

(1) Mining Industry...

must be saved from embezzlement," he stated.

The Ministry of Mines and Petroleum meanwhile said that revenues of the sector have decreased due to a pause in mining contracts and the existence of large debts on contracted companies.

The mines ministry spokesman Abdul Qadeer Mufti told TOLONews that the ministry continues its efforts to assess the debts on contractors.

"First, we will collect our debts and then we will work on signing mines contracts by conducting key plans," the spokesman said.

The remarks by the Ministry of Finance come at a time that recently Afghanistan Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (AEITI) said that considering large mineral resources in Afghanistan, this country must have \$3.5 billion annual revenue from the mining industry. (Tolonews)

(2) Son of Afghan...

leader of the Taliban last year and had insisted on continuing after his father took office.

Mullah Haibatullah took over leadership of the Taliban after his predecessor, Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour died in a U.S. drone strike in Pakistan in May, 2016.

"Before this, a number of close relatives and family members of previous supreme leaders had conducted suicide bombings but Sheikh Haibatullah has become the first supreme leader whose son sacrificed his life," the senior Taliban member said.

A government official said security authorities were investigating the incident and could not confirm that Mullah Haibatullah's son had been killed.

The incident in Gereshk came as fighting in Helmand, source of most of Afghanistan's opium crop, has intensified in recent days following the end of the harvest season.

The insurgents control much of the province and threaten Lashkar Gah but government forces, backed by U.S. airstrikes, have launched an operation to drive them back from around the provincial capital.

In addition to the fighting in Helmand, there have also been reports of heavy fighting in other areas of the country, from Kunduz and Baghlan province in the north to Farah province in the west. (Reuters)

(3) 'Media's Role ...

to attract Chinese investors to Afghanistan.

He added the Afghan mission in Beijing would strive to pave the way for Chinese journalists to visit Afghanistan through the Information and Culture Ministry.

Afghan journalist Mohammad Shabir Ahmadi thanked the Chinese government for giving them the opportunity to visit China. He said media's role was key to bilateral relationship development. (Pajhwok)

(4) Delay in Launch ...

USAID has also asked for wires to be extended to the defined location.

Both demands had been met and only the launch of work on the project remained, Baqi said, adding 80 acres of land has been acquired for the project and 135 pylons had already been installed.

He recalled President Ashraf Ghani, during his last visit to the province, had pledged work on the solar power project would be completed till summer, but no progress had been made yet.

Baqi also provided information about the installation of the third turbine at the Kajaki dam, saying 40 percent of the work had been done. But a few months back, work on the third turbine was postponed due to insecurity, he explained.

With the installation of the third turbine, the dam would produce 18.5 MW of additional power. Currently, the dam produces 33MW of electricity.

A third option is electricity supply from Kabul to Kandahar via Ghazni. Kandahar currently consumes 15 MW of electricity --- three MW produced by diesel-powered generators and 12 MW from Kajaki dam. Industrialists in Kandahar City said they needed 10MW of electricity but were provided only 3MW. Most of factories had stopped production due to non-availability of electricity, they complained. Abdul Rahman, a resident of the 5th municipal district, said the president had pledged the completion of the 10 MW solar power project by summer. However, He lamented no progress could be seen on the scheme. (Pajhwok)

(5) Kabul Optimistic...

terrorism for 2016 last week, providing an overall report regarding the terrorism related upheavals during the year.

"Afghanistan, in particular, continued to experience aggressive and coordinated attacks by the Afghan Taliban, including the affiliated Haqqani Network (HQAN) and other insurgent and terrorist groups," the report stated. The Department of State also added that

a number of these attacks were planned and launched from safe havens in Pakistan. (KP)

(6) Mattis Certifies...

House review of South Asia strategy, which is still ongoing.

"This decision does not reduce the significance of the sacrifices that the Pakistani military has undertaken over previous years," Stump said, and noted that the United States continued to be encouraged by Pakistan's operations in North Waziristan and elsewhere in FATA.

Pakistan's efforts have reduced the ability of some militant groups to use North Waziristan and FATA as a safe haven for terrorism, he said.

"However, the Taliban and the Haqqani Network continue to operate in other locations in Pakistan," Stump said. "In our discussions with Pakistani officials, we continue to stress that it is in the interest of Pakistan to eliminate all safe havens and reduce the operational capacity of all militant organizations that pose a threat to US and Pakistani interests as well as regional stability," Stump said.

"Pakistan is authorized to receive up to USD900 million in FY17 CSF. There is a similar certification requirement for Pakistan pertaining to USD400 million of FY17 CSF. Pakistan still has time to take action against the Haqqani Network in order to influence the Secretary's certification decision in FY17," Stump said.

