

(1) China Calls ...

of peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban, according to the joint statement.

Referring to China as a "trustworthy and reliable partner" of the Afghan people, Wang reiterated that China backs an "Afghan-led, Afghan-owned" reconciliation process and spoke highly of the resumption of peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban.

"China supports all initiatives and measures that are conducive for the reconciliation and resumption of peace talks. This also accords with China's security interests," Wang said.

He added that China will continue to support, mediate and provide favorable conditions for the peace talks. China will also improve communication with Russia, Iran and India to support the peace process.

The two foreign ministers also discussed the development of China-Afghanistan relations in the meeting.

Wang said China was ready to strengthen cooperation, especially in development and security, to promote the strategic partnership of cooperation.

Calling China a close friend of Afghanistan, Rabbani thanked China for its "important and constructive role" in the peace and reconstruction process.

He said his nation was willing to join the Belt and Road initiative to promote regional intercommunication and common prosperity.

According to a press release after the talks, high-level engagement will be strengthened. China welcomes Afghanistan's CEO Abdullah Abdullah to visit China at a time convenient to both sides.

China will help Afghanistan with residential construction, personnel training and improvement of people's livelihood. China will also help Afghanistan map out plans for infrastructure construction, the press release said.

China supports Afghanistan in joining regional economic cooperation and welcomes it to take part in the Belt and Road initiative. The two sides will sign a cooperation deal in this regard.

The two countries vowed to further strengthen cooperation in security, anti-terrorism, culture and people-to-people exchanges. The two sides will back bilateral exchanges between universities, think tanks and localities.

International and regional mechanisms related to Afghanistan will also be given attention, and support will be extended to the Istanbul Process on Afghanistan, with discussions on the expansion of trilateral cooperation among China, Afghanistan and the United States floated.

Afghanistan hopes to become a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. China said it welcomes the requests, the press release said.

Rabbani is on a four-day official visit to China at the invitation of Wang. Lasting from Jan. 25 to 28, this is his first China visit since taking office. Vice President Li Yuanchao also met Rabbani on Tuesday. (Xinhua)

(2) Govt. Responsible...

same boat. If anyone of us is suffering, we are all affected," the president commented.

During the meeting, Ghani pledged to assist the families that lost their loved ones in the recent suicide attack on Tolo staff in the heart of Kabul.

At least seven workers were killed and 26 others injured late on Wednesday when a suicide bomber detonated his explosives near the minibus at the Allaudin intersection in the third police district. (Pajhwok)

(3) Pneumonia ...

was good for sometime but last night her condition deteriorated and I took her to hospital where she died", he said.

Dr. Samar, however, said the death toll from the fast-spreading disease was not surprising because such deaths could take place on the same scale if a similar situation occurred in a developed country.

Dr. Hashmatullah Faez, a doctor at the Afghan-Turk hospital, said winter was a season when most people suffered from pneumonia.

He complained against the lack of health facilities in hospitals, saying six patients should be kept in a single ward under World Health Organization (WHO) standards, but currently there were 20 and 25 individuals admitted to a single ward.

But the health department head said construction work on a 100-bed hospital, a \$4.5 million project, had been delayed by the construction company for illogical reasons.

Governor Syed Anwar Sadat had said the construction of hospitals and some other projects had been recently discussed with the president. He said the construction company had promised in written to complete the remaining work of the hospital in 2016. Officials believed with the two new hospitals, people would easily find access to health facilities in the province. (Pajhwok)

(4) USAID-Funded ...

Afghan and the US governments were committed to improving health services in the war-torn country.

He said Afghanistan had gone a long way in improving its health sector, but still a lot of work was needed to be done with support from the Afghan and US governments.

McKinley once again announced that his country was committed to addressing emergency humanitarian needs and challenges in the development area.

Public Health Minister Dr. Ferozuddin Feroz, who participated in the ceremony, said nearly \$38 million USAID assistance would be used for improvement of the management, leadership and human resources sectors of his ministry.

He said they would try to provide health services independently by using domestic financial sources instead of foreign-sponsored health services with the help the project.

Charging fees from patients in government-hospitals was one of the ways to attain self-

Feroz said partnership between the public and private sectors, building new professional hospitals, utilizing MoPH facilities and properties and doubling taxes on cigarette usage were another ways to financially support the ministry.

