

(1) Iran's Service..

main role in giving aid to the refugees and thanked the Iranian people and government for it.

He also urged the Afghans to use the opportunities provided by Iran to become more capable while returning to their country.

In the exhibition, Afghan music, foods, costumes, artifacts, academic and entrepreneurship achievements were on display. (IRNA)

(2) US Calls on ...

"We call on Pakistan to immediately arrest or expel the Taliban's leaders and prevent the group from using Pakistani territory to support its operations," she said.

"In Afghanistan, where terrorists attacked a hotel in Kabul, such attacks on civilians only strengthen our resolve to support our Afghan partners."

This comes after the Taliban claimed responsibility for a major attack on the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul on Saturday that killed at least 22 people including 11 foreigners.

"We commend the swift and effective response of the Afghan security forces. Afghan forces, with our support, will continue to relentlessly pursue the enemies of Afghanistan, who also seek to export terror around the world," Sanders said.

Meanwhile, Pakistan's Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Monday said his government will push ahead with plans to seize control of charities run by Hafiz Saeed, designated a terrorist by Washington, and warned the United States not to weaken Pakistan, according to a Reuters report.

Abbasi brushed off US President Donald Trump's recent tweet accusing Pakistan of "lies and deception" in its commitment to fighting terrorism, as he raised the prospect of charging the United States to use Pakistan's airspace to resupply NATO troops in Afghanistan, the report stated.

Under pressure from the US and international institutions to crack down on terrorist financing, Pakistan last month drew up secret plans for a "takeover" of charities linked to Islamist leader Saeed, who Washington blames for the 2008 attacks in Mumbai that killed 166 people.

The United States has labeled the charities Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) and the Falah-e-Insaniyat Foundation (FIF) as "terrorist fronts" for Lashkar-e-Taiba (LET), or "Army of the Pure", a group Saeed founded in 1987 and which Washington and India accuse of carrying out the Mumbai attacks.

Saeed has repeatedly denied involvement in the Mumbai attacks and says the charitable organizations he founded and controls have no ties with militants.

"Yes, the government will take over the charities which are sanctioned and not allowed to operate," Abbasi told Reuters. (Tolonews)

(3) Uzbekistan Drops ...

Kabul and Tashkent, Uzbekistan has dropped its transit fees for Afghan goods being trucked through the country.

Finance Minister Iklil Hakimi said until now, Uzbekistan has charged \$2,500 USD for every container full of goods that travels through the county, but the fees have dropped to only \$1,250 USD.

Hakimi also said Afghanistan will in future be connected by road, through Uzbekistan to Asian countries and Russia.

"In the past, for each 40ft container we paid around \$2,500 USD dollars but now we pay half of the amount and we did the same with Uzbekistan, we halved our fees," said Hakimi.

Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) officials meanwhile said Uzbekistan is a good partner to Afghanistan in terms of transit and business and that government should promote the relationship.

ACCI spokesman SeyamPisarlay said Uzbekistan can play a vital role in helping Afghanistan to expand its trade relationships with other countries in the country.

"Uzbekistan is interested in all three sectors, transit, trade and investment, and we can also use Uzbekistan's cargo center," said head of ACCI KhanjanAlkozaei.

According to the ACCI, currently the trade volume between Afghan-

istan and Uzbekistan totals over \$400,000 million USD a year. (Tolonews)

(4) 65 Insurgents ...

Paktika province, Hashimi said. No report on civilian casualties were reported.

Taliban rejected the claims. (Tolonews)

(5) Cyclists Pedaling ...

cycling team said.

The cyclists have set out on their journey despite the issue of parallel cycling federations not having yet been resolved. Currently there are two cycling federations in the country.

Mohammad Hussain Hamidi, director of the Cycling Federation said the cyclists also pedal in the hope of encouraging reforms to be brought to the cycling federation.

