

(1) Ghani, UN Team ...

but Pakistan had refused to cooperate with Afghanistan. He shared with his interlocutors evidence of terror groups being trained and funded outside Afghanistan.

The president reiterated his administration's "strong will" to hold the elections. "As a president, I will not allow myself to meddle in the affairs of the Independent Election Commission."

Previous funds for elections had not been used effectively, the president alleged, promising the electoral system would be cleaned up.

The president welcomed the new US strategy on Afghanistan and South Asia and emphasized on intra-Afghan peace dialogue and peace with Pakistan.

UNSC President Umarov said the team's visit to Kabul, the first after since 2010, was intended to assess progress made in various areas in Afghanistan, particularly peace and progress.

He said that UNSC was exploring ways of enhanced coordination and cooperation among different regional and international organizations.

Security and stability in Afghanistan was crucial to security in the region, remarked the US ambassador to the UN. Haley said the UNSC team was visiting Kabul to pledge more support to Afghanistan.

The delegation pledged UN's enhanced cooperation in ending the 17-year war in Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(2) Lawmakers Question ...

make Afghanistan the second Syria," JafarMahdawi, an MP, said.

Peace and stability in Afghanistan were part of the agenda of the United Nations Security Council meetings with Afghan leaders. Legislators said most of Afghanistan's problems have internal roots, and that the National Unity Government leaders must review the domestic problems before doing anything else.

"There will be no fruitful result even if the UN Security Council members visit a hundred times, because Afghanistan's problems are domestic," said Saleh Mohammad Saljoqi, an MP. The UN Security Council arrived Kabul this week on Saturday. The first Council visit to Afghanistan since 2010, the visit was an opportunity to reiterate the Security Council's support for the Government and people of Afghanistan and their efforts to restore peace, stability and progress to the country, UNAMA said in a statement Monday.

Head of the Security Council delegation, Ambassador Kairat Umarov, the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the UN, was accompanied on this trip by representatives of the United States, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Kuwait, Kingdom of the Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Sweden, France, Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and China.

During the visit to Kabul, the delegation held meetings with the President of Afghanistan, Ashraf Ghani, Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, and other senior Afghan officials, including the chairman of the High Peace Council Mohammad Khalili, and Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Finance, Agriculture, Economy, Trade and Commerce, among others. They also met with members of parliament, women's NGOs, civil society organizations, representatives of political parties and the electoral management bodies, as well as the leadership of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and NATO's Resolute Support Mission.

Discussions focused on the political, security, socio-economic and human rights situation in the country. The visit came ahead of the Kabul Process meeting, scheduled for February 2018, where the Government is expected to present its plans for a more structured peace and security process, coordinated with the wider region.

All parties underlined the importance of an inclusive Afghan-led and -owned peace process for long-term stability and prosperity in Afghanistan and Council members renewed their commitment to support efforts that aim at bringing peace and reconciliation. (Tolo News)

(3) US, Kazakh... Sanat Kushkumbaev, deputy director of the Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies which advises the president, was quoted as saying: "From a political perspective, we cooperate on solutions and promotion of regional and global security. "The meeting will focus on the situation in Afghanistan, the Syrian conflict, and relations with Russia," Kushkumbaev added. (Pajhwok)

(4) CEO Shares ...

various groups of the Afghan people and plan cooperation and assistance with Afghanistan by assessing the situation here.

Part of the delegation, the US ambassador to the UN Haley talked about electoral reform, drug trafficking and political situation of Afghanistan.

Dr Abdullah welcomed the UNSC team and praised its assessment of Afghanistan situation as significant as he described the situation and challenges the unity government faced in its functioning.

The CEO said the unity government missed many opportunities to bring about reforms and improve governance since coming into power three years back.

He spoke about challenges and progress in the fight against terrorism, saying that the people of Afghanistan had long been victimized for defending their homeland.

"We have been looking for continuous and sustained reforms and we believe that reforms are a fundamental condition for change," he added.

Abdullah noted "we are committed to holding parliamentary, presidential and district elections in time."

