

(1) US Needs...

Dunford said: "I don't think anybody would want to withdraw our forces from Afghanistan or the broader Middle East more than me."

Sputnik quoted him as saying: "It's my judgment today based on the threat from South Asia that we need to continue to put pressure on those terrorist groups or they'll pose a threat to the US"

"I know it's frustrating to you and the American people for us to be there for such a long period of time," he said, suggesting the situation was not yet ripe for a complete withdrawal, (Pajhwok)

(2) Afghanistan Has...

values has defined certain limits for achieving peace and moving towards national reconciliation. Respect and protection of the principles of human rights are making the fundamental part of these limits and they are not negotiable. Therefore, in order to settle down decades of conflicts in Afghanistan, there is a need to respect the fundamental rights of all citizens, ensure public welfare development, ensure social justice and maintain the rule of law. All these principles are making our fundamental conditions in the peace talks," Rabbani explained.

"For settling down decades of conflict in Afghanistan, there is a need to respect the fundamental rights of all citizens, honor social justice and implement rule of in the peace process," said Rabbani at the second Afghanistan-EU Special Working Group meeting on Human Rights, Good Governance and Migration in Kabul on Thursday.

The EU officials said at the meeting that any peace with the Taliban should be acceptable to the people of Afghanistan and religious minorities.

"The Afghan people have been engaged in discussions and speculation about how peace could be achieved and what kind of peace they would like to achieve," the First Lady Rula Ghani said. She said the main concern has been the fear about losing the achievements of the past 18 years for the peace process in the country.

"Study and experiment has shown that if women are involved in the peace process, there are much better chances that the peace settlement would be lost. We follow with interest the national women consensus for peace conference and its outcome," said Paola Pampaloni, the Deputy Managing Director of Asia and the Pacific at the European External Action Service.

The remarks come as a scheduled meeting between the Afghan delegation and the Taliban scheduled for mid-April was delayed due to disagreements on a list proposed by the Afghan side.

Furthermore, a grand council of 3,200 delegates from around the country in a resolution after five days of consultations called on the Afghan government and the Taliban to agree on a ceasefire. President Ghani accepted the call and said the resolution of the council will turn into an action plan for the Afghan government. (Tolo news)

(3) West Needs...

out their duties and responsibilities."

The senior Iranian official emphasized that European governments should contribute to the reception of immigrants, either in the form of paying the costs or by accepting some of them in their own countries.

"This is a serious demand of the Islamic Republic, and the Foreign Ministry has been pursuing it for many years through the UNHCR,

the European authorities and the Afghan government, and will continue to pursue it seriously," he said.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister also said that obviously, in the present circumstances when the cruel and illegal sanctions of the US government imposed on Iran without any international justification and that the US government is trying to curtail the financial resources of the Islamic Republic, the demand of the Iranian nation is getting new dimensions.

The Deputy FM, emphasizing that the Islamic Republic of Iran is fully acquainted with and adhering to its Islamic, human and international responsibilities, said that the issue of the expulsion or return of refugees is not at all on the agenda of the government of Iran but to consider new options vis-a-vis them, is a separate matter.

Speaking in a TV interview on Wednesday night, Araghchi noted "More than three million Afghans are now in Iran, more than two million job opportunities have been occupied by good Afghan brothers in Iran, and they are taking out three to five billion euros from our country."

He stated, "About 468,000 Afghan students are educating in Iran free schools, and each student costs € 600 per year to us. There are more than 3,000 Afghan students in Iran, but these trainings cost around 15,000 euros and they receive health care. We are pleased to welcome them, but it costs us." (IRNA)

(4) Relentless Taliban...

on aspects of the framework for ending the Afghan war. We are getting into the 'nitty gritty.' The devil is always in the details," Khalilzad said.

"However, the current pace of talks isn't sufficient when so much conflict rages and innocent people die. We need more and faster progress. Our proposal for all sides to reduce violence also remains on the table."

Nine people were killed and at least 20 were wounded when Taliban fighters set off a big bomb at the gate of the Counterpart International aid group's office in Kabul, and then battled Afghan security forces for seven hours.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said his fighters attacked the group because it promoted "Western culture", including the mixing of the genders.

