

**(1) More Peace ...**

in legitimate money in Helmand. He did not however give details. He also said that civil society, youth and women's roles is key in the peace process, adding that Afghanistan has the best Islamic constitution in the world.

He said that Afghanistan has faced an ongoing crisis for the past four decades and that the country's youth, women and civil society must also work to end the crisis.

"This is a crisis and not natural and we don't want to live in a crisis anymore," Ghani said.

On Pakistan, Ghani said that Afghanistan and Pakistan can become prosperous.

"We need all-round negotiations with Pakistan. We have raised our negotiations hand," Ghani said.

On the economy, Ghani said Afghanistan is a "wealthy country" but "we still raise our hands for help from other countries."

He also said: "Before me no one was talking about the gold that we have. Everyone was waiting when the Torkham gate was closing but if you close today, if the gate closes for 100 years, Afghanistan will stay developed."

He believes that water could be one of the great sources of wealth for Afghanistan in the upcoming 40 years along with mining, and said: "Our Hajigak mine alone has 200-billion-tons of iron."

He also stated that Afghanistan will not be a complete unit as "we have four million refugees outside the country." (Tolonews)

**(2) Pakistan Rules out ...**

months campaign, which began in August.

Meanwhile, the refugees living in the Swabi district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Tuesday urged President Ashraf Ghani to make arrangements for their immediate return to their motherland.

Led by Musharrafullah, ShamasurRehman, Zarif Khan and Gohati Camp president Mohammad Gul, the refugees acknowledged the prospects of their stay in Pakistan had dampened. Set up soon after the occupation of Afghanistan by the former Soviet Union, the two camps in Swabi house 48,500 refugees. Inmates complain half of Gandaf Camp has been without power supply for over a year. (Pajhwok)

**(3) Russia Offers ...**

The statement also said Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov would be heading to New York Wednesday for two days to participate in two high-level sessions: "Non-Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction: build confidence-building measures" and "Building regional partnerships in Afghanistan and Central Asia as a model of the interdependence of security and development".

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Russia would provide every possible support to Pakistan to turn it into a developed country.

Addressing a news conference in Moscow, Lavrov said he acknowledges Pakistan's efforts in eradicating terrorism, and said the terrorists spread inside Afghanistan along the area bordering Pakistan pose a grave danger to Islamabad.

He said several agreements had been signed between Pakistan and Russia for the provision of helicopters and military equipment.

He added that Pakistan's presence in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization would strengthen relations between the two countries. (AA)

**(4) No Military Meeting..**

allegations of an unknown Afghan lawmaker to Wall Street Journal about a military meeting related to the recent political issues in Balkh and said that no meeting in this regard had been held.

General Yaftali also said that ANA represented national power and the will of all Afghans and operated neutrally protecting the national interests. He urged the national and international media to reflect realities about Afghan army in order to avoid misperception about the military involvement in political issues. (Pajhwok)

**(5) Undoubtedly, Afghanistan..**

The Vice President pointing out to the high level of relations between two countries during 3 last years, lauded that, "The Afghan government has no doubts to eliminate any obstacles impacting negatively the development of the bilateral relations between the two nations." (Monitoring Desk)

**(6) MPs Welcome ..**

He hoped the fatwa would help reduce suicide bombings and terrorist attacks

in Pakistan and Afghanistan. He asked scholars of other Muslim countries to issue similar decrees.

Habib Afghan, a Kuchi tribe representative, said the Pakistani Ulema had lately issued the fatwa against suicide bombings and terrorism. He said many precious lives could have been secured had the fatwa been issued some years back.

President Ashraf Ghani has said Islam belongs to all Muslims and Ulema's fatwa against terrorism is not limited to a certain country or region.

It is pertinent to mention that Pakistan Army Chief Gen. Qamar Bajwa during his visit to Kabul assured President Ghani that Pakistani ulem would issue a fatwa against terrorism in Afghanistan, but Afghan officials say the pledge remains unfulfilled. (Pajhwok)

**(7) Pence Supports...**

the impact of President Trump's South Asia strategy, the White House said in a statement.

Pence and Ghani commended the bravery and sacrifices that US, Coalition, and Afghan soldiers have made in fighting the insurgency and international terrorists, such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda.