Second deputy CEO Mohammad Mohaqiq, acting foreign minister Salahuddin Rabbani and Afghanistan Ambassador to the UN Mohammad Sidiqq Afghan were present at the meeting.

The unannounced trip by representatives of the 15-member council ended on Monday. It was the first visit by the full council since 2010.

The talks focused on political, security, socio-economic and human rights issues in Afghanistan, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) said in a statement.

"Council members aimed to get a first-hand account of progress made by the Afghan National Unity Government, with the assistance of the international community, in addressing a wide range of interconnected challenges and to learn how the Security Council could further assist efforts on the ground," UNAMA said.

Among other things "all parties reiterated the need for greater international and regional security cooperation". Afghan President Ashraf Ghani described the talks as "productive" in a statement from his office.

The Security Council also urged Afghanistan to ensure parliamentary and presidential elections scheduled for this year and next were "timely" and "credible". (Pajhwok)

(5) More Than...

household appliances.

He added: "The families left out will also receive aid," he promised.

Mirwais, 50, a resident of Kamalkhel and a beneficiary, said they had left their area six months back. They were in acute need of essential food items and other materials.

Ahmad Shah, another resident of Barak-i-Barak district, said they had been driven from home by war. Nine months after they complained to the department, they were delivered aid. Last year, a number of families from Barak-i-Barak, Charkh, Azra and Mohammad Agha districts were displaced by conflict. (Pajhwok)

(6) Daesh Fighters...

also killed during Afghan forces airstrike in the Pech Dara district of Kunar province. (Pajhwok)

(7) Afghanistan Needs ...

whose lives have been ruined by conflict or natural disaster, and to help people returning to Afghanistan from neighbouring countries."

Armed clashes in the past year were the highest in a decade and civilian casualties remained near record levels.

More than two million people were directly affected by the conflict last year, 448,000 of whom had to abandon their homes to save their lives.

More than 500,000 people arrived in Afghanistan in 2017, many of them after seeking refuge in Iran, Pakistan or other countries.

"The international community has proven its continued commitment to the people of Afghanistan with generous humanitarian funding of \$317 million in 2017," said Chief Executive Officer Abdullah Abdullah.

"The Humanitarian Response Plan launched today will serve to provide timely, life-saving assistance to families in emergency shelters or in need of urgent support across the country," he said.

The response plan puts forward activities of more than 150 humanitarian partners - national and international humanitarian NGOs and the United Nations - delivering assistance to families and communities in need wherever they can be reached, despite

difficult conditions including increasing attacks on aid workers.

"The Humanitarian Response Plan is a crucial part of the response to the human suffering and the ongoing crisis in Afghanistan," said Swedish Ambassador to Afghanistan, Tobias Thyberg. "After decades of conflict, we may not abandon people and saving lives with immediate assistance must remain our highest priority."

This year's Humanitarian Response Plan focuses only on providing life-saving emergency assistance to people caught up in current or very recent disasters.

Besides the 2.8 million people the plan is designed for, another 8.7 million people are estimated to live with high level of needs as a result of long-standing and unresolved issues such as lack of jobs and livelihoods, long-term displacement, an underfunded healthcare system or the effects of climate change.

Humanitarian emergency assistance cannot provide a solution for such chronic needs, like land for housing or jobs and vocational training to lift them out of poverty and fragility.

The government, supported by development partners and the United Nations, is working to improve these underlying conditions, namely via the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework.

The Humanitarian Response Plan for Afghanistan is one of more than two dozen such plans this year, requesting a total of US\$22.58 billion to assist 90.9 million people globally.

The plans ensure joint humanitarian action in crises caused by conflict or natural disasters and are the humanitarian community's main tool to rise funding with donors and ensure accountability towards the people served and donors. (Pajhwok)

(8) 42pc of Parwan ...

of the township had also been grabbed by strongmen.

Shahid did not name any of the land grabbers but said they had constructed buildings on the land during nighttime.

He expressed concern over the situation and said he had shared the issue with relevant organs including the governor's house, security organs and the Attorney General Office but no one had so far taken any action to stop the land usurpation.