Officials from the aid group were not available for comment.

The attack in Kabul triggered a sense of unease between the U.S. and Taliban negotiators in Qatar, three senior officials said.

"The original plan was to continue the talks," said one of the officials, who declined to be identified. "It ended abruptly due to the attack." 'WHAT'S THE POINT?'

Last year, U.S. President Donald Trump's administration accelerated efforts to find a political settlement in Afghanistan and reduce the U.S. troop presence there.

About 17,000 foreign troops are based in Afghanistan - most of them American - as part of a U.S.-led NATO mission to train, assist and advise Afghan forces. Some U.S. forces carry out counter-terrorism operations.

But the Taliban have repeatedly rejected calls for a ceasefire, and they also refuse to talk to the U.S.-backed Afghan government, and have instead stepped up their attacks.

"They are clearly giving a message that they can continue war and peace talks at the same time and are engaged in negotiations from a position of strength," said a Western diplomat in Kabul.

But the level of violence was putting pressure on the U.S. side to

come up with a plan to end it, the diplomat said.

"There is no time left for fake bonhomie when people were dying every hour." An aide to Afghan President Ashraf Ghani questioned the entire process, given the Taliban rejection of a ceasefire. "He appeals for a reduction in violence but clearly the Taliban are not listening," the presidential aide said, referring to Khalilzad. (Reuters)

(5) Efforts Being...

Explaining the online system, he said all votes cast would be automatically uploaded to the server, which would provide results within 48 hours.

When asked about lack of the Internet facility in remote areas, he replied efforts were being made to connect different servers through satellite across the country.

"In line with the law, this time we are not bound to hire teachers, who have to be trained on the biometric system. Now we are free to hire educated people."

Mohammad Naeem Ayubzada, head of the Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan (TEFA), said he was concerned about the use of technology in upcoming polls due to lack of time.

He acknowledged the use of technology would be helpful in terms of saving time and ensuring transparency. He also accused IEC of incompetence. "Lack of administrative skills and IEC leadership's association with politicians may give birth to even greater challenges in future elections," Ayubzada feared.

Yousuf Rashidi, executive head of the Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan (FEFA), said with the passage of time, opportunities for the effective use of technology were being lost. "Options of using technology in upcoming polls narrow down with each passing day and like in past elections, this may not be viable," he remarked. (Pajhwok)

(6) Woman Among...

the support of its female member, Fatima in Qargha, mainly during Thursdays and Fridays, the Kabul Police said, adding that Fatima used to stand on the roadside and was asking for a left from car drivers to lure them into their trap and rob their vehicles either by drugging, beating, or intimidation by use of arms.

According to Kabul Police, the gang was busted during an operation which was conducted in 5th district of the city last week. (KP)

(7) Human Rights...

The CPT recommended that German authorities "take immediate action to end the application of these two techniques by Federal Police escort officers."

In its response, Germany said it had forwarded the recommendations to federal police to take action.

Rejected asylum-seekers need time to face deportation. The 34-page CPT report criticized the short amount of time rejected asylum-seekers sometimes have between their application being denied and their deportation. The committee said it was essential people have time to psychologically process their situation, even if they are being held in custody pending deportation. The CPT said failed asylum-seekers sometimes received less than a week's notice of their impending deportation. (AA)

(8) Sixth Round...

The statement said both sides will discuss the issues on which developments have been made and also on the issues no progress was made and then will start another round of talks. (Tolo news)

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(9) War in Afghanistan...

"insurance policy" against what could happen in the country, McMaster said, adding that the collapse of the US-backed Afghan government would forfeit a region known as Khorasan to jihadi groups.

"They're trying to establish these emirates," he said. "And then stitch these emirates together into a caliphate in which they force people to live under their brutal regime and then export terror to attack their near enemies, Arab states, Israel, and the far enemies, Europe and the United States."

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A recent report by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan showed a record number of civilian casualties in the country and said most of the casualties were caused by pro-government forces.

"If you think about the importance of the mission in Afghanistan, to protect what is fundamentally a transformed society, from the enemies that we're facing - the Taliban and their al-Qaida allies - it is a cost that is sustainable," McMaster said.