However, the Afghan constitution prohibits taking fees from patients in government-hospitals. (Pajhwok)

(5) Power Utility ...

Rahmatullah Alizai, an inhabitant of the city said: "We do not know why local residents are subjected to power price hike while most of the power is used by dwellers of districts who earn all their income from farming activities run by heavy usage of electricity, I think it is injustice against city residents."

Meanwhile, the governor's spokesman Ihsanullah Hayat warned defaulters of decisive action if they failed to pay their outstanding power bills.

Not only in Herat, government offices and some people in other provinces including capital Kabul also owe millions of afghanis in unpaid power bills to the power utility. (Pajhwok)

(6) Pakistan ...

message. The all four attackers also appeared in the video. Mansoor was also behind the terrorist attack on the Army Public School in December 2014 that had killed 150 people, nearly all students.

"The government of Afghanistan was urged to take action against the perpetrators of this heinous act of terrorism and extend cooperation to Pakistani authorities to bring them to justice at the earliest possible," the Pakistani foreign ministry said. (Xinhua)

(7) Claims of ...

biased trend assessments and unrealistic assumptions about the long-term sustainability of existing water systems.

It underlines the limitations of the existing "improved water sources" MDG indicator when it

comes to capturing the realities of access to safe drinking water at a household level.

The paper suggests the more ambitious and more appropriate conceptual framework of "household water (in)security" as a guide to monitoring as well as policy and programme development in the sector. (Pajhwok)

(8) Security Plans ...

areas. He said security forces, weapons and other needed resources had been readied to launch the offensive.

Qahraman took the helm of affairs at a time when Taliban are in control of several districts and clashes are underway in several parts of the province. (Pajhwok)

(9) Graft-Tainted ...

another six officials including managers of the procurement, the crime branch, police headquarters, revenue office and urban development department were also involved in the embezzlement.

Attorney's office deputy head Abdul Momin Nasrat told Pajhwok Afghan News they summoned all of the accused to the attorney's office, but only three of them including managers of revenue, urban development and crime branch turned up.

He said those refusing to appear before the attorney's office had violated the law and it meant they had no respect for government rules.

However, Mohammad Amin Tokhi said he did not accept the attorney office's allegations against him, thus he rejected his summoning.

He said the embezzlement allegation against him was baseless and he had previously asked for a delegation from the central government to assess the issue.

Tokhi added he had approached the attorney's office to defend himself, but he believed the office was not impartial and had links with the former governor.

The deputy governor in the past too had rejected allegations against him and had said the projects mentioned were scheduled to be implemented in mid-2016. He had said contracts for the projects were yet to be signed and budget yet to be specified.

Zolqarnain, a member of Ghor urban court, confirmed the cases of the 10 individuals were referred to the court on Tuesday and would be processed. "We decisively address cases no matter who the accused are," he said. A civil society activist Mohammad Wazir Noorani said judicial organs should equally treat all individuals.

The former Ghor governor has recently been appointed as deputy governor of capital Kabul. (Pajhwok)

(10) Fate of 2,596...

presidential palace and the Supreme Court to access the cases of inmates, but no step was taken as yet.

"According to the Afghanistan Penal Code, a case should be probed in 10 months and three days by the three tier court system, but there are some people in the Pul-i-Charkhi prison who have been waiting for the last seven years for the appellant court and the Supreme Court to hand down verdicts in their cases after the primary court," he said.

Meanwhile, Lt. Gen. Abdul Alim Kohistani, the director of detention centers in the Ministry of Interior (MoI), acknowledged cases of some prisoners were pending, but disputed the number of cases provided by the Meshramo Jirga's delegation. "The verdicts from the three tier courts don't take more than two or three months, but there are some complicated cases which take maximum one year," he said.

About 8000 to 9000 inmates are currently being held at the Pul-i-Charkhi convicted on charges ranging from murders, terrorism and other crimes including drug smuggling.

Fateh Mohammad, one of the detainees at the jail, said he was sentenced to 10 years in jail by the primary court on drug smuggling five years ago and the verdict was withheld by the appellant court, but the Supreme

Court was yet to issue its verdict in his case.

