

(1) Measures ...

Turning his face to security officials, Abdullah said: "You should not think that your authority is a privilege, but it is a conscience you should carry out honestly."

He said the government was using all its resources to strengthen the Afghan forces and keep them away from politics.

Security officials should not consider people criticisms about their performance as a negative move, rather they should understand people's problems and behave with them with an open mind, he added.

Abdullah said police could never be successful until they lacked public support, asking people's representatives to point out government's failures along with their suggestions for reforms to relevant organs.

Acting Interior Minister Lt. Gen. Abdur Rahman Rahman told the conference that people's cooperation with police was a must.

He asked people to take part in improving the country's security and support Afghan forces in discharging their duties. (Pajhwok)

(2) Afghan Troops ...

area around the village of Yakhdan under their control.

The decision to leave the posts follows months of heavy fighting with the Taliban, who have put government forces under heavy pressure across southern Afghanistan.

"We want to create a reserve battalion in Deh Rawud and we may ask our soldiers and policemen from other districts also to leave their checkpoints," Nayab said.

Nayab said the withdrawal was prompted by a shortage of troops and police, worn down by combat losses and desertions. He said troop numbers in the province were about 1,000 short of their assigned strength while police were hundreds short.

"Some of them have left the army and police, some have been killed or wounded and some have surrendered to the Taliban," he said. "We have to control situation here until we receive enough forces."

NATO officials have long pressed Afghan commanders to pull troops off isolated and hard-to-defend checkpoints and use them more effectively against the Taliban, who have pressed their insurgency since international troops ended most combat operations in 2014.

Uruzgan, which shares a border with the insurgent heartlands of Helmand and Kandahar, is a poor and largely mountainous region which Dutch and Australian troops struggled to stabilize after the Taliban regime was toppled by U.S.-led forces in 2001.

Along with northern Helmand, much of which has been abandoned to the Taliban, it constitutes one of Afghanistan's main opium smuggling routes, providing a significant source of revenue for the insurgency. Last month, troops pulled out of the Helmand districts of Musa Qalah and Nawzad, regrouping around a few towns near the provincial capital Lashkar Gah in what authorities said was a tactical decision to deploy forces more effectively. (Reuters)

(3) US Troop ...

mission command this week, was praised for his 18 months leadership under very difficult conditions.

"We are fortunate to have had him during this critical period of transition, and also recognise his sacrifice of his family as well, who have been without him for the last 18 months," the chairman said. (Pajhwok)

(4) Senior UK ...

Sir Simon, who worked in Afghanistan as NATO's civilian representative from 2011-2012, expressed strong support for the unity government's commitment to securing an enduring peace.

He also sought an update from the government of Afghanistan on progress in delivering its reform commitments ahead of NATO Warsaw Summit and Brussels Development Conference later this year.

During his visit, the political director had meetings with President Ashraf Ghani, Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani and former acting defence minister Stanekzai and National Security Adviser Hanif Atmar. They discussed a broad range of issues including the security and economic situation in Afghanistan, the British Embassy said in its statement.

During all his meetings, Simon reiterated the UK's support for an Afghan-led peace process and welcomed the progress made in the quadrilateral talks and stressed the importance of maintaining momentum.

He also discussed the Afghan government's reform agenda, which

he said was vital to ensure a more prosperous future for Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(5) Aziz Spurns...

y efforts toward achieving broader national consensus in support of reconciliation in Afghanistan.

He hoped countries in the region would shun their objections and support efforts of the QCG to help the Afghan government bring stability to the country. With so much capital expended on the process, another setback would be unaffordable, he noted.

Regrettably, Aziz said, there was a tendency to blame Pakistan in a somewhat simplistic fashion for most of the difficulties and challenges in Afghanistan.

"We are blamed for pursuing a duplicitous policy. This narrative revives the unpleasant memory of the past when our relations had dipped to perhaps the lowest levels in recent years," he continued.

Nothing could be further from the truth than to hold Pakistan responsible for the Afghan problems, he commented, asking: "Who would like to set one's own neighbour on fire with the hope to save one's backyard?"

