

Quote of the Day

The world is so dreadfully managed, one hardly knows to whom to complain.

Ronald Firbank

Trump Admin Targets Violent Islamist Groups as Foreign Policy Priority

WASHINGTON D.C - The Trump administration will make defeating "radical Islamic terror groups" its top foreign policy goal, according to a statement posted on the White House website moments after Donald Trump's inauguration as U.S. president. Trump, a Republican, used his inaugural address on Friday to promise to "unite the civilized world against radical Islamic terrorism, which we will eradicate completely from the face of the earth."

In the statement, titled "America First Foreign Policy," the Trump administration said, "Defeating ISIS and other radical Islamic terror groups will be our highest priority." ISIS is an acronym for Islamic State. In order to "defeat and destroy" Islamic State and similar groups, the new administration



said it "will pursue aggressive joint and coalition military operations when necessary," work to cut off funding for terrorist groups, expand intel-

ligence sharing, and use "cyberwarfare" to disrupt propaganda and recruitment efforts. The statement offered no indication of how Trump's policies might differ from those of his predecessor, Democrat Barack Obama. The Obama administration also pursued those broadly

described strategies: working with European and Middle Eastern allies in a bombing campaign targeting Islamic State leaders and their oil infrastructure, authorizing U.S. special forces operations against the group, and using sanctions and other methods to cut off its financing. Trump's speech and the statement echoed his campaign criticism of Obama and his Democratic rival, Hillary Clinton, for not using the phrase "radical Islamic terror" to describe Islamic State and other hardline jihadist groups. Obama argued that using the term would conflate "murderers" with "the billion Muslims that exist around the world, including in this country, who are peaceful." Clinton said using the phrase would play into the hands... (More on P4)...(1)

Mol Police Reform Campaign Underway



KABUL - The Ministry of Interior (MoI) on Saturday said it had launched a campaign to bring about reforms to the police ranks. MoI spokesman, Seddiq Seddiqi, told a press conference here 20 teams had been appointed to identify police problems and resolve them. He said the MoI prioritized some programs in winter such as building capacity of security forces, equipping them and reviving security

organs that had been affected in wars. He said a reform process in different police ranks and a program to remove challenges the police faced were ongoing. "The MoI has sent 20 investigative teams to different provinces to assess police problems and the ministry would then find solutions to them after the teams had their reports prepared," Seddiqi added. ... (More on P4)...(2)

Ghani Strongly Condemns Saudi Terror Attack

KABUL - President Ashraf Ghani on Saturday strongly condemned a terrorist attack in Saudi Arabia's Jeddah city that took place early this morning. A statement from the Presidential Palace to Pajhwok Afghan News quoted President Ghani as calling terrorism a common threat to all regional countries and the world, stressing on joint fight against the phenomenon. On behalf of the Afghan government and people, the president shared his condolences with Saudi King, the families of victims and people of that country, the statement said. Two suspected militants blew themselves up following a confrontation with security forces in Jeddah on Saturday, Saudi media reported. Saudi security forces surrounded a house in Jeddah and exchanged fire with the men, who blew themselves up, Sabq.org, a website affiliated with the monarchy's interior ministry, said. (Pajhwok)

Afghan Forces Kill 20 Militants in 9 Operations: Govt.

KABUL - About 20 militants have been killed amid operations launched by Afghan security forces elsewhere in the country, the Interior Ministry said on Saturday. "In past 24 hours, Afghan National Defense and Security Forces launched nine Counter-Terrorism joint operations to clear some of the areas from terrorists and enemies of peace and stability of Afghanistan. As a result 20 armed militants were killed, 16 wounded and two others were arrested," the ministry said in a statement. The security forces also discovered and confiscated light and heavy rounds of ammunition during the raid carried out in Kapisa, Uruzgan, Zabul, Helmand, Farah, Faryab and Sari Pul provinces, the statement said, without adding if there were any casualties on the side of security forces. (Xinhua)

Afghanistan Desperately Reliant on Intl. Aid, Conference Told

KABUL - A Swedish diplomat says the persisting crisis in Afghanistan has left the country increasingly reliant on international humanitarian aid that can only provide short-term relief without resolving key problems. Sweden's Ambassador Anders Sjoberg said Saturday that the Asian nation's continued reliance on such aid points to wider failures. "Let us acknowledge that we've been doing this work in Afghanistan for too long," Sjoberg said at a gathering of international and Afghan bodies in Kabul. "This is a failure in itself. Humanitarian aid is not short-term anymore, it has unfortunately become a Band-Aid for



the unresolved conflict." Sjoberg said the crisis highlights the need to find a peaceful resolution to the conflict without pointing to any specific plans. The development came as international organs launched a request for \$550 million in new funding for the impover-

ished nation. This is while the United Nations estimates that at least 9.3 million Afghans - nearly a third of the population - will require humanitarian assistance in 2017, a 13-percent increase compared to last year which comes amid growing violence, economic stagnation, ... (More on P4)...(3)