Parwan governor Mohammad Asim confirmed that parts of the teacher's township had been grabbed. "We have taken action for stopping land grabbing in the township, security forces are also available in the area, but police are unable to stay there day and night, the grabbers take teachers' land during night," he said.

The governor said police had several times destroyed structures illegally built on the township land but it did not help.

However, he said construction of the township's second boundary wall would help prevent the land's usurpation.

The governor did not name any grabbers but said they were powerful figures who used to sell sold the occupied land to other people.

Parwan police chief Brig. Gen. Mohammad Zaman Mamozai confirmed the issue and said: "Our security posts are available in this township, they control the area but areas which are a little far from police are sometimes grabbed by people, if there were no police the entire township may have been usurped."

He said the names of land grabbers were mentioned in letters they had obtained from different departments. "If we reveal their names it would not be useful, we should find a solution to this problem," he added.

Abdul Hafiz Ausuli, the provincial appellate court head, said the attorney office had received letters about government's land grabbing from the governor's house and the education department.

"Some figures are summoned over this issue but investigations are not yet complete," he said.

Teachers' concern Bashir Ahmad Omaid, 56, a teacher from Qala-i-Khwaja village of Bagram district, said in his 25 years service he could not buy a land plot to construct his own home.

He said he had formally requested the Parwan education department a land plot but the land promised to them in the teacher's township had been grabbed.

He expressed concern over the situation and said: "The rights of poor and weak people are always usurped by powerful people."

Abdul Rauf, 50, a teacher in Charikar, who also lives in a rented house, said, "I took the land request form two years ago, I filled it and we were promised the land allotment this

(1396) solar year, but the land was usurped and we missed the chance."

He said education was a country's backbone and teachers must be provided with basic facilities of life for improvement of the education sector. Pointing to their land seizure, he said teachers in Afghanistan were not appreciated and their rights were taken away by strongmen due to government's negligence.

According to Parwan education department, 6,000 teachers including 1,000 of them female are serving in Parwan schools.

The land grabbing is a nationwide issue and in Parwan it is not confined to the teachers' township only, but in prevalence in other parts of the province.

According to Afghanistan Land Authority, around 560,000 acres of government land has been grabbed countrywide. (Pajhwok)

(9) Thousands of ...

but recently her school remained shut most of the time due to violence.

"All students are growing as illiterate, sometimes Taliban also say that girls should not study beyond sixth class." The residents of Dasht-i-Archi called on the Education Department to address issues facing the vital sector in the district.

Islamuddin Taimouri, deputy head of the Education Department, said three schools in Dasht-i-Archi remained closed periodically.

He rejected the closure of five schools and added the Jamhoriyat, TahjirKhana and Central Girls High School were sometimes closed due to conflict and were reopened after a lull in fighting. Answering a question, he said around 2,500 students studied in the three schools that got closed due to fighting.

Taimouri said when a school was closed due to violence, its students could be shifted to another place for study in order to keep the education system going.

Naiamtullah Taimouri, the governor spokesman, said no school had been closed in Kunduz province.

He mentioned as the only problem girl students faced in the province was Taliban's ban on their education after sixth class. He added efforts had been launched with the help of tribal elders to address problems in Taliban controlled areas.

The Taliban have not yet spoken about the closing of schools in Dasht-i-Archi. There are 57 schools in Dasht-i-Archi, imparting education to 27,550 students including 9,643 of them girls. (Pajhwok)

(10) MPs Scrap Ghani's...

said Fawzia Kofi, an MP from Badakhshan.

"All conditions predicted in the draft are quite restricted in practical manner," said MP Massouda Karokhail. Other legislators meanwhile argued that the decree was in the interests of the county as it has been witnessed that some people are misusing civil freedoms under the name of demonstrations and protests.

"In the face of the miseries and dangerous situations which are currently prevailing in Afghanistan, everything is misused in Afghanistan; therefore, there is a need for more debates to be carried on the law," said MP Humaira Ayubi.

"I don't understand why the (parliament) commission has brought this issue to the house," said Lailuma Hakmi, an MP.

The decree is now expected to be put for further debates in Meshrano Jirga, the Upper House of Parliament.

