the Ministry of Interior remained silent about the issue. Kabul garrison officials and Dostum could not be reached for comments on the issue. (Pajhwok)

(2) Zakhelwal Hopes ...

training camps in Pakistan and asked the neighbouring country to take action against them. The letter was handed over to Pakistani authorities by the ambassador and an immediate action against the 32 terrorist training centres was demanded, MoFA said.

The statement said the initial response from Pakistani authorities with regard to the list was positive and there was an expression of hope that practical actions would be taken in this regard. (Pajhwok)

(3) Pakistan Army ...

to be used for terrorism in any country and noted that time had come to ensure that no other country's soil was used against Pakistan.

Relation between Afghanistan and Pakistan strained after terrorist attacks in the neighbouring. Pakistani officials accused Afghanistan for not acting against terrorist groups who they claimed were responsible for fresh bout of violence in different parts of Pakistan.

Afghanistan strongly denied the allegation and said the country was victim of terrorism and took effective action against Daesh and other militants groups.

The two countries had been involved in blame game over the issue of terrorism. Pakistan also closed border with Afghanistan and launched mortar and artillery shelling into Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(4) EU to Investigate...

of ammunitions and weapons to Taliban.

It also has been said that such deals also happened in Kunduz province, the province that has been fallen twice to Taliban in the recent two years. "In Kunduz province and per-

haps in most other places there are lots of weapon and ammunition sellers," said Ghulam Rabbani Rabbani, member of Kunduz provincial council.

Kunduz officials however reject the claims.

"Kunduz local government has investigated deeply in this regard. No one member of Afghan security forces do not dare to sell weapons to enemies and they will not do that," said Sayed Mahmood Danish, spokesman of Kunduz governor. (Tolonews)

(5) Mattis, Ghani ...

and guns on purpose, they were unsuccessful in gaining their tactical objectives," he added. "So I think it was a lot more damaging to the Taliban, and the Afghan Security Forces paid a very heavy price to keep the Taliban on their back foot, but they paid it, they've held, and the Taliban is in a worst position today, even though I do not equate that to success on our side," the Defense Secretary said. (Pajhwok)

(6) De Maiziere ...

without talking to him first.

Germany's most northern state had declared last week that it would stop all deportations to Afghanistan for three months - the maximum amount of time states are allowed to halt deportations without Berlin's permission. (DW)

(7) Dostum ...

governance, support the country and the people as well as keep 'real unity' among the nation.

This comes after the security forces were said to have besieged Dostum's home.

A security source said earlier the armed forces surrounded his house on Tuesday because he had brought huge numbers armed personnel into the city.

In addition, the source said, nine of Dostum's security guards were accused of mistreating Ahmad Eshchi, former deputy head of the National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan.

Only two of the guards showed a willingness to cooperate in the investigations. The remaining seven guards have not so far have not appeared to face questions.

A further reason for the security force action was that Dostum himself was asked to cooperate with the investigation into the Eshchi case. He, however, has thus far not complied with the request.

The source said Dostum went to his office with more guards than usual.

The siege on Dostum's house started on Tuesday morning. (Tolonews)

(8) Mashal Vows...

losses a tragedy. Some cricket academies and ground had been constructed in the country but their maintenance had received no attention, Mashal regretted. "Cricket grounds in Paktia, Khost, Kunar and Laghman are not up to standards. The Paktia playground in particular is a big disaster."

Similarly, the Khost ground lacks capacity for even 10,000 people. Many people had to wait outside the ground during the inaugural ceremony a few months back, he recalled.

In the past, the chairman continued, the board's administrative branches did not have work plans. But now all departments have been asked to come up with proper strategies and plans.

About \$3 million could not be received from ACB's major sponsor -- the Alokoyay Group of Companies (AGC) -- over the past two years because of the previous administration's negligence.

In line with a presidential request, the AGC had promised the board \$1million in extra assistance, the chairman explained, lamenting that amount had not been received either.

Conflicting statement about the ACB budget emanated from the previous administration, he said. Some months back,

they said they had \$8million in budget, but now they claiming having \$17million.

"ACB doesn't have that much budget and there is no sign of this money. They should prove this budget. In case they actually have this much money, the government should ask about it."

According to him, unnecessary appointments have been made to ACB. Even people who were not part of the organisation received salaries, he alleged. Some money has been unaccounted for but no one is ready to accept responsibility, he added.

The ACB's chief went on to say that former officials treated some players unfairly as there was no proof of Shahpoor's exclusion from the squad. "Despite the lifting of ban on Sha-faq, he isn't allowed to play." He acknowledged meddling in provincial affairs, as some provincial officials had turned into mafia with the abetment of the authorities concerned.

In Kabul, where cricket is more popular than other provinces, there are not five clubs, according to the ACB head, who regretted the situation at the provincial level was even worse.

Efforts were ongoing to make the board self-sufficient, bring about administrative reforms and construct five stadiums in different parts of the country to international standards. About 15 other playgrounds will also be set up.

