

(1) Pir Gilani ...

of his followers were present. CEO Abdullah said Pir Gilani offered untiring efforts for peace and accepted the HPC leadership without any privilege. He said peace talks were among the unity government's priorities and the successor to Pir Gilani would be appointed soon.

Nangarhar Governor Mohammad Gulab Mangal said the history of Afghanistan would remember the important services Pir Gilani had done for the development and independence of Afghanistan and the Afghans. (Pajhwok)

(2) Pakistan Preparing...

groups in Pakistan still persists. State Department spokesperson Mark Toner made the remarks in response to a question regarding Afghan officials concerns about the attacks being carried out in Afghanistan using the Pakistani soil.

Endorsing Afghanistan's view that terrorists are able to strike at whenever they want to because of the existence of safe havens, terrorist safe havens inside Pakistan, Toner said "Well, it continues - so the short answer to your first question is yes, and I think we've been very frank and very open about publicly saying to - to Pakistan that it needs to not provide any safe haven to groups that will or are intent on carrying out attacks on Afghanistan." (KP)

(3) Afghan Women's ...

Afghanistan through music is one of the key objectives pursued by ANIM.

At the moment, at least 65 girls are studying at the institute, which also has about 200 male students. (Tolonews)

(4) Canada Concerned...

undertaking the necessary due diligence to ensure that in the event that Canada's funds have been misappropriated, that such funds are recovered and that the guilty parties are held to account," Ottawa Citizen quotes Jessica Seguin, a spokeswoman for Global Affairs Canada.

Meanwhile, a spokesperson for the Embassy of Afghanistan in Ottawa Khalid Khosraw said in a tweet the allegations would be taken seriously and the findings would be reported to the public at the end of the inquiry.

This is not the first time that allegations of "ghost students, teachers and schools" have been reported. In a report in January 2016, the U.S. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) has warned the incoming U.S. administration led by President Donald Trump that "corruption continues to be one of the most serious threats to the U.S.-funded Afghanistan reconstruction effort."

The Canadian aid to EQUIP was administered by the World Bank through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, which was established in 2002 to support the Afghan government.

SIGAR, which describes itself as the only U.S. oversight agency in the country conducting inspections, also raised concerns about the administration of the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund.

"SIGAR has launched a new ARTF performance audit to assess the extent to which the World Bank and the Afghan government monitor and account for U.S. contributions to the ARTF, evaluate whether ARTF-funded projects have achieved their stated goals and objectives, and utilize and enforce any conditionalities on ARTF funding."

Canada, the U.S. and other donor countries pledged to financially support Afghanistan until 2020. Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau renewed USD 150 million per year in funding for aid projects in Afghanistan, totaling approximately \$465 million over three years, following a meeting with Ghani in July 2016. (Wadsam)

(5) AAF Bomb...

Taliban insurgents. He made the remarks during a meeting with the elders of the two provinces which organized amid concerns that the fighters of the two groups are attempting to expand foothold in some districts of the two provinces.

The elders of Zabul said the local residents in Khak-e-Afghan and Nawbahar districts have noted movements of the two groups to establish and strengthen their

presence.

The Ghazni representatives also said the ISIS loyalists and Taliban insurgents have started to expand their foothold in Nawa district.

The ISIS militants have reportedly arrived with their families and are fully equipped with the area turning into an entry point for the foreign insurgents. (KP)

(6) Taliban Tells ...

mission to support local forces as well as a separate US counter-terrorism mission.

Two of his top security appointments - retired Marine Corps General James Mattis as Secretary of Defense and former General Michael Flynn as National Security Adviser - both have extensive experience in Afghanistan.

The Taliban, however, warned Trump against relying on the kind of "unrealistic" reports presented to former presidents by their generals.

"They would emphasise continuation of war and occupation of Afghanistan because they can have better positions and privileges in war," the Taliban statement read.

It accused Washington of imposing a "surrogate administration" on Afghanistan in the face of popular Muslim resistance.

"You have to realise that the Afghan Muslim nation has risen up against foreign occupation," it said.

The Taliban has made steady inroads against the Western-backed government in Kabul since coalition forces ended their main combat mission in 2014, with government forces now in control of only two thirds of the country.

It has repeatedly urged the United States and its allies to leave Afghanistan, ruling out peace talks with the Kabul government while foreign forces remain on Afghan soil.

Trump has sharply criticised past US administrations for their handling of conflicts in the Muslim world but he has also pledged to eradicate militant Islamists around the globe. (9News)

(7) WFP Receives...

as we plan to buy as much food as possible locally. We thank the Government and the people of the United States of America for making this possible," said Mick Lorentzen, WFP's Representative and Country Director in Afghanistan.