Pakistan had suffered the most due to the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, he said, adding the actions taken by his country against terrorist group of all shades in Afghanistan had been unprecedented. (Pajhwok)

(6) Russia Hails...

Vladimir Putin has welcomed Afghan security forces' operations to eradicate Islamic State (Daesh) fighters from eastern parts of the country. A Russian delegation would soon meet Ministry of Finance officials on ways and means of boosting economic cooperation between the two countries. Russian firms would invest in Afghanistan's housing sector, he promised. (Pajhwok)

(7) ANSF Make ...

from the area," an army spokesman in the province, captain Sakhi Dad told Xinhua.

"Khawja Namusi, the bastion of Taliban in Pashtun Kot district, is in full control of government forces today," the official asserted.

Three government security men have been killed and 11 others injured for the control of Khawja Namusi over the past three days, Dad confirmed. Khawja Namusi had served as main Taliban base in the northern Faryab province with Maimana as its capital, 425 km northwest of Kabul over the past one year.

Dostum, who is leading the military operations in Faryab province, has said that the major parts of Khawja Sabz Posh and Pashtun Kot districts had been cleansed of Taliban militants over the past couple of days.

In another blow to Taliban outfit amid Taliban desperate attempt to overrun Maimana city, the capital of northern Faryab province 425 km northwest of the national capital of Kabul city, 130 Taliban fighters renounced violence and gave up fighting in the province on Sunday. (Xinhua)

(8) Turkey Stops ...

a lot of problems. One of the problems is war in all of the places of our country. Because I came here and I want to go to Europe. Because we have no security in Afghanistan," said Arman, an Afghan migrant who was stopped by Turkish coastguards.

Another migrant Asif said they would not have taken the perilous journey had their home country been a safer place.

"We have a lot of bad situations in Afghanistan and there was a lot of terrorist regime like Daesh, Taliban. They cut our heads and we should, we must go from here to Europe. We have a lot of bad situations. If we had a good situation we'd never come this way," he said.

Turkey, which aspires to join the EU, struck a deal with the bloc in November to prevent migrants from travelling to Europe in return for 3 billion euros (\$3.3 billion) in cash, a deal on visas and renewed talks on joining the 28-nation bloc. Since then, it has ramped up patrols at sea as well as raids to secluded beaches, rounding up hundreds of migrants.

Coastguards rescued some 13,104 migrants at sea this year in 281 separate incidents, according to officials. (AFP)

(9) China to...

views, plans and programmes about Afghanistan and the region and called relations between Kabul and Beijing based on friendship and cooperation.

Gen. Fang told Ghani that the people of China still remembered and commended irrigation projects implemented during his job in the World

Bank.

He said China praised the Afghanistan government's efforts for peace and countering terrorism and assured of his country's support in this regard on behalf of the Chinese president.

The Chinese military leader supported President Ghani's strategy that he presented at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) aimed at mustering regional support against terrorism.

Gen. Fang said to implement that strategy a meeting of the heads of state of regional countries would be called in summer.

He said Afghanistan's location as a roundabout in the Central Asia had enormous importance for China's economic belt but terrorism posed a huge threat to this and that was why China insisted on countering the threat of terrorism.

The Chinese general said Afghanistan, Tajikistan, China and Pakistan should jointly fight against terrorism under a quadrilateral framework, insisting on intelligence sharing and cooperation between the four nations.

He expressed his concern over the existence of terrorist groups and praised the Afghan security forces' struggle against international terrorism. (Pajhwok)

(10) Analysts Skeptical...

Vladimir Putin to increase his administration's interaction and influence over the Taliban in Afghanistan.

"These strategies are similar to that implemented in Syria. Namely to fill in the gap which is left open as a consequence of uncertainty by the West; make deals with those locals with whom it is possible to negotiate; and, project the influence thus gained at the global level," Frattini noted.

"All this will be aimed at two objectives, to resist and counter any advances of Daesh; frustrate the plans of the Americans and NATO, who remain indecisive whether to reinforce their commitment on ground or pull out from Afghanistan all together," he added.