Unparalleled in the region and equipped with modern facilities, a covered cricket academy to global standards had been established in the country, he claimed

Phil Simmons, a renowned foreign coach, had been hired for the national team, he said, adding efforts were being made to appoint a similar trainer for the under-19 squad as well. (Pajhwok)

(9) Prices,

Afghanistan. On Thursday, Pakistan announced extra security measures and border restrictions on the border between the two countries following Saturday's deadly blast at a Sufi shrine in Pakistan's Sindh province.

Islamabad claimed that the move was imperative in order to control the infiltration of terrorists infiltrating into Pakistani from Afghanistan.

Pakistan's sudden move of introducing border restrictions has led to uncertainties within the business communities in the two countries.

The ACCI says that Pakistan's new border restrictions will hinder Islamabad's access to Afghan and central Asian markets. The unwarranted move will also inflict devastating repercussions on the economic development and commercial relations of Pakistan with other states.

"Pakistan harms its own economy, because it loses income from large markets of Afghanistan and the central Asian countries from where a large part of its trade ties are vested," said Tawfiq Dawari, deputy head of ACCI.

"Only 20 percent of Afghanistan's goods are imported from Pakistan and sold. People are not interested in Pakistani products, because of this border closure. This does not leave any major impact on prices," said local trader Khalilurrahman.

The volume of the trade balance between Afghanistan and Pakistan is estimated to be \$1.5 billion. Of that, the share of Afghanistan's exports to Pakistan is estimated at 15 percent while 85 percent of the share is made up of Pakistan's exports to Afghanistan.

The trade volume between Pakistan and central Asian countries is around \$4 billion, the ACCI said.

The ACCI said that Pakistan also collects large amounts of money through smuggling from the Afghan and central Asian routes.

"Today Afghanistan has established its good reputation among regional countries and major organizations. We will

act against the problems on the basis of our national interests," said Musafir Qoqandi, spokesman to Ministry of Commerce and Industries.

Economic experts say that border closure between Afghanistan and Pakistan will also impact transportation between the two neighbors as well as commercial relations along the border regions.

It will also impact the larger economy of the two nations. (Tolonews)

(10) TAPI...

Afghanistan because other projects like a power transmission project, a railway project, industrial parts and an optic fiber project will be built along the TAPI pipeline route," Habibiyar added.

Meanwhile, Turkmenistan's Murad Amanov, CEO of the TAPI project, said the project is of great importance to the Turkmen president.

Amanov said the project will help improve his country's economy as it is one of the biggest economic projects in the country. The design documents and initial work for the project have been completed and Turkmenistan is fully committed to its implementation. (Tolonews)

(11) NATO Returns ...

in Afghanistan, this will be very helpful," Abdul Rahim said commander of the technic and artillery unit of Afghan National Army (ANA) in Kandahar.

NATO leaders last year approved a plan that has kept more than 13,000 international troops in Afghanistan.

In recent testimony to the U.S. Congress, gen. John Nicholson, commander of the NATO and US forces in Afghanistan said "a few thousand" more advisers were needed, largely to expand his program of providing more tactical training to more units.

There are some rumors that Nicholson has called for 5,000 additional troops to be added to the current number. (Tolonews)

(12) Fresh Troops,

manner. He told security officials to sacrifice for defending the holy land of their country standing strong against the enemy. "In case of need, I would prepare myself to stand with our security forces for defending our territory," he added.

The governor also overviewed security forces bases in various areas and met with soldiers at the Torkham commissary and other security officials. He stressed close coordination among all security organs.

The governor's visit to Lalpoora comes as recently the Pakistani forces fired light and heavy weapons into eastern parts of the country, particularly to Lalpoora district and inflicted casualties on many people as well as forced more than a hundred families to leave their homes.

Officials in eastern Kunar province also said the cross border shelling had caused financial and human losses to people in two districts of the province.

An official in the capital Kabul, wishing anonymity, said fresh troops and heavy weapons had been sent to the zero point area of Nangarhar border with Pakistan.

The source said the forces were ordered to be on standby and respond in case of more rocket attacks by Pakistan. (Pajhwok)

(13) Suicide Bomber ...

militant groups have not commented regarding the report so far.

Soldiers deployed near Dostum house, police forces near Dostum house, Dostum house under siege, Afghan army near Dostum house, tanks deployed near Dostum house. (KP)

(14) 2 Including...

official. The slain policeman had gone to Shiberghan for treatment of wounds he had suffered earlier.

There has been no word from Taliban so far in this regard. Meanwhile, Sibghatullah Selab, Faryab provincial council mem-

ber, said Hashim Pahlawan, a tribal elder, was also killed in the Ghaliban area of Garziwan district near his residence on Monday night.

Taliban confirmed that Hashim Pahlawan was killed by the group's fighters and his wounded son was being held captive. (Pajhwok)

(15) Bombers ...

were gunned down by police. The district administrator's office is located near the scene.

Of the 20 people injured in the bombings, four are said to be police officers. Ten of the wounded and three bodies were shifted to hospital. Law-enforcement personnel cordoned off the area.