McMaster also said that the term "nation-building" has created an unrealistic expectation of what the US can do to shape another country, especially one like Afghanistan, according to the Military Times report. But progress has been made there, he added, pointing to the arena of women's rights and democratic voting.

"Afghanistan is not going to become Switzerland. It's just not," he said. "It can be Afghanistan, and it can be an Afghanistan like it was in the '70s or like it was during this really short but brutal period of rule under the Taliban from 1996 to 2001," he said as quoted by Military Times. (Tolo news)

(10) Heading High...

He told prisoners the government remained committed to following the rules of war and taking all suggestions seriously concerning conditions at the detention centres.

Last week, Mohib met the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) leadership for Afghanistan and promised visiting the prison to ensure inmates' access to healthcare and legal resources. (Pajhwok)

(11) People Complain...

said the computerized ID cards were accepted at the Passport Office, adding that individuals with such cards should not go to the Population Registration Department (PRD) for its confirmation as it was credible to them compared to the paper Tazkera.

Mohammad Daud Chakari, head of the Traffic Department of Kabul, said they had received no notification regarding the computerized ID cards from the PRD, therefore biometric verification of these cards had to be conducted for a second time.

He said holders of the electronic ID cards were not required like holders of paper ID cards to confirm their identity from the PRD. Saer Zaland, spokesman for the Ministry of Telecommunication and Information Technology, said technical issues in the computerized ID card were their concern while sharing information regarding the process was up to the PRD. He said before sharing information, the authorities concerned signed an agreement with the PRD on the basis of which the information was shared with them. Rohullah Ahmadzai, PRD spokesman said, the process of electronic

ID cards was being implemented in Kabul currently and would be launched in Herat, Balkh, Kandahar and Nangarhar provinces soon.

He said from the start of the distribution of the computerized ID cards, around 140,000 people had obtained them.

"The problems of confirmation of citizenship in certain government institutions may exist until the information or database is not shared with them," he said.

Ahmadzai added after the information was shared with other institutions, massive facilities ranging from transparency in polls, improvement in security, hiring of employees would be provided.

Mohammad Kabir Rangbar, a legal expert, said having the computerized ID card was an essential thing, adding unless a complete data regarding the citizens was not available, the conduct of uplift work in a particular area for its people may not be successfully implemented.

He added the computerized cards would help accurately count of the country's population and would be quite effective in elections. (Pajhwok)

(12) 1,500 Cases...

Speaking on the occasion, Afghanistan Journalists Council chief Mohammad Bashir Hatel said 24 journalists and media workers were killed and another 18 wounded during the past one year in Afghanistan.

He said during the period 32 incidents of threat, 30 insult and five kidnapping of journalists also took place. "These are figures registered with us, there may be different figures with others," he said.

He said the insurgents, powerful individuals and government officials threatened journalists individually and in groups last year, negatively impacting journalists' work.

At the end of the gathering, a number of journalists, including Pajhwok reporter Abasin Zaheer, were given away appreciation letters in recognition of their work. (Pajhwok)

(13) 3 Butchers Arrested...

He said the dog had been tightly tied up with a rope at the place where horses were slaughtered.

Another resident of Khost City, Islamuddin, said the detained butchers should be awarded exemplary punishment to others learnt a lesson. He said the municipality should investigate all butchers in order to prevent such incidents. (Pajhwok)

(14) Economic Watch...

Calling the Second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRF) a "great success," Jin said the BRI will enjoy a promising future.

The public has noticed that more world leaders joined the round-table that was used in both BRFs. "That being said, the BRI has been getting more attention as well as recognition," he said.

Jin, 70, had been China's vice finance minister and vice president of the Asian Development Bank before heading the AIIB in 2016.

He said the much-anticipated inaugural transaction in the debt capital markets demonstrates investor commitment to driving socio-economic development in Asia.

"We have triple-A ratings from Standard & Poor's, Moody's and Fitch, which reflect the Bank's commitment to the highest standards of governance, enhanced transparency and accountability," he said, adding that the Bank never rushes to make any decision. (Xinhua)