

(1) US in 'Very Strong'...

teleconference with U.S. troops deployed there, which will be his first trip to the war-riddled country after taking office.

"Maybe I'll even see you over there. You never know what's going to happen," Trump told a U.S. general in Afghanistan after saying that he will see the general when the latter comes back to the United States.

Asked by a reporter later if he looked forward to going to Afghanistan, Trump said, "We'll be doing some interesting things."

Asked if he had a sense of when he will be going, Trump responded, "I do, but I can't tell you."

Currently, the United States has around 14,000 troops in Afghanistan, mainly providing training and advisory service to Afghan security forces, with some others conducting counter-terrorism operations. (Xinhua)

(2) Ghani Asks...

Malistan and Jaghori districts of Ghazni province.

"We have a clear message to the Taliban. They have condemned this act (the recent attack on religious scholars in a wedding hall in Kabul), but only condemnation is not enough. Taliban must denounce suicide (bombings) and explosions and join peace. The ceasefire showed that Afghanistan is ready to welcome them (Taliban) but no Afghan is prepared to live under the shoes of other Afghans," said Ghani.

Regarding the peace process, Ghani said: "We all want equality and a free life, a prosperous and comfortable life, we will continue our efforts in this respect to create a system based on the will of the people. Because the only solution is democracy."

Ghani pledged to send six of those wounded in recent wars in Malistan and Jaghori abroad for treatment.

"I have ordered that a certain amount of money should be allocated to every displaced person of Malistan and Ghazni, there should be a transparent system so that the aid is provided," he said.

Ghani said that the explosives factories exist in a neighboring country to Afghanistan. (Tolo news)

(3) IEC Delay...

She said the process of votes inspection and recount was ensure transparency and fairness which was a time consuming process and therefore the commission was unable to announce the results in time.

She did not mention the next date for the announcements of Wolesi Jirga elections results but assure announce them soon.

According to the elections earlier schedule, the preliminary results from the Oct 20-21 Wolesi Jirga polls shall be announced on November 10, but the IEC recently said that the announcement of results from 32 provinces had been delayed to November 23 and from Kabul to December 1. (Pajhwok)

(4) Over 50 Rebels...

rebels were killed in the Grezwan district of Faryab and 14 others injured.

Separately, seven militants were killed and four others injured in the Khasrud district of southeastern Nimroz province. (Pajhwok)

(5) JICA Supports...

of Customs Services under the Government of Tajikistan, the Deputy Chairman of Drug Control Agency under the President of Tajikistan and others attended the ceremony.

According to JICA Tajikistan Office, the Government of Japan has allocated 506 million Japanese yen (appr 4.6 million US dollars) for the second phase of the project for the period of three years. The project aims to promote stability and security in the bordering areas of Tajikistan and Afghanistan, as well as to enhance livelihoods of people living in bordering areas.

Before signing the Agreement, both

the Chief Representative of JICA and UNDP Resident Representative emphasized the importance of cooperation in implementing projects aimed at supporting both effective border management and improving well-being of people through trade facilitation and job creation. To this end, JICA is also implementing Livelihoods Improvement in Tajik-Afghan Cross-border Areas project through UNDP. Through these projects the components such as construction of infrastructure, provision of training and procurement of equipment are completed.

JICA understands that ensuring security and promoting trade between Tajikistan and Afghanistan is a challenge for the Government of Tajikistan. However, it is very important for promoting security and enhancing well-being of the people that is a prerequisite for regional stability as a whole. Therefore, JICA will continue seeking for the best ways to support the Government of Tajikistan in achieving its efforts.

JICA began its technical cooperation with Tajikistan in 1993 by inviting Tajik officials to gain knowledge and experience on governance and macroeconomics development. As of January 2018, a total number of participants to JICA's Knowledge Co-Creation Programs, formerly called the Training Programs, has exceeded 2100 people. JICA Office was established in Tajikistan in 2006 and since then various Grant Financial Assistance and Technical Cooperation projects have been implemented more dynamically, aiming at improving living standard of Tajik people for the sectors such as agriculture and rural development, water supply, health, transport, energy, capacity building as well as SME promotion. JICA's cumulative investment portfolio in Tajikistan in all sectors comprises 35 projects amounting to more than 349,6 million USD (82 million USD for Technical Cooperation and 267,5 million USD for Grant Assistance), including 13 on-going projects. (Trend)

(6) Up to 290,000...

The report says that 930 families (6,510 individuals approximately) have arrived in Bamiyan City following clashes in Jaghori and Malistan districts.