"We have a message for promotion of sport in Afghanistan ... and today our athletes will carry peace messages from province to another province," said Hamidi. (Tolonews)

(6) First Plane with...

terrorists dressed as ordinary visitors came to a hotel restaurant and ordered dinner before opening indiscriminate fire. More than 30 people were killed as a result of the terrorist attack, including seven Ukrainians: four employees of the KrylaUkrainy airline - a 43-year-old aircraft crew captain Roman Vlasov, a 43-year-old co-pilot ViacheslavShyshakov, and 30-year-old stewardesses Kateryna-Pasenchuk and IrynaMedycheva. (Agencies)

(7) A Night with...

provincial capital of Wardak, till we reached Jalrez district, we defused or detonated 81 mines," said Rahman.

Rahman said he has five children and always worries about them when he returns to duty.

"My family is not happy about my profession, but I have chosen this as it is a very holy, professional duty," Rahman added.

Meanwhile MaidanWardak police criticized government for not considering the "reward and punishment" principal for deminers.

"When insurgents control mines from a long distance, then our forces should also be equipped with modern and advanced equipment," said Fahim Qaim Wardak police chief.

Police deminers said that in the past year they have defused nearly 500 mines in total along various highways, including the Kabul-Kandahar road. (Tolonews)

(8) 3 Projects Costing ...

Sayedullah, a resident of the area, expressed his happiness over the construction of the retaining wall in their area.

He said flood would destroy their farmland and houses each year but now the issue had been resolved.

The projects were inaugurated a day after three other projects were completed in Urgan district at a cost of 21 million afs. (Pajhwok)

(9) Saudi Arabia...

the state-controlled information agency TDH reported President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov had sent a message to Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, expressing gratitude for the investments provided.

It added the United Arab Emirates was also interested in TAPI investments. A week ago, Turkmen Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Berdinyaz Myatiyev and UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan met in the United Arab Emirates.

On December 20, President Berdymukhamedov also met the Sheikh in Ashgabat. Arab investors have reportedly evinced an interest in the implementation of the TAPI gas pipeline. Construction work on the gas pipeline is expected to begin in Afghanistan in February. The Ministry of Mines and Petroleum (MoMP) says necessary steps have been taken to implement the project. The project will transport 33 billion cubic meters of gas from Turkmenistan to Afghanistan, Pakistan and India via a 1,814km pipeline.

For the construction of the TAPI gas pipeline, a consortium - TAPI Pipeline Company Limited - was established and the state concern Turk-

mengaz was elected as the leader. The main hurdles to the project's implementation are financing and security issues. The Asian Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Japanese government have expressed their interest in funding TAPI.

The Islamic Development Bank has already allocated a loan worth \$700 million for Turkmenistan to construct its section. (Pajhwok)

(10) HRW Denounces ..

in the past year. In the first half of 2017, UNAMA documented more civilian deaths and injury from suicide and complex attacks than in any previous period.

"The Intercontinental Hotel attack is a grim reminder of the increasingly routine carnage deliberately inflicted by combatants against civilians in flagrant violation of international law," the statement said. (Pajhwok)

(11) 12 Villages Cut ...

center," he said.

The elder said reaching the district center by alternate routes took a lot of time, urging the government to repair the bridge as early as possible because thousands of people living in the 12 villages faced a great inconvenience.

A resident of DehqaqQashlaq village, Najibullah, said the bridge destruction had sent prices of daily use items soaring. He said they had to pay doubled taxi fare to reach the Imam Sahib district by taking alternate road.

Similarly a resident of Nawabad village, Mirwais, said food prices had increased manifold following the destruction of the Begum Joy bridge.

According to him, the price of a sack of flour increased from 1300 afghanis to 1500 afghanis, a five kilogram ghee from 500 afs to 700afs and a 50-kg bag of sugar's rate jumped from the previous 300 afs to 450afs.

Other residents expressed similar views and urged the government to reconstruct the bridge at the earliest.

