

(1) Taliban is...

insurgent attacks in Mali, Beirut, Istanbul and Paris, Ghani said the world is faced with another type of insurgency - that of Daesh. "The biggest threat we are faced with is from terrorists that launched attacks in Paris and Istanbul. We are experiencing the biggest type of threat in Afghanistan which is the new terrorist group (Daesh)." Ghani meanwhile called on Asian countries to make the most of current economic opportunities in the region and use them to boost investment and infrastructural development. (Tolonews)

(2) Kunduz Fact...

had been planned by an "army and an intelligence service" and that the Taliban were taking orders during the siege from Peshawar. Saleh also stated that the commission found evidence of a "grey network" in Kunduz that was anti-Taliban but in favor of a weak government. He said this "network" was running a parallel government in Kunduz and that it had support from within the Kabul administration.

Saleh also pointed fingers at the National Security Council and said the commission's "first line of criticism is with the president's office (national security council). We will not hide anything."

He said the commission found that the government made a big mistake when Taliban took control of Chardara and Dasht-i-Archi districts. He said troops failed to carry out operations to retake these areas, adding that an Afghan National Army commander has been arrested over this and is being interrogated. According to him, local police had been under Taliban pressure for three months ahead of the incident but had not been given any back up. The report stated that leading up to and during the fall of the city, security force members had been well equipped and had had enough arms and ammunition.

However, Saleh said that had it not been for the U.S that launched an air strike against the Taliban during the siege, the insurgents would have gained more ground by taking control of the airport and the entire city. Saleh said the primary reason for the collapse of the city had been failure in management by government and a gap in their command structure. He said: "Failure of leadership at strategic (Kabul) and tactical levels are the main cause." He went on to say that despite everything they have been through, Kunduz residents want nothing else except a strong government and security. He said "residents still support government."

The commission also found that differences among MPs, corruption and ghost forces were to blame and that "hundreds of (illegal) armed men, land grabbers and criminal groups are active in Kunduz." The commission in turn called on government to take practical measures to overcome problems in Kunduz.

However, one team member rejected claims that the U.S took the war to north to suppress northern neighbors. The commission said these claims are baseless and that had it not been for U.S support the Taliban would have taken the airport as well.

Saleh meanwhile ensured the nation that the commission had hidden nothing and all findings are in the report. He said government has promised the commission it will follow up on its recommendations. The five-member team was appointed last month by Ghani to investigate the fall of the city to the Taliban.

Saleh said "the commission had been independent and impartial," and their main aim had been to find out whether there had been a plot or conspiracy or whether it had been government's mismanagement that led to the siege. He said the commission had in no way been pressurized into making changes in their report and that the president will submit his decision within the next few days. (Tolonews)

(3) Task Team ...

housing contract. Last week however, a document surfaced implicating Mohammadi in yet another Frozi-related scandal. This time, Mohammadi appears to have issued a memorandum, via the Finance Ministry, urging all government offices to sign deals with Frozi's Gas Group for their supplies. On Saturday, Sayed Zafar Hashemi, Ghani's deputy spokesman, confirmed that the commission had

started its investigation.

"The president has signed a decree and assigned a team (to probe the Smart City scandal). The team has started its work. We hope that the team works independently."

This comes amid rising concerns among MPs about government's ability to investigate and handle this scandal appropriately. Sadiqzada Nili, a Daikundi MP, said: "I don't support anyone and I don't want to accuse anyone but if the fight against corruption continues like this it will be a corrupt investigation itself. You appoint some people and then suspend others. I hope that the president has a clear response (after this investigation) for the nation."

Mohammadi allegedly facilitated the signing of the "Smart City Township" project - worth over \$900 USD. The deal was inked about two weeks ago. However, after mounting criticism of government, Ghani cancelled the contract within a week and ordered an investigation into the issue. (Tolonews)

(4) UN Approves...

ways to shore up the fight, "either through military action, the search for political solutions or the battle against terrorist financing." The resolution does not provide any legal basis for military action and does not invoke chapter seven of the UN charter that authorizes the use of force.