Lawyer Inayatullah Rehman, meanwhile, said one of the attackers lobbed a hand grenade at the court gate before opening indiscriminate gunfire. "At least one lawyer has been killed in the multiple suicide attacks," he said.

The outlawed militant outfit Jamaat-ul-Ahraar (JuA) claimed responsibility for the bombings. Body parts of the bombers and their explosives lay scattered on the road. (Pajhwok)

(16) After Millions...

Monday. The more successful petition, seeking to rescind the invitation, received 1.85 million signatures. The petition supporting Trump's visit got 311,000 signatures. (AP)

(17) Brexit Minister...

labor like programmers from foreign countries coming to work in Britain.

As for low-skilled guest worker's job prospects, he said it would take "years and years before we get British citizens to do those jobs and so that [the employment of guest workers] will continue too". (Xinhua)

(18) Britain will ...

our own citizens," Davis said. Hundreds of thousands of EU citizens living and working in Britain, a majority from eastern EU states like Poland, are demanding that their rights be protected despite Brexit. (AFP)

(19) IMF Agrees...

issues, and it is too early to speculate about the prospect for reaching staff level agreement during this mission," said the IMF.

A staff-level agreement on policy reform is a necessary condition for the successful conclusion of reviews and therefore for Greece to receive financial support consisting of 86 billion euros (91 billion U.S. dollars) in bailout funds.

In its latest annual assessment of the Greek economy, the IMF said that Greece should deepen and accelerate reforms, which, together with further debt relief, are needed to allow the economy to return to a sustainable growth path. (Xinhua)

(20) U.S. Vice...

that the United States will continue to "hold Russia accountable" and "demand that Russia honor the Minsk agreement, beginning by deescalating the violence in eastern Ukraine."

"We urge both sides to abide by the ceasefire as scheduled, to begin today, in the interest of peace, and in the interest of innocent human lives," he added. Pence also voiced the United States' willingness to "search in news ways for new common grounds with Russia, which President Trump believes can be found."

The EU, which slapped sanctions on Russia in 2014 in response to an alleged role it played in conflicts in eastern Ukraine, is deeply concerned over Trump's pro-Russia stance. (Xinhua)

(21) Leader of ...

AFD and that there will be more meetings.

France's far-right National Front (FN) party in 2014 borrowed 9 million euros (\$9.48 million) from Moscow-based First Czech-Russian bank. The bank has lost its license to operate and Russia has started legal

proceedings to recover the loan. FN leader Marine Le Pen said that, unlike mainstream parties, the FN had not managed to secure any loans from French banks. (Reuters)

(22) EU More...

and stick" approach ruffled the EU's feathers. European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker has reportedly said on the sidelines of the Munich conference that the EU should not cave in to U.S. pressure, arguing that EU's investment in development and humanitarian aid should be also seen as an investment in security. (Xinhua)

(23) China Leadership...

meeting. Reforms in key areas will be deepened, while the role of innovation will be boosted to facilitate economic upgrading, said the statement.

China will also intensify efforts to tap the potential of domestic demand and strengthen internal growth momentum. (Xinhua)

France's Hollande Criticises Britain over Child Refugees

PARIS - French President Francois Hollande called Tuesday on Britain to "accept its responsibility" to take in stranded under-age migrants stuck in France who wish to join up with family in the UK.

The issue has been a constant irritant between the two countries, made worse by Britain's decision this month to end an arrangement to take in up to 3,000 unaccompanied minors from Europe.

The scrapping of the so-called "Dubs agreement" by Britain's conservative government has sparked criticism from opposition MPs in London and led to anger in France.

"France is playing its part in the European effort. We expect that our partners do the same, particularly when we are talking about minors on their own," Hollande told a conference on children in conflict zones.

"I call on the United Kingdom to accept its responsibility for adolescents in France at the moment who have family on the other side of the Channel," he added.

Last October, French authorities cleared a squalid camp near the Calais port on the Channel sea separating the countries which was filled with thousands of migrants hoping to reach Britain. (AFP)

Majority of Aussies Want Government to do More to Support Clean Energy: Poll

CANBERRA - More than 70 percent of Australians believe the federal government is not doing enough to promote and encourage clean energy, the results of a poll published on Tuesday shows.

According to the results of a Guardian Essential poll 71 percent of Australian voters believe the government could do more to promote safe, reliable and affordable renewable power, while just 12 percent are happy with the government's current efforts.

The government has also said it was committed to ensuring 23 percent of Australia's power was sourced from clean origins by 2020, however more voters were in support of the Labor opposition's policy of Australia sourcing 50 percent of its power from renewable sources by 2030.

The survey comes after the federal government announced it was mulling changes to the nation's "green energy bank", the Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC).

According to Energy Minister Josh Frydenberg, the government wants to allow the CEFC to fund "clean coal", which would involve burying carbon emissions deep underground before they escape into the atmosphere.

However according to the voters, just 31 percent support the idea of clean coal power stations, while 45 percent described it as a poor idea. (Xinhua)