Imam Sahib district chief MahboobullahSayed confirmed the bridge had been damaged and said the issue had been shared with the provincial authorities who had pledged an early action.

NimatullahTaimori, the governor's spokesman, said the provincial administration had decided to rebuild the bridge soon.

The military operation in the Imam Sahib district has displaced some 2,000 families to other areas, including the provincial capital, Kunduz City. (Pajhwok)

(12) In a First, Fund...

would contribute a certain amount to the fund on a monthly basis.

With cooperation from relevant quarters, he promised, the fund would be strengthened. A sum of 15,000 afghanis has been pooled by journalists, Khogyani revealed.

The money will be paid to two Radio-Television Authority journalists who were recently wounded in a militant attack.

Zabihullah Ghazi, a Voice of America reporter, said the fund would help deserving journalists in emergency situations.

Abdul MoeedHashimi, head of the Committee to Protect Journalists, hailed the initiative, saying the fund would help media professionals.

It is pertinent to mention here that no journalist has benefitted so far from a similar fund created in the nation's capital Kabul. (Pajhwok)

(13) Kabul Security ..

arrangements for elections in Kabul. The long-delayed elections are scheduled for July 18 this year, but a copy of the schedule received by Pajhwok Afghan News shows the voter registration process would start from April till August, thus election may not be possible on the due date. Ziaee said the 111th Division conducted 308 operations in Kabul in which 13 suspected individuals were arrested and 37 heavy and 28 light weapons recovered. He said the division being a reserved force of the Ministry of Defence had participated in several operations in provinces and had huge achievements. (Pajhwok)

(14) Taliban Pull ...

village of Raghistan. He was killed during a clash with Taliban in Sangin district of southern Helmand province. His body was transferred here and buried on Monday at his locality.

The Taliban who were not present during the burial, became aware after six hours and they came and reopened the grave, fastened a rope around the foot of the body and dragged it for almost one hour, he said.

He said the Taliban also punished almost 75 residents who took part in the funeral and burial of the slain soldier by forcing them to stand bare feet in cold.

Mohammad Arif, a cousin of the slain soldier, said: "The Taliban brutal behavior with the body was against human and Islamic values. They beat me hard for burying my cousin. I am feeling pain in my legs and back due to the torture," he said.

Mahboob Rahman Talat, a member of the provincial council, confirmed the incident and added the Taliban pulled out the soldier's body from his grave and took away tens of residents with them.

He added residents had been beaten by Taliban and there was no information about the body and the residents.

Deputy police chief Col. Syed HangirKaramat also confirmed the incident and added the village where the incident occurred was in Taliban control and there was no information about the whereabouts of the missing people. (Pajhwok)

(15) Ghani Meets ...

and execute development projects there to bring positive changes in people lives.

He added Afghanistan exported pine nuts worth \$6 million annually, something previously done by Pakistan.

Two factories would be established in Khost and Paktia provinces to process pine nuts because it could double the exports, the president announced.

He explained there was a special plan at hand to convert Paktia into an industrialized and economic zone. Development programs were also planned for border districts, he added. (Pajhwok)

(16) Trump Admin groups operating on its soil and responsible for destabilising Afghanistan and the region."

Offering condolences to President Ashraf Ghani and the people of Afghanistan, Nusrat said the people of Karachi stood shoulder to shoulder with Afghan brothers and sisters and offered them complete support. (Pajhwok)

(17) 11b Afs Saved ...

Ministry, Public Health Ministry and Da Afghanistan BreshnaShirkat were approved.

Hotaki claimed NPC's work had been commended by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan's Reconstruction (SIGAR) and independent Joint Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (MEC). (Pajhwok)

(18) Hollywood's ...

was to embed themselves with the Northern Alliance and fight the Taliban.

The movie tracks the soldiers operations through unforgiving terrain on horseback, while embedded with warlords of the north - neither side quite trusting the other - as they fought one of the initial battles to reclaim Afghanistan from the oppressive Taliban.

