

(1) Indonesian Envoy ...

and Kabul would kick off.

When asked about peace process, Rahman said being an Islamic country Indonesia wanted to play a positive role in Afghan reconciliation process.

Governor Weesa termed the trip of Indonesian envoy to Kandahar vital and added the provincial government wanted to attract Jakarta support in education, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

He expressed delight over the allocation of 500 scholarships to Afghan students and demanded better education opportunities for Afghan students. Provincial Council member Haji Syed Jan Khakrezwal said Indonesian could play decisive role in Afghan peace process besides other assistance to Afghanistan.

He asked the Indonesian envoy to provide support for social and religious activities and help the completion of Umar Bin Khattab Mosque. (Pajhwok)

(2) India, US and ...

Delhi remain committed to work closely with its regional and international partners to bring peace, security, stability and prosperity in Afghanistan.

Earlier, the US told the UN Security Council that the status quo regarding terrorist safe havens in Pakistan is not acceptable.

The US had said that the status quo regarding continued terror safe havens in Pakistan is not acceptable and insisted that Islamabad join its efforts to bring a resolution to the conflict.

"We seek to work cohesively and effectively with Pakistan, but cannot be successful if the status quo, one where terrorist organisations are given sanctuary inside the country's borders, is allowed to continue," US deputy secretary of state John Sullivan told the ministerial meeting. (Agencies)

(3) Foundation Stone ...

on to a wall in the area which was once called the "wall of democracy". It is here that the new memorial will be built.

Addressing guests at the ceremony, Abdullah said sacrifices made by the media in Afghanistan have helped the country achieve freedom of speech, as it stands today.

"Those who dumb the voice of science, knowledge, the voice and the rights of humans, are found on the dark side of history," Abdullah said, referring to militant groups who have committed deadly attacks against civilians and media workers.

"And those who stand and defend the rights (of the people) and sacrifice their lives in this way, and are ready to make sacrifices, and maintain this as an achievement, they are on the bright side of history. They are in a place where they lay the foundation for the improvement of development in the country."

"I thank all the fighters of freedom of speech in Afghanistan," Abdullah said.

Abdullah once again expressed his condolences to the families of those killed in the 2016 attack on TOLO TV - which claimed the lives of seven staff members. The attack took place two years ago today, Saturday 20 January. He said following this incident, the media in the country chose a clear and committed route to provide information to the people and to support freedom of speech.

Abdullah said the National Unity Government stands by the people in terms of supporting freedom of speech in the country.

He stated that the new memorial will be a 'stab to the hearts of those who want to silence the voice of the people' in Afghanistan.

He reiterated that there is no excuse for violence against journalists in the country. (Tolonews)

(4) 1,600 Daesh...

"The number of ISIS-K fighters killed in Afghanistan in 2017 was approximately 1,600 fighters," said Gresback. Gresback also called on Taliban to join the Afghan peace process and said if they failed to do so they would be targeted anywhere in the country. He said Taliban should use winter for negotiations with the Afghan government.

"Our message to the Taliban is reconciliation. We will continue to pursue them unabated through the winter months. There will be no breaks during the winter months, it will be a long winter for the Taliban," Gresback said. Afghan defense ministry meanwhile said they are targeting Daesh militants wherever they are in the country and insisted that reports of a rise in Daesh numbers were not true.

A number of members of parliament, however said Daesh activities and movements in the country pose a serious threat. They blasted government over hiding information about Daesh activities in the country.

Although RS says Daesh only exists in three provinces, MPs claim Daesh is active in more than three provinces. (Tolonews)

(5) Taliban Running...

had been informed about the issue, but no action so far.

GhulamSedique, a driver on the Zaranj-Dilaram Road, said the Taliban had hoisted their flags on the road and were taking taxes from heavy weight vehicles. The driver said the Taliban did not stop small and passenger vehicles.

He said the insurgents took 7,000 to 10,000 afghanis in tax from heavy load vehicles.

Nida Mohammad, Khasrud district's administrative chief, confirmed Taliban's customs check-point and added a clearing operation would be launched soon in the area.