WFP is providing food and cash assistance for 163,000 undocumented returnees, 200,000 documented returnees, 150,000 internally displaced people, and 35,000 refugees in Khost and Paktika. WFP is also scaling up existing nutrition programmes in eastern Afghanistan, with special nutrient-dense food being provided to more than 23,000 toddlers from returnee families to stave off malnutrition.

Wherever possible, food for the operation will be purchased in Afghanistan. Already in 2016, WFP used USAID funds to buy 23,322 metric tonnes of wheat flour, fortified with vitamins and minerals, from mills in Kabul, Hirat, Jalalabad, Kandahar, and Mazar-e-Sharif.

The USD 20 million contribution accounts for almost 30 percent of the total planned budget for WFP's response to the immediate needs of the returnees arriving into Afghanistan from Pakistan, and of people displaced within the country by conflict, in what is planned to be a nine-month operation. The USA remains a strong partner and the largest donor to WFP's operation in Afghanistan. (Wadsam)

(8) Governor Accuses...

Ambassador to Afghanistan Alexander Mantytskiy acknowledged contacts with the Taliban "for the safety of their diplomats".

Last month, Afghanistan's National Security Adviser Mohammad Hanif Atmar urged Moscow and Tehran not to keep ties with such "non-state actors". Iran and Pakistan have so far not reacted to the accusations made by the Afghan governor. (Monitoring Desk)

(9) 50pc of Khost's...

dental clinics, four ultrasound centres, six pharmacies, one X-ray centre and some other facilities.

Public & civil society concerns Residents complain private clin-

ics and check-up centres prescribe irrelevant and additional medicines, a practice that raises disturbing questions about the performance of private health facilities in Khost.

Yousaf Entizar, an inhabitant of Khost City, alleges there are tens of clinics in the provincial capital and districts exploiting patients and fleeing the general public.

"Some doctors at private clinics have become butchers. People have no option but to take patients to them. These doctors dupe us and charge more money by prescribing drugs we don't need."

Syed Marjan, another dweller of Khost City, acknowledges private clinics are generally good for the speedy recovery of patients. But some doctors are out to rake in money, he charges.

Jahan, hailing from Nadirshah Kot district, says his son recently suffered a bullet injury to his eye. When he took him to a private clinic, the doctor said the boy needed enucleation due to severe trauma.

Jahan claims the doctor jumped to the conclusion without any check-up or lab tests. Later, he took his son to Peshawar, where his eye surgery was satisfactorily performed. His son's ocular system is stable now.

Jahan wants the government to strop non-professional doctors from working if it really does not want people to take their ordinary patients abroad for common medical treatment.

Jamal Tanai, a civil society activist, blasts local officials for failing to implement public health rules and regulations. The department concerned and security officials should treat illegal health centres under the law, he demands.

If the health centres get work permits, they will improve their performance and provide quality medicine, he believes. Once these facilities start providing better services, public trust in them will be restored.

Public representatives Mujibur Rahman Salimzai, chairman of the Khost provincial council, says though improvement has come about in the sector, yet it has been unable to restore people's confidence or meet their demands.

He accuses the department of preventing a commission tasked with taking action against illegal health centres in the province from discharging its duties. "There are individuals who have no medical qualifications but prescribe medicines for all patients."

He rejects the allegations leveled by Public Health Department officials that local representatives are creating hurdles to the reforms process.

Health activists Workers of illegal medical stores and private clinics could not be reached for comments, but owners of legal facilities acknowledge problems in the health sector.

Dr. Badshah Zar Abdali, a doctor at the Matoon Baba private clinic, admits some doctors are fleecing patients under different pretexts. Most of such doctors do not have work permits.

"We should avoid prescribing unnecessary medicines that harm human bodily systems." A doctor should prescribe medicines, keeping in view the patient's financial position, he suggests.

Public health department and governor's house Public Health Director Dr. Gul Mohammad Din Mangal insists they have mounted pressure on owners of illegal medical centres. As a result, some have applied for permits.

He says the department has tried over and over again to seal illegal health centres but provincial council members created hurdles in their way.

"Interference from some officials and local representatives prevents the department from action against illegal health centres. We decided recently on closing down all illegal medical facilities.

"But later, we changed that decision and agreed on gradual action against illegal private medical stores and clinics," he explains, linking illegal practice to the lengthy process of issuing permits.