Moreover, the number of IDPs from Malistan and Jaghori in Ghazni City had reached 2,660 families (15,820 people) as of 16 November 2018, the report said.

According to presidential delegation's information, about 60%-70% of the population are displaced from Jaghori and Malistan following the armed clash, the report added.

The report says that IDPs continue to arrive in cities of Ghazni, Bamiyan and Kabul.

The Afghan government officials meanwhile said they continue their efforts to help the displaced families - especially those of Ghazni province.

"We are covering the displaced people for 72 hours from our emergency budget. We provide them food and other stuff until they are settled in some areas," said Ahmad Tamim Azimi, spokesman for Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA).

Meanwhile, a number of displaced persons in Ghazni said government is not taking solid measures for security of their areas.

"There were bombardments and rockets were fired in our area. We took some of our goods from the war zone... Nothing left for us," said Gul Agha, member of a displaced family from Ghazni.

"Government should at least show us our way if it does not want to take action to help us," said Mohammad Ali, member of a displaced family from Ghazni.

"Our school was destroyed, our homes were destroyed. We cannot go to school," said Ezatullah, a resident of Ghazni.

Based on the UN report, the situation

is also worse in the eastern and western parts of the country.

"Nangarhar authorities reported of approximately 1,028 families (7,196 people) displaced due to the intra-NSAG clashes in Khogyani District. Majority of these people have been displaced within the district with the remaining moved to Surkhrod, Behsud and Jalalabad city. OCHA organized an OCT meeting in Nangarhar on 14 November and constituted joint assessment teams to conduct needs assessment and respond to the immediate needs of IDPs," says the report. (Tolo news)

(7) Elections...

is completely unnecessary, unimplementable and against Afghanistan's Constitution. In fact, it means going backwards and means creating a crisis. This is a demand that is, more than anything else, for the benefit of Afghanistan's internal and external enemies and it is not for the benefit of the Afghan people," said Danish. However, some other political figures at the same event said the National Unity Government does not have control over peace and war in the country.

Ahmad Wali Massoud, head of Masoud Foundation, said many political groups, especially the main parties fighting the Taliban, have been kept away from peace talks.

Massoud criticized government over the "overall irregularities, poor-management and challenges in the country".

"Nor the war neither the peace authority is in our hands. We do not have the authority over elections and interim government. Some people say that government has the authority over these issues, but believe me government is not making the decision. It is only the loudspeaker for people who make decisions," said Massoud.

Speakers at the event meanwhile talked on activities and achievements of Qurban Ali Erfani.

"Erfani was a political, influential, religious, committed and pragmatist figure," said Abdul Qahar Abid, head of the office of Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah.

The remarks by the second vice president over presidential elections and peace talks come as reports said US is pushing the Afghan government to postpone elections to help the peace talks.

The reports said Washington is afraid that chaos after election may damage the peace process.

The Afghan government however has repeatedly ruled out the possibility of any delay in elections. (Tolo news)

(8) Moscow Planning...

I know tens of people who were talked to about this," said writer Khalil Roman.

The Russian envoy meanwhile said that Moscow was not providing support to the Taliban.

"Russia is not providing any financial or armed support to the Taliban," said Khorev.

"The US has not taken into consideration the views of neighboring countries. Eleven countries participated in the Moscow conference, but the Afghan government did not have a specific representative and the meeting ended up under the leadership of the high peace council, but people from various ethnicities participated. Moscow meeting proved that the Afghan people have got national unity," said Russian political analyst Nikolay Filchenkov.

"Certain countries were named who have got concerns about the presence of foreigners in Afghanistan," said HPC deputy chief Attaullah Saleem.

"The most positive point which was seen at the Moscow meeting was that the Americans finally agreed to send one of their embassy diplomats to participate as observer. InshaAllah (God willing) I think you also heard from Kabulov (Zamir Kabulov Russian presidential envoy to Afghanistan) and Kabulov said that he

expects Mr. Khalilzad will visit Moscow in December," added Khorev.

According to the HPC, within the next few days, an authorized negotiating team which will include representatives of government, political parties and civil society will start its work, however the team will not report to government and instead it will pursue its agenda as an independent body. (Tolo news)

(9) Implementation of...

The World Bank he said just recently recognized Afghanistan as a top reformer under the Doing Business Report 2019 among 190 world economies, as Afghanistan's ranking jumped from 183 to 167.

"Thanks to new land and air corridors our exports have increased by 40%, showing more dynamism from our private sector in opening new markets abroad. The economy is growing - and we want the growth rate to further increase in the coming years," he noted.

