

(1) Ghani, Abdullah ...

a teacher at such a facility. From 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, to 10 December, Human Rights Day, is the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence Campaign and is a time to galvanize action to end violence against women and girls around the world. (Tolonews)

(2) EU Wants...

the integrity of future elections. Addressing past weaknesses and introducing fraud mitigation measures will also underpin efforts to regain public trust in the electoral process."

The EU, its member states and Norway promised continued support for the Afghan people on their path towards building a stable and democratic Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(3) Pentagon Voices ...

Iraq, Syria and other parts of the world, Cook said.

"We stand prepared to support Afghan forces as needed and we'll continue the mission we have to train and advise mission with the Afghan forces as we have been for the last couple years. There's no change in our role, even though the Afghans may be pushing operations into the winter months..."

Cook said the US forces conducted a precision airstrike near Sarmada, Syria, on November 18 that killed Abu Afghan al-Masri, a senior al-Qaeda in Syria leader.

Al-Masri, an Egyptian, originally joined al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and later moved to its Syrian affiliate. He had ties to terrorist groups operating throughout Southwest Asia, including groups responsible for attacking US and Coalition forces in Afghanistan and those plotting to attack the West, he said. (Pajhwok)

(4) Questions Raised ...

letter of Najibullah Ahmadzai, that was sent to the media from the presidential palace, shows that he is just 20 years old when in fact he is 40.

According to Ahmadzai's appointment letter, he received his master's degree at the age of 19 - when one takes the noted date of birth into consideration. "It is obvious that some people are not truthful to pass the process. However, if anyone is appointed as commissioner and then it is proven that he/she lied, the commissioner will lose his/her job," said Yusuf Rashid, a member of selection committee. (Tolonews)

(5) 10 Women May ...

The present situation of females was acceptable, Abdullah said. For his part, the president asked the people to start a campaign for the elimination of violence against women, who are the first class-citizens of the country like men. (Pajhwok)

(6) Takharis ...

teachers for English and the same number for Pashtolan-guage subjects.

A teacher training center in Farkhar only trained teachers in science subjects over the past five years, he said.

Nagina, a student of 9th grade of Nahid Shahid Girls School, said the shortage of professional teachers had a negative impact on their education. School graduates could not properly answer entry test questions, she said.

"Our every book has around 300 pages and some unprofessional teachers can teach only 40 pages of them, students remain unaware about the rest of the book, some teachers are employed based on favoritism and they are playing with our future," she added.

Provincial education department's statistics manager, Abdul Wakil Sahel, said besides the shortage of professional teachers, employment of religious scholars to teach other subjects was another problem.

"Around 5,000 religious scholars who received education in Pakistan have obtained certificates of 12th and 14th grades, most of them are employed in

Takhar education department and a number of others are hired as teachers in districts," he said. A civil society activist, Erfan Bazgar, said a shortage of books and laboratories in schools were another important problem.

He said educational projects were not properly supervised and developments made in the area lacked efficiency and quality.

"The education department does not have an effective development plan to share it with organizations, but it constructs buildings for schools and teacher training centers in districts," he said.

Acting Takhar education director, Sayed Enayatullah Navid, confirmed problems in the education process, but said aid organizations endorsed their plans and implemented projects according to their wish.

"Organizations work in districts where security situation is better or located close to the provincial capital."

He said lawmakers tried to work in areas where they had received most of votes. He said projects implemented by his department were based on the plan, but those implemented by other organizations were out of the development plan.

Religious affairs head at the education department, Karimullah Latifi, who has been tasked to evaluate education process over 14 years, said, "The teacher training centers in districts train teachers in specific subjects, which is a problem."

He confirmed employment of religious scholars to schools beyond their profession.

Latifi also expressed concern over corruption in the education department and said some positions in the department were sold behind the scenes while graduation certificates were also given to uneducated people. However, he did not provide more details. (Pajhwok)

(7) New Zealand...

training was made available to them only recently, as part of the Afghan government's plan to increase the number of female soldiers and officers to 10 percent of the total force.

In April 2013, New Zealand troops left Afghanistan's Bamyán Province, where they maintained a camp and ran the provincial reconstruction team for 10 years. (Xinhua)

(8) Pakistan's Wrong ...

hatred of Afghans."