Abdullah Welcomes Trump Commitment to Troops



KABUL - Afghan Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah on Saturday expressed hope that the United States would continue its support for the Afghan government after American President Donald Trump publicly spoke with U.S. troops stationed in Afghanistan after his inauguration on Friday. "I want to congratulate the U.S. president on behalf of myself, the Afghan government and the people of Afghanistan," Abdullah said at an event to launch a bid for \$550 million in international humanitarian aid for Afghanistan, which remains locked in a bloody war between the Western-backed government and insurgent groups like the Taliban. Trump, attending a post-inauguration ball in Washing-

ton, spoke by video link with American troops stationed at a base north of Kabul. "I'm with you all the way... we're going to do it together," he told the troops. "The courage that you show is incredible." As president-elect, Trump spoke by phone with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani in early December, but has provided few details on whether he will continue the billions of dollars per year in military and development aid to Afghanistan, nor has he confirmed the future of the nearly 9,000 American troops still deployed there. Abdullah, who shares power with Ghani after a 2014 U.S.-brokered political deal, said he interpreted Trump's comments to the troops as a positive sign. ... (More on P4)...(5)

Afghanistan Thumps Ireland in Desert T20 Finals

KABUL - Mohammad Nabi delivered the goods once again for Afghanistan as his four-wicket haul helped his side win the inaugural Desert T20 Challenge. His four for 10 helped Afghanistan blow Ireland away for just 71 runs in the final in Dubai, reported Cricbuzz. The other bowlers too made their marks as Amir Hamza, Fareed Ahmad and Karim Janat all picked up two wickets apiece to leave Ireland in tatters. In reply, Afghanistan galloped to the target in just 7.5 overs and with 10 overs to spare, with Mohammad Shahzad smacking an unbeaten 52 off 40 balls, while fellow opener Nawroz Mangal (17 off 8) playing second fiddle. With both bat and ball, Nabi has been one of Afghanistan's most consistent performers over the course of the eight-team tournament. And he proved again why he is the lynchpin in the Afghanistan team with a stunning spell, reported Cricbuzz. In just fourteen balls, Nabi struck to remove captain William Porterfield, opener Paul Stirling, ... (More on P4)...(6)

Former VP Calls for Review of Govt's Peace Strategy

KABUL - Former Vice President Mohammad Karim Khalili said in an interview with TOLOnews that the former and incumbent administrations have not made any 'considerable' achievements in the peace process and that the peace strategy should be reviewed. "I believe that the former government was not as successful as required. The incumbent government also has not achieved any success unfortunately. This [peace strategy] should be reviewed," he said. He said the agreement for holding the Constitutional Loya Jirga (Grand Assembly) was done only between President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah; not between the two teams.



"The Constitutional Loya Jirga was between the two gentlemen [Ghani and Abdullah]; not between the two teams. The National Unity Government is established between the two gentlemen, the president and the chief executive. But the agreement has to be implemented for the people. However its implementation has been weak so

far," Khalili added. Meanwhile, the High Peace Council's (HPC) international relations advisor Mohammad Ismail Qasimiyar said Afghanistan's peace will not be successful without the world's cooperation. "We will not have a proper result from our peace efforts as long as countries (do not) ... (More on P4)...(4)

75,000 Acres of Govt. Land Grabbed in Ghazni



GHAZNI CITY - More than 75000 acres of government land has been grabbed by powerful individuals in southern Ghazni province and their names would be exposed in the media if they did not relinquish the property, a public representative said on Saturday. The provincial council secretary, Hassan Raza Yusufi, told a press conference here that some government officials and local powerful individuals had grabbed more than 75000 acres of public land and they had documents as well. Though he did not share any document but said a list of illegal land occupants had been prepared and would be shared with the media if the usurped land was not returned. The public representative said some government offices were without own buildings and were being run from rented homes. Yusufi said it was government's responsibility to retake usurped land because a time would come when government would not have any land for construction. In response ... (More on P4)...(7)

Encourage US Investors to Invest in Afghanistan, ACCI Asks Trump



KABUL - The Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) urged the US President Donald Trump to convince investors in his country to invest in Afghanistan in order to strengthen the economy of war-hit country. According to ACCI officials, there are several sectors where the US investors can invest such as mining, agriculture, infrastructure and production sectors. Deputy of the chamber of commerce and industry Khanjan Alokozai said: "The US investors have taken stable steps with modern system on investing sector in Afghanistan, but no significant investments were made by the US investors in Afghanistan for the past several years." "There are a lot of investment opportunities existing on agriculture, infrastructure, mines in Afghanistan that the US investors and Afghanistan could both be benefited from it." Meanwhile, economy experts have accused Afghan government of not having economic development programs, therefore no foreigner investors ... (More on P4)...(8)

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