Another inmate convicted by the primary court to 14 years in jail in a murder case said he was waiting for the past seven years for the apex court to announce his fate, but this case had disappeared in the court. (Pajhwok)

(11) 27 Afghan ...

refugee youth's education is an investment in their future and in the generations to come." He added educated youth, if provided the right conditions, could become the agents of peace and development. (Pajhwok)

(12) Stability Party ...

Wednesday's attack on media personnel had no precedent in history of the region.

"The attack shows militants are afraid of the freedom of speech. With the Tolo staff deaths, the number of journalists losing lives in Afghanistan over the past 14 years has reached to 57," he said. He asked the government to assist families of the slain people and those injured in Wednesday's attack.

Seven people were killed and several others wounded when a suicide bomber struck a minibus carrying TOLO TV staff members in Kabul on Wednesday. (Pajhwok)

(13) Daesh Could ...

assistance, especially that of the United States.

"They are wholly dependent - for money, for weapons, for pay - on continued US aid," Lieven stated.

Kabul must offer something viable to the Taliban if they intend to pacify the country, he said, adding that, "Dividing and conquering also requires genuine and convincing peace offers to the mainstream Taliban." (sputniknews)

(14) Taliban Shoot...

to leave our homes and migrate to other areas."

Another resident, Ahmad Zia, confirmed Mira Jan's account and said the Taliban shot injured seven persons, but did not kill any. He said the injured persons had been shot in the legs and hands.

The civil hospital director, Dr. Abdul Qasim, said the seven persons had been shot in the legs and hands and they were under treatment.

But he said four of the injured persons needed intensive care and the remaining three were comparatively in good condition. Shinwari district chief Qazi Aka Gul also said the Taliban were involved in the shooting and the area where the incident took place was remote and under Taliban control.

The Taliban have so far said nothing in this regard. (Pajhwok)

(15) Ceremony Held ...

voice is stopped, hundreds of other Mariam voices will be raised," said Hamida a friend of Ibrahim.

"Armed oppositions with their attacks want to stop people from speaking out but such attacks will not stop this," said Baqer another of Ibrahim's friends.

Mariam Ibrahim had been employed by TOLO TV in the dubbing department but she was also a civil society activist and was committed to securing peace in the country.

Last week Wednesday the Taliban targeted a TOLO TV staff bus in Kabul, in Darul Aman Road, killing eight people - including seven TOLO TV employees - and wounding more than 25 others. Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack. (Tolonews)

(16) 10 Taliban ...

elders with the approval of some officials inked a ceasefire with Taliban in Dand-e-Ghori district on the outskirts of provincial capital Pul-e-Khumri five months ago.

However, majority of residents in Dand-e-Ghori and adjoining areas have complained about Taliban's harsh policies, demanding the government wipe out armed militants in the area.

Hakmal also added that the operation will last until the area is cleared of militants and lasting peace returned there. (Xinhua)

(17) Stepson Shoots ...

principal of a school in the Karez locality of Pashtonkot district. Her stepson was identified as Wahidullah.

The woman recently tied the knot with Abdul Ghani, a resident of the 3rd police district of Maimana. The man was already married and she became his second wife.

Faryab Women Affairs Director Sharifa Azimi said the victim's stepson wanted to steal some cash and jewelry from his mother, who caught him red-handed. As a result, she was shot dead on

Meanwhile, the regional office of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) said it had registered 126 incidents of violence against women in Faryab, including 18 murder and suicide cases.

A couple of days back, the body of a 22-year-old woman was found in Maimana. The slain woman, a student of the teacher training centre, was married. (Pajhwok)

(18) EU Allocates ...

ensures the possibility of early and appropriate action against pests, with high economic and environmental benefits, added the press release. (Xinhua)

(19) Syrian Army...

started withdrawing toward nearby rebel-held towns, mainly Ibtā' and Nawa, a military source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

The 15th Brigade of the 5th Armored Division of the Syrian army backed by the National Defense Forces (NDF), a pro-government paramilitary force, as well as the 7th Mechanized Division were leading the offensive against Sheikh Miskeen.

What made things worse for the rebels in the city is the battles between the rival groups of Al-Muthanna Movement and the Al-Yarmouk Army rebels, which are fighting along the main road to Sheikh Miskeen, which has hindered supplies from reaching other militants fighting inside the city against the Syrian army. (Xinhua)

(20) Poland will ...