Chris Hemsworth stars as retired Special Forces Captain Mitch Nelson (based on the real-life Mark Nutsch), who has just started unpacking boxes with his wife (Elsa Pataky, the real Mrs. Hemsworth) and daughter in their new home when al-Qaeda launched their deadly attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon.

Nelson immediately heads to base and wants in on the American response even if he has yet to see actual combat himself. His commanding officer is understandably reluctant, but with the help of his Chief Warrant Officer Hal Spencer (the always dependable Michael Shannon), Nelson gets to re-assemble his squad and sneak them into Afghanistan. There they meet General Abdul Rashid Dostum - played by Navid Negahban - who

helps them find Taliban strongholds where they can stage ground assaults and call in airstrikes. Dostum simultaneously wants to intimidate the Americans and yet at the same time wave them in the face of the Taliban, represented by Khaled, who is played by Fahim Fazli. Nelson is unsure of Dostum's strategy and is worried about betrayal at every turn, while Dostum is concerned that the Americans have no idea what to do in this harsh country -- the "graveyard of empires" as he calls it -- and will abandon the mission if it gets too difficult.

The movie was however received with mixed reaction with many critics claiming not enough emphasis had been put on the horse aspect and that the shooting location, in New Mexico and California, had been out of context, compared to the harsh, unforgiving landscape of the mountainous north of Afghanistan. (Tolonews)

(19) '75pc Medical..

Majroh, MoPH spokesman, on Monday told Pajhwok over the phone that the lack of pharmacists was a serious problem in the country.

"The issuance of work permits has been stopped since 1393 solar year due to the shortage of pharmacists."

However, Dr. Kamawal during the agreement signing ceremony said the agreement would give pharmacy students of Kabul University apprenticeship opportunities and pave ground for their employment. He said the MoPH would encourage the private sector and medical stores to hire pharmacy students in medical stores in capital Kabul and provinces.

Kamawal said about 50 pharmacists would be hired during the current fiscal year, adding "the number would be increased up to 300 individuals in the next five years."

Meanwhile, Farqi called inking of the agreement as an effective step towards finding jobs and building capacity of pharmacy students, saying about 100 students graduated from the Pharmacy Faculty this year. (Pajhwok)

(20) Barmak's ..

brother, who has served as district police chief in PD5 and PD11 in Kabul, was promoted to deputy head of the interior ministry's intelligence department on Sunday - while the siege was ongoing.

"If it is interior or defense minister or director of security, they should allocate one hour to their sons, but now they spend hours at an event," MP Abdul Hai Akhundzada said.

However, the ministry said Barmak had not been at the event to introduce his brother. Instead, the deputy interior minister had attended.

The attack was launched at about 9pm on Saturday and carried on through the night and into Sunday. It only ended 17 hours later and dozens of Afghans and foreigners lost their lives.

The attack also drew widespread condemnation by the general public who blasted security departments for failing to prevent such deadly attacks. "One gets appointed by Abdullah and another by Ghani. They don't care about the people," Kabul resident Omran Mubarez said.

"Neither the minister nor the president has any right to ignore this bloodshed," Kabul resident Gulabuddin said. Interior ministry spokesman Najib Danish said the minister had been at the scene until the siege was over. "The minister was up late that night at the scene and also the next day he was there - until the attack ended. These remarks are baseless," said Danish. Kabul residents meanwhile also criticized government leaders, President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, over what they said was negligence in managing the country. (Tolonews)

(21) 2 Development ...

completed in three months at a cost of six million afghanis with financial support from Afghan AIDS organization in Behsud district.

Khogyani said the 292-meter long, six meter wide and three meter high wall would protect hundreds of acres of farmland and many houses from floods.

Nasir Kamawal, a public representative, said the schemes would benefit thousands of people in both districts. He called on the provincial government to improve agriculture. (Pajhwok)