CSF authority is not security assistance, but rather reimbursements to key cooperating nations for logistical, military, and other support provided to US combat operations. "Pakistan is the largest recipient of CSF reimbursements, having received more than USD14 billion since 2002," he said, adding that CSF is just one component of America's broad and enduring partnership with Pakistan. (Pajhwok)

(7) WJ Secretary...

money in many contracts of the Wolesi Jirga had been embezzled by the secretariat and the AGO was responsible to seriously investigate the issue.

"There are enough evidence and documents available that prove embezzlement in the secretariat of the house," he said.

In response to a question, Hamayon said: "Yes the administrative board of the house may also be involved in some corruption cases, which will become clear after the AGO investigation," he said.

Hamayon, who formally shared the documents as evidence about corruption in the lower house secretariat with the AGO during the press conference, said the secretary should respond about his violations.

However, Wolesi Jirga secretary Khudai Nazar Nasrat rejected the allegations against him and said Hamayon had accused him to achieve his personal goals. Nasrat said Hamayon wanted to fire financial director of the Wolesi Jirga and take leadership of some contracts especially stationary contract of the lower house.

"We established the Wolesi Jirga Television channel with donated money after many difficulties, but Hamayon says the channel airs no good programs except the morning program, so he now wants to operate the channel by a media outlet that belongs to him," he said.

Nasrat said the first deputy speaker had warned them two days earlier of sharing the issue with the public. (Pajhwok)

(8) US Strike Kills ...

opium harvest that helps fund the insurgency.

In April, some 300 US Marines returned to the province as embattled Afghan security forces struggle to beat back the resurgent Taliban.

The surge helped Afghan security forces, backed by US air strikes, recapture Nawa district in Helmand six months ago.

The operation came as Pentagon chief Jim Mattis finalized plans to present a new Afghanistan strategy to President Donald Trump in a bid to reverse what US generals call a "stalemate" at best.

In February, a US airstrike in Sangin killed at least 18 civilians, mostly women and children.

Last November 32 Afghan civilians were killed in a US airstrike in the northeastern province of Kunduz.

In October 2015, a US air strike hit a hospital run by Medecins Sans Frontieres, killing 42 people and sparking international outrage. (AFP)

(9) You Symbolized...

and a number of members also talked at the meeting and thanked the president and the first lady for their attention to the Afghan youth, particularly girls. They demanded more support for the team from the government.

The robotics said they were proud to be Afghans and that they would continue their education in the field and share their experience with others in future.

The president and the first lady provided financial assistance to the team from their personal budget and gave cash to

the team's coach for improvement of the students. (Pajhwok)

(10) Taliban Closing....

and urged security officials to pay attention to the security of the district.

"The Takhar-Kunduz highway is blocked since two days, the government must pay serious attention to security of the major highway because people of Kunduz, Badkhsan and Takhar travel on it, the authorities should try to keep it open," Rabani said.

A public uprising commander, who did not want to be named, also warned if additional forces not reached, the district would fall into the hands of militants.

Meanwhile, police chief Brig. Gen. Abdul Hameed Hameedi confirmed heavy clashes were underway between Taliban and security forces in many parts of the district.

He said reinforcement had reached the area and the situation was under control. The Taliban staged coordinated attacks on Khanabad district on Friday morning and blocked the Takhar-Kunduz highway. (Pajhwok)

(11) 323 People ...

government workers. The remaining 250 people were arrested for being involved in various other criminal activities, including sale and purchase of alcohol, possession of weapons and street crimes.

This comes as the criminal related incidents are on the rise, including armed robberies, burglaries, and kidnappings in the key cities of the countries, including capital Kabul during the recent months.

The observers believe that growing rate of criminal activities has direct link with the growing instability, poverty, and lack of employment which forces the people to get involved in some serious criminal activities, including kidnappings and armed robberies. (KP)

(12) MSF Reopens ...

American special forces in 2015, which killed 42 patients, medical staff, and caregivers at the MSF trauma center, the medical aid group has been trying to secure assurances from American and Afghan military officials that their medical facilities would be respected and protected.

"We are still finalizing commitments but we believe we were able to reach an agreement," Dallatomasina said.

The new clinic in Kunduz, which is not situated at the site of the destroyed hospital, will only provide outpatient treatment of minor or chronic injuries, she said.

Patients who need more advanced care including X-rays will still need to go to the government-run regional hospital, which has been overworked amid heavy fighting in the province.

"The regional hospital is quite overwhelmed, so we want to try to reduce that burden by treating less serious injuries," Dallatomasina said.