"Pence and Ghani reaffirmed the enduring bonds and close alliance between the United States and Afghanistan," the White House said.

The discussion was a continuation of the dialogue that Pence had with Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah in Kabul last month.

Pence highlighted Kabul's continued engagement and critical progress on necessary reforms, political inclusion, and preparations for forthcoming elections.

On the other hand, acting Foreign Minister Jamiat-i-Islami Afghanistan leader Salahuddin Rabbani hailed Pence's suggestion in a tweet and emphasized transparent elections and governance reforms.

Meanwhile, Noor also welcomed the US vice president's remarks. His party wanted a broad-based government in Kabul, he said, stressing a joint Afghan-US war on terrorism. (Pajhwok)

**(8) Wolesi Jirga Oks ...**

unaddressed. MPs said claimed provinces had been granted many uplift projects at the expense of others. But Amir Khan Yar, head of the Wolesi Jirga economic commission, said some 17 billion afghanis had been added to the development budget in the revised version of draft budget.

Eight percent of projects dropped in the earlier draft have been included and proposed administrative units, to which additional funds were allocated, reduced from 10 to six.

In addition, the precautionary budget of 56 billion afghanis has been slashed to 54 billion afghanis. He added the 161 billion afs of the projected funds was expected from government revenue and the rest from foreign aid.

Finance Minister Ekilil Hakimi said the draft budget had been prepared based on available resources and international standards. With its approval, he hoped, the global community's trust in the Afghan government would increase.

Similarly, he said, the government would be able to attract more foreign aid through the national budget. Of the 152 lawmakers present, 122 voted in favour of the budget. (Pajhwok)

**(9) US Again Asks ..**

Wells suggested to Pakistani leaders that enhanced intelligence cooperation could provide the basis for improvement in relations, especially in counterterrorism cooperation.

Ambassador Wells during a brief talk with a small group of journalists at the US embassy on Tuesday, Wells said: "There can be no good or bad terrorists."

She also spoke about the projects being funded by the US in Pakistan, the Coalition Support Fund (CSF) and professional and constructive meetings that she held a day earlier.

The diplomat made clear Washington was averse to efforts to foment separatism inside Pakistan. "We don't support Baloch separatism," she added. Wells added the US would not support the use of Afghan soil as a base for hostile acts against Pakistan. About the Taliban and the Haqqani network, she said the US opposed the use of terrorist proxies by any country.

She said the US wanted Islamabad to launch a crackdown on groups trying to destabilise Afghanistan, just like the "extraordinary" fight against the Pakistan Taliban and JamaatulArhar.

Washington's aim was to find a political settlement in Afghanistan and that was where the US expected Pakistan to play its role, the visiting dignitary said. (Pajhwok)

**(10) 27 People ...**

he added.

Moahid said the detainees under investigation with the CJTF. The appellate court of the CJTF had sentenced five individuals from one to 20 years in jail during the last seven days, he concluded. (Pajhwok)

**(11) President...**

president came up with another plan to construct 24 from mud which was approved. He said these buildings were completed in six months.

Education Director Mohammad Karim Atal said these schools were constructed in Sharana, the provincial capital, and some districts. He added thousands of students would study in the facilities.

Haji Gul Khan, a tribal elder, thanked the governor for constructing 24 schools instead of six also thanked the president for his charity.

He said many schools in Paktika were without buildings with students studying under the open skies. (Pajhwok)

**(12) Noor Threatens...**

of electronic national identity cards, and the establishment of a commission to oversee the amendment of the Constitution, among others.

On Wednesday, Noor addressed his supporters at a routine gathering in Balkh where he harshly criticized government for its failure to ensure people's safety, implement projects, ensure transparency and prevent the infiltration of Daesh militants into the north.

"We seek social and political justice. We want the rights of every citizen in the country to be ensured. We want corruption fully uprooted," Noor told a gathering in Balkh.

Noor talked about recent remarks by a number of government officials who called him "an ordinary employee of government", and said he is representing a great number of people, a coalition and a big political mainstream.

He said nothing will convince him to step down except a logical agreement. He also stated government has failed to prevent the infiltration of foreign Daesh militants, from Syria, into Afghanistan.