Momand said Afghanistan was a sovereign nation and had the right to maintain good relations with India and other countries, but the relations should not be against Pakistan.

He said it was beyond logic that Afghanistan should not enhance relations with India. He also urged Pakistan to allow Afghanistan and India to do business with each other through its soil. The move, he said, would help develop positive thinking about Pakistan in Afghanistan and would create jobs for the Pakistanis as well.

He said if Pakistan did not change its policies towards Afghanistan, Kabul would look for alternate options which would harm Pakistan's interests. (Pajhwok)

(9) Russia Strongly ...

statement said.

"We strongly condemn this inhuman terrorist act. We express our deep condolences to the families and loved ones of those killed and wish a speedy recovery to those injured." The Russian Embassy urged the Afghan authorities to do their utmost to ensure security and interreligious peace in the country. (Pajhwok)

(10) Restoration of...

he called an Indian prism. He urged poetical leaders to avoid making irresponsible statements because they could fuel tensions.

Former Pakistan Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) chief, Asad Durrani commented Islamabad and Kabul could not meet each other's expectations. "It is difficult for Pakistan to eliminate all the Taliban militants."

Afghan lawmaker, Faridoon Momand said Afghans and Pakistanis were brothers, but some figures in Islamabad and Kabul were fuelling divisions between the two nations. He added such elements should be isolated.

Haji Roothullah Wakil, an Afghan tribal elder, asked Pakistan not to treat Afghanistan the way it did in the past. Afghanistan was an independent country and its people always wanted good relations with the neighborhood, he continued.

Rauf Hassan, a member of the Pakistani delegation, said Islamabad should seek Kabul's forgiveness for its mistreatment of iconic Afghan refugee woman, Sharbat Gula.

However, another Pakistani participant, Juma Khan Sufi, said the stay of Afghan refugees were not in the interest of Pakistan. He asked Afghanistan to recognise the Durand Line as a formal border, an issue that sparked strong reaction from Afghan delegates.

An Afghan attendee, Dr. Farooq Azam, said recrimination would not resolve any problem and seeking foreigners' assistance would not help either. Pakistanis and Afghans should resolve their problems on their own, he suggested.

Afghanistan National Stability Society (NSS) head Ziaul Haq Amarkhel, said Pakistan did not need building new facilities on the Durand Line, because the step fuelled tensions between the two nations.

There was a common view in Afghanistan that Pakistan detained or killed the Taliban leaders who evinced an interest in peace talks, he said. For example, he said that Mullah Baradar was one of the pro-peace Taliban leaders detained by Pakistan. Afghan lawmaker Jaafar Mahdavi called the exclusion of Taliban and HIA from the Bonn Conference the mother of all problems.

Sherry Rahman, a leader of the Pakistan People's Party, said: "Let's ignore slogans like Afghans and Pakistanis are brothers and recognise our borders and resolve our problems ourselves." The Pugwash head called the conference effective and promised to continue holding such discussions in the future. (Pajhwok)

(11) Nuristan Clashes...

clashes. Nuristani feared losing the district to insurgents if fresh arms supplies did not reach the forces and if the air support did not arrive.

Khan Mohammad, a resident, said people had run out of food items due to the closure of Doab road. According to Khan Mohammad, no civilians have suffered casualties in the clashes but they could die of starvation if the clashes prolonged.

The governor said new supplies including food would be reaching both security forces and residents of the district soon.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid claimed the fighters had captured three check-points and inflicted casualties to security forces during the clashes in Doab district, but his claim was rejected by local officials. (Pajhwok)

(12) Ex-Balkh ...

Barna arrived in Mazar-i-Sharif city in his car, police signaled him to stop, but he got frightened and police opened fire at him and Barna's car crashed into a tank of German troops.

The incident took place amid tight security measures in Mazar-i-Sharif, he added. Balkh deputy police chief, Abdur Razaq Qaderi, said Barna had possibly lost his life in a traffic accident.

His body was unidentifiable in the first, but after investigations, he was identified and handed over to his family, he said.