While no final plans have been confirmed, MSF hopes to begin building a new trauma center in Kunduz as early as 2018, although likely on a smaller scale than the previous facility, she said.

The MSF trauma center was destroyed during a period in 2015 when Taliban militants briefly overran the city. An American military probe concluded that the attack was the result of human error and equipment failure, among other factors.

At least sixteen U.S. military personnel were disciplined for their role, but MSF has criticized the lack of independent investigation into the incident.

While Afghan troops, still backed by U.S. warplanes and special forces, have prevented the Taliban from seizing the city again, fighting has continued. (Reuters)

(13) Residents Want ...

helped the Taliban to kill the forces," said Amrullah Saleh, a resident of Badakhshan. "We are concerned about our safety," another resident Adham said. "Local officials including governor and the police chief are reluctant. The bloodshed in Warduj was repeated in Tagab."

According to local officials, lack of intelligence information about the Taliban's plot was one of the main reasons behind the incident. Badakhshan Police Chief Abdul Khaliq Aqsaee said the policemen had lost their lives due to the "negligence" of intelligence institutions.

He said the incident will be probed in the near future. "We did not have any military operation in the area where the forces were killed. The forces were there, but actually, the intelligence forces and the soldiers failed to identify and foil the enemy's bid," he stated.

The incident took place on Friday night when a group of Taliban attacked an outpost of the local police force members in Tagab district - close to the provincial capital Faizabad city.

At least 10 local policemen were wounded in the incident.

Badakhshan Provincial Council members meanwhile criticized security forces over the incident and said the issue must be probed.

"Mysterious killing of dozens of soldiers in a district is questionable. Government must respond about this," said Jawed Mujaddidi, a member of the council.

Health officials in the province said a number of the wounded forces are in critical condition.

"Thirty five bodies and 10 injured have been taken to our hospital. They were killed and wounded in the conflict between security forces and the Taliban in Badakhshan's Tagab district," the provincial public health director Noor Khawari said. (Tolonews)

(14) Taliban Slay ...

Walikat, with the ensuing clash lasting several hours.

Security officials said at least 12 insurgents were killed and 15 others wounded during the clash. Officials also acknowledged the killing of two policemen and injuries to three others.

However, the Taliban claimed killing 26 soldiers and injuring 12 others in the clash. But there has been so far no word from insurgents with regard to the kidnapping of the 70 civilians or the killing of seven of them.

Due to the clash, the Uruzgan-Kandahar Highway has been closed. Durrani said the insurgents had emplaced landmines on the highway and security personnel were currently engaged in detecting and defusing the devices. He promised the highway would be soon reopened for traffic.

Meanwhile, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) condemned the kidnapping of the 70 civilians by insurgents.

A statement from the AIHRC said targeting and taking hostage civilians was an explicit violation of international humanitarian law, human right standards and norms, and Islamic Shariah.

Based on international humanitarian principles, planning and carrying out such attacks on civilians were considered war crimes and their perpetrators should be brought to justice, the statement said. The AIHRC seriously requested the insurgents to avoid killing and kidnapping civilians and release the hostages at the earliest possible and don't commit more war crimes.

The AIHRC asked the Afghan government, especially security forces, to identify the perpetrators of the incident as soon as possible and prosecute them.

It said security forces should use all resources at their disposal and put efforts into rescuing the civilians. (Pajhwok)

(15) Gold Prices....

tea cost 200afis and the same amount of African black tea 300afis -- same as last week's. Sometimes a slight difference is observed in retail and wholesale prices but in some areas, the difference is huge.

Ahmad Wali Panjsheri, who owns a grocery shop in Dahn-i-Bagh area, sold a 50-kg bag of Kazakhstani flour for 1,280afis and a 49-kg sack of Pakistani sugar for 2,200 afis.

He sold a 16-litre tin of Khurshid ghee for 1,200afis, a 24.5kg sack of Pakistani rice for 2,000afis, a kilo of Indonesian green tea for 300 afis and the same quantity of African black tea for 350afis.

Fuel prices also remained steady. Abdul Hadi, a worker at the Wazirabad Pump Station, said a litre of diesel cost 40afis and the same amount of petrol 44afis.

The gas price also remained unchanged. Ahmad Javed, a gas seller in the 4th street of Taimani area, one kilogram of the commodity cost 50afis.

Mohammad Fawad, a jeweller in Timor Shahi area, said the price of one gram of Arabian gold edged up from 2,250 afis to 2,300afis.

However, the rate of same amount of the Russian variety increased from 1,800 afis to 1,850 due to a global market jump.