But French diplomats maintain that it will provide important international political support to the anti-IS campaign that has been ramped up since the attacks in Paris a week ago.

"This resolution is a powerful international recognition of the threat posed by Daesh," said British Ambassador Matthew Rycroft, who chairs the council this month.

The British envoy described it as a "call to action" to member-states to join in international efforts to defeat Daesh.

The measure calls on member states "that have the capacity to do so to take all necessary measures, in compliance with international law... on the territory under the control of Daesh, in Syria and Iraq."

Russia's Ambassador Vitaly Churkin stressed that the resolution was a "political appeal" and did not "change the legal basis" for states confronting terrorism.

France's bid for UN backing came after Russia submitted a revised text of a separate draft resolution that calls for fighting the IS group with Syria's consent.

That draft has been rejected by the United States, Britain and France, which are refusing to cooperate with President Bashar al-Assad's regime, whom they accuse of fomenting extremism by resorting to brutality.

Describing Daesh as a "global and unprecedented threat to international peace and security," the resolution calls for sanctions and urges countries to step up efforts to cut off the flow of foreign fighters to Iraq and Syria.

The 28-year-old ringleader of the Paris attacks, Abdelhamid Abaaoud, a Belgian of Moroccan origin, is believed to have traveled to Syria to join Daesh and be trained as an operative in Europe.

The resolution "unequivocally condemns in the strongest terms the horrifying terrorist attacks" in Paris and in Beirut, and also mentions violence in Tunisia, Turkey and Egypt this year.

France put forward the resolution on Thursday and sought quick approval from the 15-member council. The vote came exactly a week after coordinated attacks claimed by Daesh targeted a packed concert hall, football stadium, bars and restaurants in Paris, killing 130 people and wounded hundreds.

Two weeks earlier, a Russian airliner was downed by a bomb, killing all 224 people on board, in a separate attack that Daesh claims was carried out using explosives packed in a can of Schweppes soft drink.

France has been pounding Daesh targets in Syria since September, invoking the right to self-defense contained in article 51 of the UN charter, but Russia began air strikes after receiving a request from Damascus for assistance. (AFP)

(5) UK to Provide...

organizations, but it was extended until 2017 with an additional cost of 9 million pounds. "The implementation of the program would help education 180,000 girls and they would be taught by 8,000 teachers in suburb areas," said Pierce.

The UK government has helped 16 provinces of Afghanistan in improving women's education, added

Pierce.

Minister Balkhi cited poor infrastructure, lack of schools and professional teachers in rural areas, insecurity and poverty as main causes that prevented girls from getting education. (Wadsam)

(6) Insurgents...

other hostages early this month after being kidnapped by Daesh almost two months ago.

The seven victims, including three women, were also kidnapped while traveling between Zabul and Ghazni provinces. They were beheaded earlier this month allegedly by Daesh members.

The incident sparked a massive demonstration through the streets of Kabul two weeks ago. About 20,000 demonstrators carried their bodies through the streets of the capital, calling for justice and an end to the kidnappings.

No group has however claimed responsibility for Saturday's incident. (Tolonews)

(7) McCain's ...

the leadership of General Sharif, the Pakistani Army has inflicted losses to the enemy at great sacrifice. I thanked General Sharif for his leadership and expressed my appreciation for the sacrifice of so many brave Pakistani soldiers in the fight against terrorism."

In addition, he said the meeting focused on the situation in Afghanistan, the fight against Daesh and ways to improve coordination and cooperation between the two countries against terrorist enemies. "Going forward, I hope we will continue working closely together in the interest of both our countries."

Reuters meanwhile reported earlier that just days before Pakistan's powerful army chief was due to visit Washington for talks on regional stability and fighting militancy, Sharif engaged in thinly veiled criticism of the nuclear-armed country's civilian government.