"However, we still have a long way to go. There is significant room for urgent reform action, especially improving the enabling environment for our micro, small and medium businesses, supporting their ability to meet domestic demand in a more meaningful way while placing greater focus on expanding and diversifying our export baskets and markets. And there is the challenge of fighting corruption and the illicit economy," he noted.

Abdullah the ECDO participants that the private sector in Afghanistan has grown remarkably in size and scope compared with the early 2000s when the private sector structurally did not exist in a major way. It was now time to build on the achievements of the past years and put our focus on the sectors that can have the largest impact in terms of job creation, income generation and production for both domestic demand and foreign markets, he remarked.

According to CEO an essential component for reaching that goal was to turn attention to small and micro businesses, which so far have not received sufficient attention but make up a big part

- Operation in the informal economy, which creates challenges for public service delivery to them, creating fewer employment and generating tax revenue from their business activities

- The delivery of essential services to small and micro businesses are rather costly in terms of time and money

- Limited access to finance, land, electricity, skilled labor, regional markets and certification are major barriers for the growth of these businesses

- Inability to adequately meet the domestic market demands

- Unnecessary compliance burdens imposed by the regulatory environment

To overcome the challenges, he said the government had already started implementing reforms to improve the business climate, boost private sector development and grow the exports.

"We are also making sure that women entrepreneurs heads of households can benefit from the reforms and new policies," he said.

He added the first time ever, the government had created the Private Sector Development Executive Committee (PRISEC) as a high-level interagency mechanism that brings together the private sector, government and our international partners under a single umbrella.

"Examples of our recent efforts to address the challenges that our business community faces include: Approving and implementing a National Export Strategy, National Trade Policy, reforms for the DBI and the development and implementation of a National Priority Program for Private Sector Development (NPP PSD), 2018-2023," he said.

It was worth mentioning that the NPP PSD was demand-driven, time-bound and budgeted.

According to the CEO the private sector development and business-to-business partnership development had been incorporated into our regional cooperation agenda under the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA) and the Heart of Asia - Istanbul Process (HoA-IP).

Abdullah said: "through an excellent collaborative effort with the OECD and strong support from the EU, we are boosting the private sector development and entrepreneurship policies in the country, specifically to provide an enabling environment for the growth of the micro, small and medium enterprises," he said.

Three technical workshops have been held under this program and the outcome is a peer-reviewed set of recommendations identifying pressing barriers to businesses and proposing actions to address them on three specific dimensions: (1) business formalization, (2) access to finance, (3) digitalization of government services for businesses.

"On behalf of the Afghanistan government, I welcome these recommendations," he said.

To achieve the solutions proposed in this peer-reviewed paper, the government is committed to taking the following concrete steps:

- (1) Include the core recommendations into the National Priority Program for Private Sector Development

- (2) Develop a long-term development framework specifically for Medium, Small and Micro enterprises

- (3) Update our e-governance strategy. We have made good progress in the telecom and information technology sector and can now take those capabilities and connectivity to the field of service delivery.

- (4) Give more urgency to tackling those barriers that currently limit access to finance for businesses

- (5) Continue our efforts to improve our Doing Business ranking. In this year's ranking, the World Bank recognized the reform actions Afghanistan implemented and gave it the coveted spot the top reformer.

- (6) Improve public-private dialog through existing platforms such as PRISEC, Council of Ministers, Cabinet and other government mechanisms and also at a regional level through RECCA and HoA-IP.

"With a new generation of young reform-minded individuals in the government, we have a better opportunity and greater ability to be more effective in delivering on our economic reform promises, creating jobs, generating revenue and becoming more self-reliant," he noted.

"Therefore, on behalf of the government of Afghanistan - and I believe tens of thousands of members of Afghanistan business community - I invite the EU and the OECD to seriously consider and, if possible, commit to a long-term technical partnership as a part of its Eurasia Initiative and other programs that will extend all the way to 2025 or 2030. Structural reforms of the nature recommended usually succeed when a long-term approach and strong political will are given," the CEO said.

"We head soon to the Geneva Ministerial on Afghanistan and review our overall commitments and benchmarks with the donor community, I thank every participant, stakeholders from the business community, the OECD, EU delegation, USAID, IFC/World Bank Group for their contribution and support to this work," he concluded. (Pajhwok)

(10) Afghanistan Redoubling...

Afghanistan is one of the three remaining endemic countries in the world along with Pakistan and Nigeria. The endemic countries are intensifying their efforts by making sure they fully implement the strategies in their national polio emergency action plans. (Agencies)