It seems Russians are ready to open a window for negotiated settlement in Afghanistan. "On their part, the Taliban too consider Daesh as their enemies [and they] are ready to line up fighters in 25 out of the Afghanistan's total of 34 provinces where they have a presence," noted Frattini.

Both Russia and the Taliban desire a quick rollback of the U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan.

Kabulov does not hide the fact that contact has been made with the Taliban. Some analysts suspect that such Russian overtures are less about confronting Daesh, but has to do more with Russia's apprehensions over the presence of U.S. and NATO troops on their southern flanks and also because they do not encourage a pro-U.S. leader to run Afghanistan. According to Didier Chaudet, head of the French Center for Foreign Policy Analysis, the Kremlin is seeking to prevent destabilizing forces from thriving in Afghanistan and spread towards Eurasia and eventually to Russia. These concerns have prompted Russians to establish a limited dialogue with some Taliban, Chaudet wrote in Le Huffington Post on Feb. 10. (AA)

(11) Experts Call...

Rajput, Ayaz Gul and Hassan Khan. The Afghan delegation comprised Qutbuddin Helal, Muhammad Nateqi, Gen. Sher Muhammad Karimi, Suraya Parlika, Ahmad Saedi, Gen. Jawed Kohistani, Abbas Noyan, Wazhma Frogh and Haroun Mir.

Pakistan's Centre of Research and Security Studies (CRSS) launched the initiative, titled 'Beyond Boundaries: Pakistan-Afghanistan Track 1.5/II', in collaboration with its Afghan counterpart DURAN Research and Analysis (DRA) and the Foundation for Integrated Development Action (FIDA).

Pakistani and Afghan regional security experts presented their views at their third regional security workshop held from February 29 to March 1 in Kabul. The workshop was the sixth major round in the series of meetings between civil society and regional security experts of both countries.

The talks are taking place at a time of increased hope for mutual cooperation, particularly in the economic arena, especially after the Heart of Asia Conference hosted by Pakistan in early December and the signing of the TAPI Pipeline in Turkmenistan, DRA said in a statement.

It said the political scenario was dominated by the ongoing quadrilateral talks of which four meetings had taken place and it was expected that by the fifth meeting in the first week of March 2016, Taliban repre-

sentatives would join the talks.

The participants of the talks in Kabul said that joint efforts were needed to crush terrorism -- a common enemy of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The delegates also extended their support to the Quadrilateral Coordination Group pushing for the intra-Afghan reconciliation.

The ice-breaking engagement between Afghanistan and Pakistan at both official and private level must continue to help remove the bilateral trust, they said.

They believed mutually agreeable confidence building measures could help in achieving these objectives. Statements hurting the sentiments must be avoided by both sides.

The civil society should put pressure on stakeholders to pursue mutual peace and prosperity, they said, adding that media on both sides could play a crucial role in correcting the narrative on each other, calling on both governments to help facilitate Afghan and Pakistani media's reporting from their respective regions.

The sessions were chaired by Professor Anatol Lieven of School of Foreign Service in Qatar, Georgetown University discussed Afghanistan Pakistan security paradigm, with focus on the ongoing bilateral initiatives, its implications and way forward, the impediments and opportunities for trade and economic cooperation and steps to improve relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan and emphasized on the need for media engagement and coverage in both countries.

At the end of the meetings, the Delegates finalized the following Joint Declaration:

"The Regional Security Working Groups, reaffirming their previous joint recommendations, have drawn up the following recommendations: Peace and Security

1. We support the Quadrilateral Group's efforts to promote peace in Afghanistan and urge the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan to continue their efforts for sustainable peace.

2. We reaffirm that terrorism is the common enemy of both countries.

3. We declare that any shelter for armed militants should be disallowed by both sides.

4. We call for an enhancement of co-operation against terrorism between the militaries of Pakistan and Afghanistan and better control of the movement of terrorists back and forth between the two countries.