A security official, who wished to go unnamed, said the Maiwand Military Corps had decided to launch a clearing operation in the area where the Taliban had established their check-point and station a military unity there. (Pajhwok)

(6) Deadly Bombing...

"The dedication which I have to my job and to myself is to go continue with my profession under any circumstances. I have to move forward and I will not surrender," he said.

However, memories of the event still haunt him, he said.

"Problems are still in there. These problems are both psychological and physical. I wounded in my face and eyes," he added.

Sadat's family meanwhile said they were totally opposed to him returning to work - especially as a cameraman for TOLONews.

"His (Hasib) problem is his eyes and he always complains about (pain) in his body, but despite that, he is dedicated to his job. We are not stopping him. He says he is interested (in his work) and he wants to continue with that," Hasib's mother said.

Sadat is one of hundreds of Afghan media workers who have had to work in the face of violence and threats for the past decade.

Today, Saturday January 20, marks the second anniversary of the Taliban suicide car bombing that killed the TOLO TV staff members and wounded 26 others, including passers-by.

Among those killed were three loyal and dedicated female employees.

The explosion happened on Darulaman Road when a suicide bomber rammed his car into a staff bus that had been taking the TOLO TV employees home.

This was the first major attack on a media organization since the ousting of the Taliban regime in 2001. (Tolonews)

(7) 2,000 Families...

security forces operation. She said security situation in their district was bad and the government had so far extended them no aid since arriving Kunduz City.

Another displaced woman expressed her concern about the situation of the uprooted families who left behind everything to save their lives.

She said the families were in great trouble due to lack of shelter to protect themselves from harsh winter.

Meanwhile, Brig. Gen.SayedQurbanMusavi, chief of the Afghan National Army (ANA) 20 division, said the Taliban used homes of local residents to attack security forces, a reason behind the displacement.

He said the ongoing clearing operation had resulted in purging ten villages out from the presence of rebels. (Pajhwok)

(8) Pakistan Hands ..

reunite with his family in Afghanistan, stated a statement by the FO.

According to a statement by Afghanistan's embassy, the government and people of Afghanistan have deeply appreciated Pakistan's efforts for taking good care of the destitute Afghan child and his safe reunion with his family. Foreign Secretary TehminaJanjua has said that peace and stability in Afghanistan is inevitable for a peaceful region and Pakistan would continue joint efforts with Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(9) Afghanistan Renders ..

terrorism is being conducted on behalf of the region and the world at large.

"In this struggle, we are making enormous sacrifices, in terms of human lives - ordinary civilians and our security forces alike. Despite all challenges, our forces have made progress in pressing violent militants and terrorists, including the Taliban; the Haqqani network; Al-Qaeda and Daesh, and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, among others," he said.

In the past 10 months alone, Special Forces have carried out more than 2,000 security operations nationwide,

which have resulted in major losses among violent militants, including foreign terrorist fighters who come from the region and beyond, he told the Security Council.

Noting that the meeting comes just days after the Security Council's visit to Afghanistan, he said the visit was an opportunity to discuss, broadly, a number of important issues, ranging from security, development and regional cooperation; to governance, human rights, and democratization.

"We are confident the outcome of the visit will factor positively in strengthening the international community's engagement, cooperation and consensus on Afghanistan," he said.

Karzai said Afghanistan's stability and development should not be seen in isolation from the security and stability of the countries in its periphery and beyond.

"In this regard, the imperative of deepened cooperation between Afghanistan and Central Asian States on common challenges and promoting our shared prosperity has gained new impetus," he said adding that Afghanistan has always recognized the importance of its relations with all regional countries, especially those of Central Asia.

These bonds have endured on the basis of mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity, shared interests and common affinities of culture and history.

"Despite these positive attributes, we had - during the past years - missed opportunities to elevate the scope of our cooperation for our common security, development and prosperity," Karzai said.

Addressing the gathering India accused Pakistan of differentiating between good and bad terrorist.

There is a common Afghan saying that roughly translates as "If water is muddied downstream, don't waste your time filtering it; better to go upstream to clean it," the Indian Ambassador to the UN, Syed Akbaruddin said.