Mazar-i-Sharif Civil Hospital director Dr. Noor Mohammad Faiz said Barna had been killed in a traffic accident. He said there were no signs of bullets on his body. (Pajhwok)

(13) 3 ISIS Loyalists ...

province as they attempt to expand foothold in this province

and other parts of the country. However, they continue to face pressures as the Afghan forces and US forces based in Afghanistan conduct regular operations against the terror group.

The increased raids followed amid concerns that the loyalists of the terror group are attempting to establish the Khurasan Caliphate and turn the province into operational base of the group.

In the meantime, the loyalists of the terror group have increased attacks on Shi'ite minorities in some key provinces, including capital Kabul during the recent months.

Scores of people were killed and hundreds of others were wounded as the group unleashed some major attacks in capital Kabul in the past 3 months. (KP)

(14) Amid Uncertainty, ...

previous agreed austerity measures.

"What I would hope to see is a relaxation of austerity but with a new fiscal framework that will allow some investment into the economy," said Michael Kitson, an economist at the University of Cambridge's Judge Business School.

The budget update is likely to set aside money for roads and digital infrastructure. Prime Minister Theresa May this week also trailed more investment into research and development in hopes of putting the U.K. ahead of the curve in science and technology. (AP)

(15) Germany, France ...

promise to reset Washington's ties with Moscow, could launch new offensives in Ukraine before Trump is sworn in on Jan. 20.

A French official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said invitations to the new meeting on Ukraine had been sent but a date had not yet been agreed by all parties.

The last Normandy Format meeting resulted in an agreement to extend a withdrawal of troops to four new areas in Ukraine's Donbass region. But monitors for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) have said similar pledges to disengage elsewhere on the front line have not been honored. (Reuters)

(16) Russian Tankers ...

affairs and security policy said the implementation of EU restrictions lay with member states. "We trust that competent authorities are complying with their obligation to ensure respect of the restrictive measures in place and to pursue any circumvention attempts," she added.

Greece's foreign ministry declined to comment. The Cypriot government said its authorities had not approved the docking of any Russian tankers carrying jet fuel bound for Syria. "We would welcome any information that may be provided to us on any activity that contravenes U.N. or EU restrictive measures," the Cypriot foreign ministry added. (Reuters)

(17) Hollande to...

Emmanuel Macron, who has declared his candidacy.

With his economic credibility already on the line, Hollande has set reversing jobless claims as a condition to extend his stay at the Elysee Palace, betting on a better business climate and various devices he implemented to encourage hiring. France's jobless claims dropped by 1.9 percent at the end of September compared to a month earlier, reaching the lowest level since 1996, according to labor ministry data.

France's left-wing parties are scheduled to hold primaries on Jan. 22 and 29. (Xinhua)

(18) Hungarian and ...

would make the EU stronger. Given the EU's current difficulties, Szijarto said, it would be a bad choice for the European Union to circle its wagons. Instead, it needs to speed up the enlargement process to prevent itself from weakening and becoming less competitive.

Treating the West Balkans as a gray area is irrational and needs to end, Szijarto added.

"The more of us we are, the stronger we are," he said, adding that the West Balkans were significant economic and trading partners.

As of next February, said Szijarto, a member of his staff would begin working in the Albanian Ministry of European Integration, to assist the Albanian government with the integration process.

On her part, Gjoshka said that the opportunity to join the European Union was a historical opportunity that her country could not afford to let go wrong. Albania is counting on Hungary's help, she added.

She said her country had high hopes regarding the Hungarian expert. Given that Hungary has already gone through the integration process, Gjoshka said, a Hungarian expert is certain to have useful experience enabling Albania to prevent mistakes.

Gjoshka added that Albania and Hungary had close and traditionally good bilateral relations, which were reflected in their economic cooperation. (Xinhua)

(19) Erdogan Plays...

measures" adopted in the wake of a failed military coup in July, in which 246 people were killed. More than 100,000 people have been suspended or dismissed in the ensuing crackdown, in which dozens of media outlets have been shuttered.

Ankara, for its part, has been critical of the EU over its stance toward the Kurdistan Workers' Party, which is recognized as a terror group as well by the bloc and the United States, and an organization led by the U.S.-based cleric Fethullah Gulen who is accused of orchestrating the failed coup.