According to the moneychangers' union in Sara-i-Shahzada, one US dollar accounted for 68.43afis and 1,000 Pakistani rupees for 635afis against last week's rates of 68.40afis and 634afis respectively. (Pajhwok)

(16) Famous Taliban ...

Kala areas of Mehtarlam.

At least two other militants belonging to commander Mubariz group also sustained critical injuries during the clashes, the statement said. The provincial government also added that a weapon belonging to the insurgents was seized by the security forces.

The local residents and security personnel did not suffer any casualties during the clashes, the local officials added.

The anti-government armed militant groups have not commented regarding the report so far. Laghman is among the relatively calm provinces in East of Afghanistan but the anti-government armed militant groups have increased their insurgency activities in some parts of the province during the recent years.

The Afghan National Defense and Security Forces have stepped up counter-terrorism operations to suppress the insurgency activities of the terrorist groups as they attempt to increase attacks as part of their spring offensive normally launched every year as the weather gets warm

across the country, allowing the insurgents to easily move between the provinces, plan, and execute attacks. (KP)

(17) Khostis Demand ...

footways do not look decent. They sit on roadsides even when it is raining, wind and hot weather, we ask the government to solve this problem," he said.

A special park for women has been established south of Khost city, the provincial capital, but local residents say it is not accessible by all women and is used most of the times by men.

Zahra Jalal, a provincial council member, said she had tried to make a park exclusive for women as only one park was not enough.

She suggested the government should build special parks for women in different parts of the city.

"We want more parks for women. There is also need for small and protected waiting areas for women in all parts of the city so women can feel safe while waiting," she said.

Khost municipality officials admitted to doing not enough to facilitate women but said they have plans to resolve such problems as soon as possible.

Lemar Niazi, head of social and cultural affairs at Khost municipality, said besides repairing the existed women's park, they also had the plan to make more uch areas for women.

"We have the plan to allocate some budget for building waiting parks for women in parts of the city, we also plan to repair the existing women's park," he said.

Municipality officials said they sometimes found themselves in trouble to build facilities for city residents because the municipality owned land was limited. (Pajhwok)

(18) 6 Afghan Soldiers...

the control of the area before noon, the sources added. Mohammad, an inhabitant of the locality, confirmed the overnight attack on the district centre. However, he had no information about casualties, saying three civilian were slightly injured in the subsequent airstrike.

The Taliban, however, claimed in a text message the capture of Pashtunkot district and killing 16 policemen in a fire-fight. Eight more security personnel were injured, the Taliban said.

They said two military tanks and a Ranger pick-up were burnt to ashes and a huge quantity of arms recovered. (Pajhwok)

(19) Taliban's Logistics...

The anti-government armed militant groups have not commented regarding the report so far.

The ministry of defense informs regarding the killing of Mullah Abbas amid deteriorating security situation in remote provinces of the country as the Afghan officials are saying that the Taliban insurgents are receiving support from outside the country.

The Afghan security forces have on numerous occasions seized the weapons, ammunition, and explosives with the Iranian marks in the past. (KP)

(20) 4 Dead, 23 ...

accidents to recklessness driving.

Zabihullah Shuja, Baghlan police spokesman, said three people including a woman were killed and 17 others wounded in the Silo neighbourhood of Pul-i-Khumri, the capital of Baghlan.

He said the accident took place when a Corolla car heading from Sharaq to Pul-i-Kumri veered off the road and collided with a truck. (Pajhwok)

(21) Daesh Kill 3...

in Daesh captivity.

Aminullah, Qush Tepa district chief, said a 20-member group of Daesh transferred the three men to Alam Leek village of the district from Darzab's Sardara village and killed them at around 4am today morning. Their bodies were dumped on the outskirts of Alam Leek village. A group of elders reached the village but could not find the bodies. Aminullah said the trio was killed on charges of collaborating with security forces.

"Qari Qudrat along with his brother and another associate had been held captive by Qari Hikmat, general Daesh commander for Jawzjan, for the past 15 days." Mohammad Gul, a resident of Darzab, said: "The report of Qari Qudrat's killing by Qari Hikmat is being circulated from mouth-to-mouth among people since this morning. It's early to confirm that Qari Hikmat has killed Qari Qudrat and more details about the incident will become clear at the end of the day." This is for the first time Daesh group has killed its fighters on the charge of cooperating with security forces. (Pajhwok)

(22) Intelligence ...

the detail.

In Uruzgan, NDS operatives detained an individual who supplied arms to the Taliban. Maj. Ghulam Qaderi, the operation in charge, said the detained individual wanted supply arms to the Taliban from Tarinkot, the provincial capital of Uruzgan. (Pajhwok)