The director, however, denies private clinics are overcharging patients or prescribes them unnecessary drugs in a bid to take kickbacks from pharmaceuticals. Mubarez Mohammad Zadran, the governor's spokesman, confirms issues in the public health

sector. But the provincial administration remains committed to reforming the health sector, he adds.

In administrative meetings, he says, health officials were directed to take action against private medical centres and stores without legal permit and qualified doctors.

Zadran calls a refusal to get work permits a huge loss to the government. The provincial government is determined to reform health institutions and facilities, he concludes. (Pajhwok)

(10) ICC Rankings...

Shahzad, the only Associate player to break into the top10 of the MRF Tyres ICC Players Rankings for T20I Batsmen, retains the ninth position he has held since August last year.

A statement from ICC said the master blaster scored 207 runs in five matches during the Desert T20, including an unbeaten 52 in the final against Ireland.

On the list of bowlers, Hamza Hotak went up three places to 13th and Mohammad Nabi one place to 14th. Nabi also retained his fourth position on the list of all-rounders. (Pajhwok)

(11) Some Ministries ...

provincial government. He stressed all information and papers must be shared with the provincial government before being placed before the Council of Ministers.

No progress had been made on six major demands of the provincial government, including improvement of security, work on development projects, an end to land-grab and ending meddling in appointments.

Over the past 14 months, Naemi said, he had been asking security institutions to conduct major clearing operations in Laghman against militants but no attention had been paid to his pleas.

He warned the security situation was not good in the county, leaving a negative impact on major projects. "The people of Laghman often ask security organs to establish bases in the province, a demand that has gone unheeded."

Alingar, Alishang, Dawalshah and Badish districts were faced with immense security threats that effected good governance and development, the governor continued.

In addition, he acknowledged, security on the 40 kilometres Kabul-Jalalabad highway passing through Laghman was unstable and the central government had been asked repeatedly to improve the situation.

Security forces in Laghman had rendered sacrifices and prevented devastating explosion, he said, seeking credit for them. However, security threats had increased in the recent past, he added, seeking help from the central government.

Land-grab is another major issue, according to Naemi, who admitted huge swaths of government lands had been usurped by a handful of individuals having strong connections. The practice has impeded progress on some development projects in the province.

"Mafia groups using fake ownership documents are involved in land-grab. But the government and people of Laghman are determined to reclaim state lands from grabbers," Naemi remarked.

He requested the central authority to increase the power of governors and consult them on major issues. Ministries should be advised to resolve problems of provinces and act on their suggestions, he concluded. (Pajhwok)

(12) Humanitarian...

hope that Pakistani officials would allow him and his sick companion to cross the border.

"I have a valid passport and documents of an appointment with the doctor. But the patient I'm accompanying doesn't have a passport. His condition will deteriorate, if he doesn't meet the doctor," Mohammad added.

Khadija, a woman from Kunar province, also reached Torkham to take her sister to Peshawar for medical treatment. Like others, she was also denied entry.

An Afghan security official, who wished to go unnamed, said Pakistan guards had imposed strict measures after a brief clash between the two countries last summer. Now passports/visas have since been made mandatory

for entering Pakistan.

Attaullah Khogyani, the governor spokesman, acknowledged the problem and said the central government should resolve the issue. Pakistan had earlier promised allowing entry to patients, but breached its commitment, he alleged.

Last month, Pakistan's Interior Ministry said a medical branch would be opened for emergency patients at the Torkham gate but the promise is yet to be honoured.

Border officials said the team would thoroughly check the medical record and examine the nature of illness of Afghan nationals going to hospitals in Peshawar or other cities of Pakistan -- without visas and passports.

Over the last six months since the ban was imposed, they had seen a number of seriously ill Afghans being refused entry only because they had no visa for Pakistan, the officials said. (Pajhwok)

(13) Kandahar ...

the province, 12 produced eggs and 458 supplied meat to the market. Six years ago, only 23 farms were active in Kandahar.

The farms involving an investment of more than 500 million afghanis are located in Kandahar City, Dand, Daman, Arghandab, Zherai, Panjwai, Takhta Pul and Spin Boldak districts.

These farms produce 100,000 eggs and 30,000 kilograms of meat on a daily basis, Noori said, adding the ranches -- containing up to 10,000 chickens -- met the need of 70 percent of Kandahar residents.

However, he informed 100 other farms had been closed in the province due to different problems. "We would not need imports from neighbouring countries if these farms are revived," he believed.

Noori said there were no poultry diagnostic laboratories in Kandahar in the past and the drugs imported were of poor quality. Fortunately, a poultry laboratory by CARD-F in the city.