A terse statement from the army's PR wing underlined the tension between Pakistan's military and its civilian government.

After top generals met to review a major crackdown on extremists, the Pakistani military said it would be "undermined" if the government did not take "matching governance initiatives."

That was taken to mean police reform, action on militant financing and better governance of restive tribal areas.

"He (Sharif) is foreign minister, prime minister, president and army chief all rolled into one," said a Pakistani newspaper editor, while also questioning the military's motives.

"His greatest achievement is that he has cemented this idea that the army is no longer interested in politics."

The general, not related to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, has helped recast the image of the military, which has ousted several civilian governments and ruled Pakistan for more than half of its history.

Since taking office two years ago, Sharif has been credited with broadening Pakistan's strategic policy to focus less narrowly on India and recognize the threat to internal security posed by the Pakistani Taliban and other militants.

Raheel Sharif is dubbed the "Man of Action" of Pakistani politics. (Tolonews)

(8) World Powers...

of the modernized reactor design". France, the United Kingdom and Germany will participate in design review and Russia will provide consultative services. (Reuters)

(9) 'Peace in ...

She said peace-loving Pakhtuns were biggest victims of violence and militancy.

On a question about Fata's proposed merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, she said tribal areas were independent even before the Partition and without taking its representatives into confidence, nobody could comment on the matter.

"Whatever the people of Fata want is acceptable to us," she added.

To a question as to whether or not Pakhtuns had subjugated the rights of Sindhis, she said Sindhis themselves had deprived their own people of their rights.

"Pakhtuns have come here to earn a living and it's because of their hard work that Karachi functions.

"Give them [Pakhtuns] their rights and they won't have to leave their hometowns to work in other cities," she said.

"Pakhtuns have been deprived of their resources and being treated as second-grade citizens," she lamented. (Agencies)

(10) Secret NATO ...

a maximum of 980 soldiers - 130 more than at present.

Legal experts say that any expansion of Resolute Support, even to share photographic intelligence or information about planned attacks on Taliban outposts, would require a new mandate from the German parliament.

The report is less negative about the security situation in Afghanistan than recent Taliban attacks may suggest, NATO sources said. Afghan security forces are capable in many areas, such as the ability to carry out operations spanning several weeks, they noted. (DPA)

(11) China, India...

discussed terrorism concerns faced by them from Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Singh said all issues relating to India's concerns were flagged in the talks, including New Delhi's perception that Beijing blocked its move to get the UN to take action against Pakistan for the release of Mumbai attack mastermind Zakiur-Rehman Lakhvi.

In July this year, Indian officials at the UN's Sanctions Committee said India's demand to take action against Pakistan for the release of Lakhvi was blocked by China on the pretext that New Delhi did not provide sufficient information. China subsequently defended its action, saying its stand was "based on facts and in the spirit of objectiveness and fairness" and expressed desire to discuss the issue with India.

"We have raised the issue and exchanged information," Singh said. Singh's talks with Chinese officials also broadly covered India's concerns over leaders of several militant groups from the northeastern states taking shelter in China as well as illegal arms supplies.

Declining to provide any details, Singh said "we have raised our concerns about North Eastern states." Indian officials, who took part in the discussions, said China faced no less of terrorism challenges than those faced by India which is grappling with cross border infiltration from Pakistan.

For its part, China has been countering similar challenges in its Xinjiang province, struggling to peg down two-way flow of Uyghur militants of the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) from the bases in Pakistan's tribal areas which were reported to have been targeted by Pakistan military in recent years.

Today China said 28 terrorists linked to foreign militant outfits have been killed in Xinjiang in one of the major operations in the area where Uyghur Muslims have a majority highlighting the security concerns in the province bordering Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). A number of Xinjiang militants have also reportedly joined the Islamic State in Syria.