The decree bans holding any kind of protests and demonstrations near government institutions and public roads.

Officials of Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) have also described the six-chapter and 32-Article decree as repressive and in divergence to the principles of democracy. (Tolo News)

(11) Enemy is Not Safe ...

time-based," Nicholson TOLONews.

In response to a question about political rift between Presidential Palace and the ousted Balkh governor Atta Mohammad Noor, Nicholson said they are here in Afghanistan to support all Afghans.

"We are here to support all Afghans regardless of ethnic group, religion, political affiliation and government, out of government. We and the international community are here to support all Afghans. And what we desire for Afghanistan is that they decide their own future and they will decide their own political process," Nicholson said.

During the ceremony, responsibility of US Marine Forces was transferred from Marine Brig. Gen Roger Turner who leads the forces for nine months

in Shorab Military Base to General Watson. (Tolonews)

(12) Afghans Award ..

said they made the medal by purchasing 15 grams of gold.

He said the bravery award was handed to the US Embassy in Kabul on Saturday.

He added that the US Ambassador in Kabul John R. Bass has promised that he will soon handover the medal to President Trump.

After Trump's tweet on Pakistan, Washington announced that it suspends almost all security assistance to Pakistan, which could affect at least \$1.3 billion USD in annual aid. (Tolo News)

(13) Afghanistan's ...

capital. The game will precede India's short tour of Ireland, the report said.

Afghanistan expressed a wish to play its first Test against India and the BCCI readily accepted the proposal, it said, adding that the sources said the two governments were keen to see Afghanistan begin its Test journey against India in India.

An official announcement is likely to be made at a press conference in New Delhi on Tuesday. On the same day, the Supreme Court has listed the matter related to the Justice Lodha cricket reforms case. (Tolo News)

(14) Kabul Residents ...

residents said they were worried about the growing air pollution in the city.

"The air is filled with smoke and pollution especially in morning and evenings," Kabul resident Jamshid said. "People use coal because they don't have sufficient electricity to use for warming their houses," said Mohammad, a Kabul resident.

Kabul Municipality says residents in big cities including Kabul, Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif are not paying the required attention to help reduce air pollution in areas where they live. (Tolo News)

Senior Official Arrested on Embezzlement Charges Involving 100m Afghanis

KABUL - A senior official in the Ministry of Interior of Afghanistan has been arrested on embezzlement charges involving around one million Afghanis. Sources privy of the development said the head of the Cooperatives Department of the Ministry of Interior was held by the security forces of the Anti-Corruption Justice Center.

This comes as the Afghan government has stepped up efforts to root out corruption from the key government institutions in line with the commitments the government has made to the international community. Last year, four former senior officials of the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing of Afghanistan were jailed and fined over the embezzlement of more than one billion Afghanis while they were serving in the ministry.

The ex-officials, apart from one missing, were tried by the Appellate court of the special tribunal, Afghanistan Anti-Corruption Justice Center today. According to the verdict of the appellate court, Ahmad Nawaz was jailed for seven years on misuse of authority in at least six stances along with Mohammad Yaqoob with a total fine of 44,360,442 Afghanis.

The verdict against Mohammad Yaqoob was announced in his absence as he still missing since the arrest warrants of the four officials were issued over the embezzlement of the state funds. (KP)

Afghan Forces Foil 3 Deadly Explosions in Kabul City

KABUL - The Afghan national defense and security forces have foiled three deadly explosions in Kabul city during separate operations, the officials said Monday. According to the criminal Investigation Department (CID) officials, the Afghan forces discovered and defused three Improvised Explosive Devices planted in three different locations of the city to kill the innocent civilians.

The officials further added that the IEDs were discovered during the operations conducted in the 4th, 5th, and 9th police districts of the city.

The anti-government armed militant groups including the Taliban insurgents have not commented regarding the report so far.

This comes as the anti-government armed militant groups are attempting to carry out deadly attacks in the cities of the country, including capital Kabul.

The Afghan defense officials blame the Haqqani terrorist network for the majority of the deadly attacks, specifically the attacks which have been carried out in Kabul city. (KP)