5. We call for intensive joint efforts to combat the rise of the Islamic State (Daesh) in the region.

6. We call for increased co-operation against narcotics between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

7. We call on both governments to expedite decisions on the status of Afghan refugees (Afghan representatives specifically requested that Pakistan extend Proof of Registration (POR) for Afghan refugees until 2017.

Trade and Economics:

1. We call for a new agreement on trade and transit between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and for efforts on both sides to facilitate trade between the two countries.

2. We call for joint efforts to expedite the development of the CASA-1000 and TAPI projects.

3. We call on both governments to expedite the completion of Pakistani aid projects within Afghanistan.

4. We call for both governments to promote business fairs and exhibitions intended to promote trade and investment between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

5. We call for early completion of negotiations on a new agreement on trade and transit between Afghanistan and Pakistan and efforts? Education, Media and Culture

1. We urge both governments to facilitate reporting by the Afghan media from Pakistan and the Pakistani media from Afghanistan, including presentations on each other's culture.

2. We agree to do our best to help improve narratives on both sides concerning the other country.

3. We call for changes in the school curricula in both countries to combat violent extremism and diminish hostility between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

4. We call for the promotion of cultural exchanges between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

5. We call for enhanced opportunities for Afghan students to study in Pakistan and vice versa. (Pajhwok)

(12) Certain Elements...

collusion with the Taliban do not let the security forces move from a defensive position to an offensive one. Meanwhile the Special Representative on Reform and Good Government criticized the government over the lack of strategy to fight terrorism

and said that the National Security Council has ordered the war commanders to stay in a defensive position and not take offensive positions to suppress terrorists.

"At the moment particular circles inside the government exist that are in collusion with the Taliban and they are not in favor that the Taliban should be suppressed through military operations," said Massoud.

He warned that if the government fails to manage the situation the Jihadi councils across the country will take action.

"People's dissatisfaction of the government resulted in me traveling to the north where we created a new initiative - that was the formation of a Mujahideen council in order to resist against the terrorists," Massoud added.

Meanwhile Massoud expressed concerns that the National Unity Government (NUG) has not yet fulfilled its promises. (Tolonews)

(13) Insider Attack...

claim, saying the affected police checkpoint belonged to Kandahar police.

Meanwhile, Qari Yusuf Ahmadi who claims to speak for the Taliban outfit told media that a Taliban loyalist who had worked as police opened fire on police personnel in a police checkpoint in Shah Wali Kot district of Kandahar province early Tuesday killing four police personnel on the spot and joined the Taliban rank.

Backing the claim, Taliban outfit in an online statement said Tuesday that a Taliban man disguised himself as police after killing four police personnel at a police checkpoint in Shah Wali Kot of Kandahar had enabled Taliban fighters to capture the checkpoint and seize several weapons including six AK-47 rifles and a rocket propelled grenade. (Xinhua)

(14) Permanent ...

He said Nangrahar was a border province and it was necessary that polio vaccines reach every district. Shan Bacha, a tribal elder in Shinwari district, said polio vaccine could not be administered to children in the district due to insecurity.

He said the best way to ensure that polio drops were given to all children was to hire local people for vaccination because locals were more familiar with the environment and they also had no security issue.

The public health director feared children deprived of polio drops could contact the virus if not administered polio drops.

Dr. Najibullah Kamawal said permanent polio workers would prove effective in eradicating polio from the province. He said a 1,500-humanforce was needed in Nangrahar in this regard.

UNICEF officials assured the governor of their full support in the eradication of polio virus from the province. (Pajhwok)

(15) Rebel Firing ...

village of the district on Tuesday morning, Pacha said. He added that there were no security posts in the area where militants were firing.

Kunar Civil Hospital Director Dr. Farooq Sahak confirmed receiving eight wounded people including women and children on Monday and four others on Tuesday. He said condition of the wounded persons was stable.

The Taliban have so far said nothing in this regard. Three days ago, at least 15 civilians were killed and 37 others wounded in a suicide attack in Asadabad, the capital of Kunar. (Pajhwok)

(16) I Dies, 10 ...

crashed head-on with a car, leaving one passenger dead and another 10 wounded. He said the injured had been transferred to hospitals in Maidan Shahr, the provincial capital, and Syedabad district. (Pajhwok)

(17) Regional...