"The atmosphere is very good. Meng is very proactive and positive in suggesting cooperation. Our discussions covered counter terrorism cooperation in considerable detail, greater cooperation on fighting transnational crimes," Singh said. On Afghanistan, China too was interested in pushing anti-terrorism cooperation as its efforts to play an active role along with Pakistan to further peace talks between Taliban and Afghan government suffered a set back after the death of Taliban founder leader Mullah Omar and the militant group's split over the new leadership, officials said. (Agencies)

(12) Road Shows...

in Mazar-e Sharif, said during the road show that the Afghan government recognized the importance of the agricultural sector. "We need to improve our local products and then promote them accordingly to develop Afghanistan's economy."

The poultry sector in Afghanistan faces various challenges. As farmers cannot respond to the high level in local demand, most chickens and poultry products are imported and of low quality. To meet the demand, local farmers need modern facilities, such as breeder farms, slaughterhouses and hatcheries as well as training. Both farmers and producers also need opportunities to showcase the quality of their produce to potential investors and wholesale customers.

Last month also saw the opening of two modernized poultry slaughterhouses with adjoining sales units in Aybak, the capital of Samangan. With modern facilities, farmers can improve the quality of their poultry, helping to gain a competitive advantage. (Wadsam)

(13) Education ...

us to a secret school," she said. "But it was a lot harder for them to imagine their daughters growing up uneducated. For them, that would have been a major step backwards." Basij-Rasikh and her older sister - dressed in a burqa - would vary their route to school every day to avoid arousing suspicions, hiding their books in grocery bags. They had several "terrifying close calls".

"Afterwards we'd beg our parents to let us stay at home like all the other girls we knew," she said. "But my father would always say, 'Look, you can lose everything in life, but there is one thing that nobody can take away from you, and that's your education.'"

After the Taliban fell in 2001, Basij-Rasikh attended a public school before going to college in the United States.

While there, she co-founded the School of Leadership, Afghanistan (SOLA) with the aim of giving young Afghans access to an education abroad and jobs back home.

In 2012, she turned SOLA - which means "peace" in the Pashto language - into the country's first girls' boarding school to educate girls from across the country.

The Kabul school places strong emphasis on critical thinking and leadership skills. Extra-curricular activities that would raise eyebrows in most of Afghanistan include everything from skateboarding and rock-climbing to driving lessons.

SOLA has 25 students and has helped 45 girls study in the United States, Canada, Britain, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan and Bangladesh, with scholarships amounting to \$9.5 million.

Some hope to be doctors, others want to become the country's first female president. One dreams of becoming an astronaut.

"Most of them are the first girl in their family to receive an education. It's a huge change," said Basij-Rasikh who plans to expand the school to 340 students in seven years.

The guards at SOLA are a reminder that it is still risky for girls to go to school. (Reuters)

(14) Agriculture ...

of spring," said a farmer from central Bamyan.

According to provincial agriculture director Eng. Mohammad Tahir Ataye, over 2,000 potato storages with a capacity of about 50,000 tons have been built in Bamyan. He added The storages are provided to the farmers at free of cost and have been established in areas where potato production is high.

Ataye further added that the province needs storages for over 200,000 tons of potatoes to help meet the local demands for potatoes all across Afghanistan. (Wadsam)

(15) ISIS Loyalists...

images were posted on social media, including the Shomoukh Al-Islam jihadi forum, under the title Leveling Graves And Erasing Pagan Symbols. Three pictures also emerged out of a montage from Syria in August this year which purportedly shows graves being smashed along with other images such as the discovery of smuggled cigarettes hidden inside a spare tire. Only the most ornate gravestones in the graveyard appear to be targeted, with the pictures showing they are destroyed using a sledgehammer. The caption states that the men are "removing the manifestation of polytheism."