"As such, support for voices of peace in Afghanistan alone is not enough. We must focus on addressing the challenges posed by cross border terrorism emanating from safe havens and sanctuaries to our region and especially to Afghanistan," Akbaruddin said.

"If we do so, the decay, which has been inflicted on Afghanistan, can be made reversible," he added. (Pajhwok)

(10) TOLO TV ...

had worked as a video editor for MOBY Group - TOLO TV's mother company - for seven years when killed.

2. ZainabMirzaee: Mirzaee had been a Dari dubbing artist.

3. MehriAzizi: Azizi had worked in the creative department for five years.

4. Mariam Ibrahim: Ibrahim had been a dubbing artist with the company for only six months.

5. Mohammad Hussain: Hussain had been a driver for six years.

6. Mohammad Ali Mohammadi: Mohammadi was a Dari dubbing artist and had worked for the company for five years.

7. HussainAmiri: Amiri had worked in the set department for eight years.

We also remember Aziz Navin, 22 who lost his life in a massive truck bombing in Kabul city on May 31, last year. Aziz, who worked in the IT department, had been on his way to work at the time of the incident.

The attack drew widespread and global condemnation and countries, activists and media organizations denounced the attack and said it had been an attack on freedom of speech. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack.

The seven employees are still sadly missed and live on in the memories and hearts of everyone at TOLO TV and MOBY Group. (Tolonews)

(11) Noor Warns of Civic ...

Noor meanwhile also responded to recent remarks by new US Ambassador to Kabul John R. Bass.

"This government is a government based on an agreement. The ambassador of one of the countries talked about law in Afghanistan. However, we rely on the stance of US Vice President Mike Pence. He is the criterion for us because he has raised his voice from the White House and we welcomed this," he said.

"It is possible that ARG (Presidential Palace) would have convinced the (US) ambassador to make the remarks, but I want to ask him that he should review the (Afghan) Constitution and understand the situation of Afghanistan."

On Thursday, Bass called for an urgent solution to be found to end the ongoing dispute between government and Noor.

He said this dispute was an Afghan issue and needed to be dealt with ac-

cordingly. He said it was not an issue for the US or any other foreign country to resolve. It was an Afghan problem that needed to be resolved within the framework of the Constitution and in accordance with rule of law.

Some MPs believe the continuance of the dispute between government and Jamiat are against the interests of Afghanistan.

"If the tension continues, it will provide an opportunity for terrorists and also it will affect people's lives," said Nazir Ahmad Ahmadzai, the second deputy speaker of the Wolesi Jirga, Lower House of Parliament. Deputy Head of President Ashraf Ghani's Administrative Office HaroonChakhan-soori at a press conference in Kabul.

For the first time after the removal of Noor from his office by the president, the deputy of President Ashraf Ghani's Administrative Office, HaroonChakhansoori talked about the issue at a press conference in Kabul on Saturday.

"The issue of Mr. Noor is a small internal issue which will be solved soon," he said.

According to information obtained by TOLONews on Thursday, Jamiat and the Presidential Palace (ARG) have reached an agreement on at least seven of twelve demands tabled to government by the party in their bid to break the ongoing stalemate.

In the draft agreement of the National Unity Government and Jamiat-e-Islami, the demands are described as follows:

- Establishment of a constitution amendment commission based on the political agreement of the National Unity Government (NUG)—in response to this, the government has agreed to create such a commission in the near future and the commission will propose the necessary amendments in the constitution within six months.

- Considering amendments in the election law and giving share to the political parties in the national assembly before next year's elections—the two sides have not agreed on this issue.

- The re-election of members of the election commissions, but the two sides have not agreed on it, however they have agreed to bring about the necessary reforms in the election commissions.

- Both sides have agreed on holding the elections as per schedule this year.

- Holding the constitutional amendment Loya Jirga, the Grand Assembly, after the parliamentary and district council elections and before the presidential elections, but the two sides have agreed that if the preconditions are implemented completely, the Loya Jirga can be held after the presidential elections.