The center has separate offices for organizations operating in health sector in the eastern region.

Doctor Najibullah Kamawal, Director of Public Health in Nangrahar said the center would make it is to reach out to patients in emergency situations after which they would be shifted to other medical facilities for further treatment. (KP)

(18) Construction ...

according to Balish. Logar governor Fidia said quality construction work should be maintained on the road. He assured his administration would use all resources to ensure security of construction engineers and workers. Provincial council member Mohammad Naser Ghairat, happy over the project, stressed that workers on the project should be hired from Logar province. (Pajhwok)

(19) Man Dead,...

resident of the area, said: "We were in the street where the rocket hit the house of our neighbour and damaged its walls,"

He added people headed to the site to evacuate victims. Zakir, however, was unaware of the exact casualty figures.

A week earlier, a rocket fired from Dand-i-Ghori area hit the governor's house and left one person dead and a driver of the deputy governor wounded. (Pajhwok)

(20) Money Politics...

the figure of this year's campaign expenditure has been astronomical, even as the primary election just began a month ago. The U.S. presidential election has become a game of the rich more than ever. (Xinhua)

(21) UN may ...

sent into besieged areas and provide an opportunity to revive the peace talks, which collapsed before they even started a month ago. (Reuters)

(22) France Seeks ...

advantage over the rival bids. He also said the potential collaboration could prove mutually beneficial for both countries, fostering the exchange of new-age, high-tech information that would "strengthen the industrial fabric" of Australia. (Xinhua)

(23) Russia wants ...

aid workers on Monday made the first delivery of desperately needed assistance since the start of Syria's fragile ceasefire four days ago. (AFP)

(24) Army Refrains...

has a limit. It depends on the other side," Assad said, adding that "the terrorists have breached the deal from the first day. We as the Syrian army are refraining from responding in order to give a chance to sustain the agreement."

The cessation of hostilities agreement was reached by Russia and the United States. The Syrian government as well as nearly 100 opposition groups announced their agreement. (Xinhua)

(25) Iraqi Forces ...

called Jazerat Samarra. The statement did not say if the U.S.-led international coalition was involved in the operation.

Controlling the Jazerat Samarra area will not only restrict the IS militants' movements between the three provinces in the region, but will also be essential for future operations to retake parts of Anbar province and Mosul, said Sabah al-Numan, the spokesman of the counter-terrorism forces. (AP)

(26) Ukraine Teeters...

Yatsenyuk and Prosecutor General Viktor Shokin to resign, which immediately caused a no-confidence motion against the cabinet and later triggered havoc in the whole governing structure.

The president's plea was another alarming sign of things worsening among Ukraine's political elite, which had been earlier shaken by the resignation of several reform-minded politicians over what they described as extensive corruption in the governing bodies and political pressure from the president-allied officials. (Xinhua)

(27) UNHCR Warns...

ation process," he added. EU member states agreed in September last year to a relocation scheme to alleviate the refugee and migrant crisis mainly affecting Greece and Italy, the two top EU destinations for migrant arrivals. The UN refugee agency revealed that despite commitments to relocate 66,400 refugees from Greece, states have but pledged 1, 539 spaces, while only 325 relocations have actually taken place. (Xinhua)

(28) S. Korean...

H-bomb test, the fourth of its nuclear detonations, on Jan. 6, and went ahead with the launch of a long-range rocket, which outsiders see as a banned test of ballistic missile technology, on Feb. 7. Tougher new sanctions toward the DPRK are under discussion at the UN Security Council, and South Korea implemented its unilateral restrictions by closing down the Kaesong industrial zone, the once-jointly-run factory park in the DPRK's border city of Kaesong. (Xinhua)

(29) Foreign ...

Several members of the group, including those from Bulgaria, Canada and China, suffered light bruises, and those hurt received first aid, he added. The Syrian army has blamed the attack on the al-Qaeda-linked Nusra Front organization, TASS said. (Xinhua)