Noor said Jamiat will announce a deadline for government's decision if the ongoing talks fail to provide results within the next few days. (Tolo news)

**(13) Newly-Appointed...**

government decide." Meanwhile, Rahmatullah Fitrat, spokesman for Dawood, said on Wednesday he has resigned from his post and claims that the Presidential Palace is using Dawood as a tool "for its goals".

"Mr. engineer Mohammad Dawood is a burnt tool of the individuals in ARG (Presidential Palace). He does not know what is going on behind the scenes," he said.

"Mr. engineer is actually not aware of the big plans which are led by ARG which include destabilizing the north." Dawood landed in Balkh Airport on Tuesday night and was accompanied by police force members to his residence in the province.

There are reports which indicate that Dawood agreed with Noor that he would enter the province without his bodyguards. (Tolo news)

**(14) Taliban..**

the Taliban phoned the ALP member, pretending as hashish sellers and then cut off his head.

The Taliban took the severed head with them and placed it on a high place with a note threatening other ALP men with the same fate if they did not quit their job, the resident said. (Pajhwok)

**(15) Afghanistan ..**

before losing to eventual champions South Africa.

The success for Afghanistan is also a 180-degree turn from the 2016 U19 World Cup in Bangladesh, when they were similarly placed in a group with Pakistan and Sri Lanka but were defeated by both sides.

Wednesday's victory was set up by a trio of half-centuries from Ibrahim Zadran who got 86 runs from 112 balls while Ikram Ali Khil got 55 off 89 balls and Darwish Rasooli got 63 off 44 balls to set up an imposing total of 284 for 7. Zadran scooped player of the match after his great performance.

The chase was in the balance when rain arrived after 24 overs with Sri Lanka 108 for 3. A revised target of 127 off the final 14 overs was set when play resumed, and the required run rate jumped from 6.80 to nearly ten an over.

Afghanistan's bowlers have played well and team captain Naveen-ul-Haq snared two wickets in the first four overs after play resumed. Naveen finished with 4 for 35 in eight overs and also effected a run-out.

Afghanistan will play Ireland in their final Group D match on Saturday. Sri

Lanka plays Pakistan with the winner joining Afghanistan in the quarter-finals.

A tie or a washout would also put Pakistan into the knockouts due to the net run rate tiebreaker.

In the first match of the tournament, Afghanistan beat Pakistan by five wickets. Pakistan batted first in the match and set 189 as target for Afghanistan.

The target was completed by the Afghan team who lost 5 wickets in 48 overs. (Tolo news)

**(16) U.S., Kazakh ...**

personnel in Afghanistan has been increased to some 15,000.

As Kazakhstan holds the rotating presidency on the United Nations Security Council this month, the U.S. government said it will continue to discuss international challenges with Kazakhstan during its tenure.

Aside from cooperation on regional and international issues, the two countries are committed to promoting "an enhanced strategic partnership for the 21st century."

"In bilateral relations, I think economic relations play a key role. And in Kazakhstan, we have major American companies operating for many years," Nazarbayev told the press Tuesday.

Bilateral trade in goods grew to 1.9 billion dollars in 2016, said the U.S. Department of State, and both countries aim to further expand the economic ties.

"We also agree that fair and reciprocal ... trade benefits both of our countries," Trump said.

During the visit, Nazarbayev promised to sign with the United States 20 commercial contracts worth 7.5 billion dollars.

In civil aviation, for example, Kazakhstan ordered six Boeing 737 MAX 8 airplanes, making itself the first nation in Central Asia to own and operate the type of passenger planes.

Moreover, its national airline carrier Air Astana announced it would purchase three Boeing 787 Dream liners, which are scheduled for delivery in 2021.

In railways, General Electric and Kazakhstan TemirZholoy (KTZ) railway company concluded two new strategic initiatives valued at over 900 million dollars, including manufacturing locomotives for KTZ, an expansion of the main rail facility in Astana and others. The two nations also signed contracts on collaboration in areas such as digital infrastructure, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, education, finance, space exploration and healthcare.

Nazarbayev said that since Kazakhstan offers visa-free entry into the country for U.S. visitors, he expects "reciprocity" from the U.S. side. The two nations are also working on opening a direct flight between them.