The latest distressing pictures are released shortly after a shocking documentary was released last week which purportedly shows the loyalists of the terror group are expanding their activities in Afghanistan by establishing jihadi schools where children as young as 3-year-old are being trained on how to carry out terrorist activities. It is estimated that 3,500 militants loyal to the terror group are operating in Afghanistan which includes militants both from Afghanistan and other countries. (KP)

(16) Afghans Lose...

high rate of unemployment and poverty have driven many Afghans to migrate to other countries to escape the difficult circumstances. Long queues of visa seekers amass almost every day outside the gates of the Iranian, Pakistani and Turkish embassies here in Kabul in a bid to escape from their strife-torn country and live a new life abroad. "I am back home but have nothing to eat, no job and no regular income to support my family," Haidar exclaimed.

Recalling his ordeal, Haidar said that in addition to having days and

nights traveling on foot he along with dozens of others had risky journeys in overloaded boats to reach Italy.

Like Haidar, another returnee is Hamza from the northern Baghlan province who was stopped by the police at the Iran-Turkey border and deported to Kabul three months ago.

"I dealt with a smuggler to take me to Germany at a cost of 7,000 U.S. dollars but the Iranian police stopped us at the Iran-Turkey border and sent us back in September," Hamza told Xinhua.

Thousands of Afghans, mostly young, educated, university graduates leave for European countries every month to seek jobs there and escape insecurity and poverty in their homeland.

Putting their lives at risk, some Afghans after selling their property and possessions at home, take treacherous routes to reach their dreamlands, but some are killed on the way, others are lost at sea when the packed boat capsizes. (Xinhua)

(17) Putin Seeks...

Keita said during a visit to the hotel on Saturday. Six employees of Russian regional airline Volga-Dnepr were killed, Russia's foreign ministry said, while six others were rescued. Putin sent a telegram of condolences to Keita and said "the widest international cooperation" was needed to confront global terrorism, according to a statement by the Kremlin. (Reuters)

(18) Britain...

Syrian ambassador in Moscow, according to which countries that coordinate their military actions with Russia are regarded by Syria as coordinating their actions with Syria. Russia began a large-scale bombing campaign against targets in Syria on Sept. 30, which Moscow says is focused on Islamic State militants but critics say targets a wider band of opponents of Moscow's ally, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. (Reuters)

(19) India Seeks ...

security, medicines and clean energy."

Trade between ASEAN and India was worth about 76.5 billion U.S. dollars in 2014-2015, but much of the potential for economic partnership remained untapped, he said. Founded in 1967, ASEAN comprises Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. (Xinhua)

(20) Belgium...

criminal procedure. "Other measures include the deprivation of liberty for foreign fighters returnees, a stricter screening of preachers, and the closing of websites preaching hate. Finally, the use of cameras recognizing number plates will be reinforced, as well as the screening for access to sensitive jobs," said Reynders.

About the control of external border of the EU, the minister upheld that they have to be strengthened, in order to guarantee the good functioning of the Schengen area. (Xinhua)

(21) 10 Years...

anchoring the diplomacy-and-sanctions strategy over Russia's aggression in Ukraine. Germany remains reluctant to expand its military role abroad, though it remains one of the biggest contributors to NATO's mission in Afghanistan and has armed Kurdish fighters in Iraq - a contrast to Germany's previous reluctance to send weapons into conflicts. (AP)

(22) Serbia Stages ...

"Cobras," 204th Aviation Brigade, Serbian State Guard, River Fleet, Gendarmerie and the Security Intelligence Agency. The simulated terrorist attacks were staged in front of Palace Serbia, Belgrade Airport, Railway Station, as well as on the river rafts, with an aim to show the readiness of these services to react on potential hostage crisis, or any other security threat. After hearing the report from the commander of the Gendarmerie Goran Dragovic, Vucic congratulated the security services for their display of readiness and said that the job was done well. (Xinhua)

(23) DPRK Rejects...

of the testimonies, asserting that the evidence is but sheer lies and fabrications.

Pyeongyang has repeatedly stressed that hostile forces whip up the human rights issue in an effort to overthrow the DPRK government and its social system, which, the DPRK says, can never be tolerated. (Xinhua)