Jamiat-e-Islami says that the party has not reached any kind of settlement with the presidential palace's negotiators about the rolling out process of electronic ID cards.

- Giving share of Jamiat-e-Islam in the national unity government based on the NUG political agreement—the government has agreed that Balkh governor and police chief must be determined on the basis of a recommendation by Jamiat-e-Islami. Negotiations were also held on two ministries, but talks were not held on certain candidates who will occupy the two ministries.

- Providing clear information about the nature of the attack on the funeral ceremony of Salem Ezedyar. The special commission which was tasked to investigate the incident will brief Jamiat about the attack, if Jamiat is not satisfied about the outcomes, the investigations will continue.

- The two sides have agreed to the establishment of a High Council of Political Parties.

- The two sides also agreed to create a joint commission to oversee the implementation of the agreement between the government and Jamiat-e-Islami within the framework of a specific timeline.

- Extension of the tenure of Atta Mohammad Noor as governor of Balkh until ARG and Jamiat-e-Islami reach a final settlement—the two sides agreed that if key items of the proposals are accepted by government, in this case, Noor will step down from his post.

- Jamiat has proposed the overseeing of the agreement by the US ambassador to Afghanistan and UN delegation, something the government rejected. But Jamiat has asked the president to give assurance about the agreement at a press conference.

It appears however that there are still serious challenges ahead for both parties before they can reach a final agreement. (Tolonews)

(12) Carpet Union ..

feel this will have a negative impact on the local carpet industry. The annual expo brings together over

1,600 exhibitors from across the world that produce floor-covering solutions. Disappointed union officials said last year, Afghanistan scooped second place for its carpets at DOMOTEX.

Officials blame government, especially the ministry of trade and industry, for its negligence.

"Unfortunately, due to a delay in the works of Export Promotion Agency of Afghanistan and the EPAA staff's lack of experience in this regard, Afghanistan's carpets did not feature in the competition at the exhibition," said Qurban Ali Jamshidzada, the head of the Carpet Exporters Union.

They said Afghanistan qualifies for the criterion which includes carpets of good color quality, the use of natural raw materials and they have to be innovative.

However, the ministry of commerce and industry said prior to the expo, the Afghan team was well prepared.

The ministry's spokesman Musafir Qoqandi now said Afghanistan was successful at DOMOTEX.

"Undoubtedly, a number of our businessmen, along with the sale of carpets, have got some contracts which we can consider achievements from the exhibition," Qoqandi added.

DOMOTEX is one of the biggest exhibitions of carpets in the world and is held in Germany every year. (Tolonews)

Hundreds Athletes Participate in Kabul Mountain Climbing

KABUL - The first-ever mountain climbing competition held on Friday in the Kurkh mountain in west of capital Kabul in hundreds of athletes participated.

Over one thousand male and female athletes participated in the show. The event was arranged by the Municipality Department in the area.

Earlier the municipality had arranged a marathon race as part of entertainment and sports events and the climbing was the second initiative.

Najibullah Alkozai, the organizer of the event was to encourage youth to participating in sport events and spread awareness among them regarding mountain climbing.

Mohammad Yaqout, the first position holder in the competition said: "It was the first competition of mountain climbing in which I participated and grabbed the first position."

"I want to see more development in sports and wish to take part in global event and earn pride for my country on international level," he said.

The municipality official pledged to arrange more sport events for the encouragement of youth. (Pajhwok)

Ireland Beat Afghanistan in U19 WC Thriller

KABUL - Afghanistan lost to Ireland by just four runs in a thriller in the ongoing international Cricket Council (ICC) Under-19 World Cup in Whangerei, New Zealand, on Saturday.

Afghanistan won the toss and invited Ireland to bat first in the 50 overs game. Ireland set the Afghans 225 runs target after losing seven wickets.

Wafadar and Qais Ahmad shared three wickets each.

In response, Afghanistan were almost close to the target but their last wicket fell just four runs short to the victory. It was Ireland's first victory and Afghanistan's first defeat in the tournament.

Afghanistan beating Pakistan and Sri Lanka have set the quarterfinals with New Zealand. (Pajhwok)