During his visit, Nazarbayev also invited Trump to visit Kazakhstan. (Xinhua)

**(17) Afghan Commandos**

Helmand is among the relatively volatile provinces in southern Afghanistan where the anti-government armed militant groups are actively operating in a number of its districts and often carry out insurgency activities.

In the meantime, the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) personnel are busy conducting counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations to suppress the activities of the militant groups. (KP)

**(18) China to Encourage ...**

Atmar added Afghanistan was interested to be part of China's Belt and Road initiative and establishing multi-dimensional relations with China.

The national security advisor said the Afghan government was ready to hold talks with Afghan Taliban and all other foreign terrorists would be eliminated. (Pajhwok)

**(19) Afghan Forces..**

better than using force for resolving conflicts".

Talking on this topic, the Afghan Interior Minister Wais Ahmad Barmak termed the US air support to Afghan forces as vital in eliminating terrorist groups.

"The (air) support has been very effective and in the future the support will be tripled," Barmak told a press conference in Kabul on Tuesday.

The Ministry of Defense meanwhile called on the international community to increase pressure on insurgents in Afghanistan and on their supporters out of the country.

"US forces have special technology that helps us to target terrorists anywhere they hide," Defense Ministry deputy spokesman Mohammad Radmanish said.

US will invest four billion dollars in the next three to four years in the Afghan Air Force to enable them to stand on their own feet, officials said. Buying

airplanes, helicopters and According to the Defense Ministry, the Afghan Air Force conducts at least 100 flights daily of which over 10 flights are for targeting insurgents. (Tolo news)

**Work on TAPI Project on Track: Ministry**

KABUL - The Ministry of Mines and Petroleum (MoMP) on Wednesday said the government has taken the necessary steps to implement Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline in the country.

The MoMP added that the Afghan government is ready to roll out the project in its country. Construction work on the TAPI pipeline is likely to start in Afghanistan in February, the ministry said.

The areas where the pipeline is expected to run through have also been finalized, said the ministry.

The project will transport gas from Turkmenistan to Afghanistan, Pakistan and India via a 1,814km pipeline. According to MoMP, the Afghan government has worked on a number of programs to lessen the impact on areas the project will run through and on acquiring the needed land.

"We have undertaken the necessary arrangements in the security sector and provided facilities for the implementation of the project, a special team has worked on it," said Abdul Qadeer Mufti, spokesman for the ministry of mines and petroleum.

Economic experts scrutinize TAPI economic privileges

"Government needs to come up with a working security strategy to prevent destructive activities around the project; secondly we need to develop a national consensus for the support of development. The people of Afghanistan should mobilize in support of these projects," said economic analyst Sayed Mohammad Zia Danish.

In Afghanistan, the TAPI pipeline will be constructed alongside the Kandahar-Herat Highway in western Afghanistan, and then via Quetta and Multan in Pakistan. The final destination of the pipeline will be the Indian town of Fazilka, near the border between Pakistan and India.

Afghanistan is expected to get \$500 million USD in transit duties annually from the project.

The pipeline will be 1,735 kilometers long and have the capacity of transferring 33 billion cubic meters of gas from Turkmenistan to Pakistan and India through Herat, Farah, Helmand and Nimroz provinces of Afghanistan. (Tolonews)

**US drone strike leaves 6 militants dead, wounded in East of Afghanistan**

KABUL - At least six militants were killed or wounded in the latest US drone strike in eastern Nangarhar province of Afghanistan, the Afghan military officials said Wednesday.

The airstrike was carried out in the vicinity of Khogyani district targeting a vehicle carrying the anti-government armed militants.

The 201st Silab Corps officials in the East said a vehicle carrying armed militants was targeted in the vicinity of Dandu Nokar Khel area, leaving three militants dead.

The officials further added that three other militants were also wounded in the airstrike and the vehicle was totally destroyed. The anti-government armed militant groups including the Taliban and ISIS insurgents have not commented regarding the report so far. This comes as the counter-terrorism operations are underway in different parts of Nangarhar province both by the Afghan and US forces to counter the terror groups who are attempting to expand foothold in this province. The Silab Corps officials said Tuesday that 23 militants belonging to the Taliban and ISIS insurgents were killed in separate drone strikes in this province. (KP)