Turkey applied to join the EU in 1987 and started the accession talks in 2005. (Xinhua)

(20) Philippines, U.S. ...

annual Mutual Defense Board and Security Engagement Board in Manila.

"There will only be about 258 (exercises) I think. Previously, there are about 260 plus so there is a reduction of around five," said Visaya.

Visaya also said the exercises will be focused on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), counter-terrorism and engineering civic actions. "So that will be in line with the pronouncement and the guidance of our president to the AFP," said Visaya.

Asked about the defense department's earlier proposal that they want the exercises reduced from 13 to about six or seven, AFP spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said the 258 exercises that Visaya mentioned include the small ones which involve a few soldiers on both sides.

"They may be referring to the big exercises," said Padilla, referring to the 13 exercises mentioned by the Philippine defense department.

"You must understand that even if two or three Americans are coming over to talk with 15 of us, to teach them, that is still part of the list," said Padilla. Padilla said the famous Balikatan exercises will be retained. "It will continue but the focus of the Balikatan will be HADR or response to disasters," Padilla added. (Xinhua)

(21) IS-Held Mosul ...

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi proclaimed a caliphate in 2014.

Federal forces have already entered the city from the east, Kurdish peshmerga and other forces are also closing in from the north and south and only the west had remained open.

The latest development will make it very long and dangerous for IS if it attempts to move fighters and equipment between Mosul and the Syrian city of Raqa, the last two bastions of their crumbling "caliphate". (AFP)

(22) Moscow Hopes ...

missile systems on the islands of Kunashir and Iturup, close to the Japanese island of Hokkaido.

Earlier in the day, Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida was quoted as saying by the Kyodo news agency that Tokyo was considering "appropriate measures" in response.

Russia and Japan have not signed a peace treaty formalizing the end of World War II due to a territory row over four small islands in the Pacific -- the Southern Kurils, as Russia calls them, and what the Japanese call the Northern Territories. The decades-old territorial dispute has hindered diplomatic and trade relations between the two countries.

Bilateral ties appeared to begin to improve after Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe met with Putin in the Russian city of Sochi in May.

In September, the two leaders held a three-hour meeting on the sidelines of the Eastern Economic Forum in the Far Eastern city of Vladivostok, during which they reached an agreement for Putin to visit to Japan in December. (Xinhua)

(23) 7th Hamburg ...

all these new challenges alone, he said.

"This is why we must intensify the strategic partnership with China in all areas, in politics and culture, as well as in economy and civil society."

The summit scheduled for Nov. 23 and 24 in the northern German city of Hamburg will include discussions, keynote speeches and panel meetings focusing on such topics as the fallout from the Brexit, China's economic transition, the Belt and Road Initiative and boosting efficiency in industrial manufacturing.

In his speech, Fritz Horst Melsheimer, president of the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce, called for an investment treaty between the EU and China as soon as possible within the next year in order to put bilateral economic relations swiftly onto a more solid legal basis. (Xinhua)

(24) China, Russia ...

world peace and promoting international justice.

He called on the two countries to boost all-round cooperation and jointly work for world peace, stability and development.

Shoigu said strengthening the strategic partnership of coordination with China is a priority of Russia's foreign policy.

The close contact between leaders of the two countries have guaranteed the high-level cooperation between the two countries and the two armed forces, he said.

Russia will actively advance exchanges and cooperation with the Chinese armed forces in accordance with the consensus reached by the two leaders, he added. (Xinhua)

(25) Khursheed ...

democratic government, a reference to calling off the 'lock-down Islamabad' plan by Imran Khan allegedly because of PML-N government's harsh measures.

Responding to a query about the Qatari prince's letter with reference to London property of the Sharifs, the opposition leader complained that the media found corruption only in the PPP, while the PML-N leaders had been given a "clean chit". (Monitoring Desk)

(26) Iran Rejects ...

accusations against a UN Member State." "At least, a regime that has brazenly flouted all UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions about the lands it criminally occupies is not in a position to broach such a claim against other nations," he said. "In addition, it is absurd and hypocritical for the representative of a regime that has occupied the lands of other peoples for so many decades and denied every basic right of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination, to accuse occasionally my country of violating international law." (Presstv)