Two doctors, who have done masters at an Indian institute in diagnosing chicken and livestock diseases, are working at the laboratory -- operating at the southern zone level.

Poultry farm owners in Kandahar complain they are faced with problems. If the problems are resolved by the government, they hope they will be able to meet Kandahar's need for poultry products.

Haji Nasrullah, head of the poultry farmers association, has invested a huge amount of money in the business and owned several farms. Lack of medical facilities, doctors, low-quality medicines and high duties are the major issues he has been facing.

He, however, explained the issue of medicine had been resolved with the establishment of the first-ever poultry laboratory in Kandahar. Most of the medicines are imported from Iran and Pakistan.

But the low-quality drugs caused more harm than benefit, he alleged, asking the government to resolve the issues being faced by the farmers to reduce Afghanistan's dependence on imports from Pakistan and Iran.

Ahmadullah, another investor, said he had built farms, but problems hampered his business. He asked the agriculture ministry to stop imports of low-quality medicines from neighbouring countries.

He also suggested the promotion of domestic production of poultry feed. He lamented that eggs and chicken meat were being imported from Pakistan at a large scale despite the fact that domestic production could meet local needs.

Eng. Mohammadullah Noori, director of agriculture, acknowledged the farmers had been struggling with multiple problems that had been shared repeatedly with the ministry concerned.

About poultry feed, he said eight factories functioned in the past but their number had fallen to only two. Their production is not enough to meet the need of existing poultry farms in the province. He said some factories stopped production due to power shortages.

Zabihullah, a resident of Aino Mena area, said the chickens imported from Pakistan were neither fresh nor tasty. Domestic eggs and chickens were of higher

quality, he claimed, asking the government to provide facilities for domestic poultry production. (Pajhwok)

(14) 2 Afghan...

details have been given by the authorities regarding the nature of the dispute between the victims and the attacker.

This comes as the Afghan refugees including the traders are preparing for repatriation following a crackdown by the Pakistani authorities. (KP)

(15) UK Missile ...

that the earlier report about the missile veering towards the United States is not true.

The revelation of the missile test failure has put pressure on May's government. But the prime minister did not directly respond to the issue when she was questioned by BBC. (Xinhua)

(16) UK to Actively...

London from the rest of Britain, as the capital and its surrounding region attract the lion's share of British investment, university graduates and entrepreneurs. The economy of southeastern Britain has expanded almost twice as fast as the rest of the country since the 2008 financial crisis.

The challenge has been to create magnets elsewhere to draw the talent and expertise that currently gravitates toward London. The British government in the past has focused on building rail links, universities and cultural attractions in hopes of creating a new economic hub that would attract jobs and investment much like California's Silicon Valley. (AP)

(17) Trump, Netanyahu...

Netanyahu asked his security cabinet to postpone a vote on bill to annex Ma'aleh Adumim, a major West Bank settlement, citing a request by the administration "not to make surprise moves but to draft a joint policy." (Xinhua)

(18) Turkish Army...

the YPG and the PYD as terrorist organizations due to their links to the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). (Xinhua)

(19) Hamon, Valls ...

your desire to open a new page for the Left," Hamon addressed his supporters.

"We must finish with the old recipes, the old politics. I will continue to defend the priority given to the social issue, ecological conversion and democratic renewal," he added.

Long trailing his rivals in opinion polls, the 49-year-old left-winger has seen his ratings unexpectedly start surging a few days ahead the contest after three televised debates gave him impetus.

Hamon is likely to pass the Left primary run-off with a strong lead thanks to the backing of defeated candidates including Montebourg.

"Primary voters have spoken ... They massively and seriously condemned the mandate (of the Socialist president Francois Hollande)," Montebourg said after the release of the partial results. (Xinhua)

(20) Ex-Opposition ...

about qualification as next president, divulging his nervous response to negative comments or questions toward him. (Xinhua)

(21) Pakistani Army...

terrorist attack. Shiite and Sunni groups in the region condemned the attack, saying they would maintain sectarian harmony in the area.

Authorities are investigating the blast and seven suspects have been arrested.

The local administrator, Shahid Ali Khan, said that body parts of an unidentified man have been sent for DNA test to determine whether it was a suicide attack. (Xinhua)

(22) Iran Welcomes...

become operational. "In tandem with the rise in production capacity, the country's capacity for storage and transportation of gas must also increase," he said.

The South Pars/North Dome field is a natural gas condensate field located in the Persian Gulf. It is the world's largest gas field, shared between Iran and Qatar. (Xinhua)