Blaszczak also said that Poland will "most probably" introduce temporary border controls in July when it will host NATO summit and world youth's meeting with Pope Francis. (AP)

(21) Syria Opposition ...

territory from the rebels with the help of Russian air strikes and Iranian ground forces, has already said it will attend.

The opposition comprising the recently formed High Negotiations Committee (HNC) has however repeatedly said the government and its allies must halt bombardments and lift blockades of besieged areas before they will go to any talks.

Zoubi, who is due to head the opposition delegation to any negotiations, told Reuters that without the implementation of goodwill steps including release of detainees "there will be no negotiations". "This is what the HNC has laid down," he said.

Reflecting opposition misgivings about the process, he told Al-Hadath that U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry had tabled Iranian and Russian ideas about Syria at a recent meeting with opposition leader Riad Hijab. (Reuters)

(22) Russia Urges ...

political asylum," he said, adding that Assad had promised Putin he would sit down for peace talks with opposition, including armed groups, and engage the "patriotic" opposition in the fight against the Islamic State group alongside the Syrian army.

Lavrov emphasized that the Kurdish group, the Democratic Union Party, or PYD, plays an important role in fighting the Islamic State group and is an essential part of political settlement in Syria.

Turkey sees the PYD and its YPG militia group as branches of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, a Kurdish resistance group it has long fought and considers a terrorist group. (AP)

(23) Canada...

and the federal government. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who took office in November, has pledged to repair relations with Canada's indigenous people, who make up 5 percent of the population but represent about half of the more than 30,000 Canadian children aged 14 and under living in foster care.

Aboriginals also have higher levels of poverty and a lower life expectancy than other Canadians, and are more often victims of violent crime, addiction and incarceration.

The crisis on indigenous reserves was highlighted last week by a school shooting in the remote northern Saskatchewan community of La Loche. A 17-year-old boy has been charged in the deaths of four people.

The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society and the Assembly of First Nations, an umbrella group for Canada's largest indigenous group, charged that Ottawa was underfunding child welfare services on reserves compared with what is spent on non-native children or aboriginals living off reserve. (Reuters)

(24) Russian Air...

intelligence chief Igor Sergun had travelled to Syria to ask Assad to resign. "No one asked for political asylum and no one offered anything of the kind."

Russia has staunchly supported Assad's beleaguered regime and said that his removal could not be a prerequisite for a deal to end the conflict, which has left more than 260,000 people dead and millions displaced. (AFP)

(25) Boosting Middle...

day of his visit to Rome, saying Iran had ambitions to develop its own economy after years of curbs and hardship.

"Under the new conditions, we want to export 30 percent of what we produce in Iran," he said, calling for rapid investment in "the most secure and stable country in the region". (Reuters)

Bosnia to Apply for EU Membership Feb. 15: Presidency

SARAJEVO - Bosnia will officially apply to join the European Union on Feb. 15, the country's presidency said on Tuesday, a major milestone in the former Yugoslav republic's integration with the European mainstream two decades after emerging from war.

Bosnia lags far behind its Balkan peers on the road to membership of the EU, with progress dogged by ethnic divisions after a 1992-95 war in which some 100,000 people died.

Years of tough negotiation and reform lie ahead if Bosnia is ever to join the bloc, complicated by a highly decentralized and often unwieldy system of government bestowed by a 1995 peace deal that divided up power along ethnic lines.

The country faces frequent threats of secession from ethnic Serbs, who are considering holding a referendum on the authority of Bosnia's national court over their autonomous region. Observers say Bosnia stands little chance of joining before 2025.

"It is now quite definitive and clear that we have got the date by the EU chairman, the Netherlands, to submit the application on Feb. 15," the Croat chairman of Bosnia's three-person rotating presidency, Dragan Covic, told reporters.

"It is realistic that we get candidate status at the beginning of the next year," he said. "I deeply believe this is a great chance for Bosnia-Herzegovina."

Bosnia's EU aspirations have been given impetus by a joint German and British initiative launched last year to encourage economic development and reform in exchange for EU funds and integration. The initiative followed years of delayed reform and a dramatic bout of civil unrest in February 2014, fueled by popular anger over political inertia, sky-high unemployment and rampant corruption. (Reuters)