

(1) UN Calls for ...

individuals to take steps to end violence against women, the statement said. "It is essential that Afghan women and girls can fully exercise their freedom and contribute to the building of the nation, without the threat of physical harm," said Pernille Kardel, the Secretary-General's Deputy Special Representative for Afghanistan. "The public outcry about violence against Afghan women must lead to concrete social and legal change that protects and empowers women and girls," said Kardel, who is also acting head of UNAMA.

As a state party to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, Afghanistan has adopted national legal frameworks to promote gender equality and end violence against women.

"The most effective way to stop violence against women is to prevent it from occurring in the first place through laws and new social norms," said Elzira Sagynbaeva, UN Women Afghanistan Country Representative. "We need to champion respectful relationships and promote women as nothing short of equal members of society. The only way we can achieve this is through long-term, sustainable efforts at all levels in society, working with everyone from individual women and girls, to men and boys, and to religious and community leaders."

The UN is fully committed to support the Government of Afghanistan in fulfilling its legal obligations to prevent, protect against and respond to violence against women across the country, the statement said.

The 16 Days of Activism campaign runs from the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women until World Human Rights Day on 10 December. (Tolonews)

(2) Kazakh FM ...

a trip to Kabul where he met top Afghan officials in a bid to push for a wider regional alliance aimed at hampering the expansion of Daesh.

In addition, Idrissov reiterated his country's longstanding cooperation to Afghanistan in fighting common threats and improving security. He also called on the international community to take firm steps in the fight against the growing number of Daesh fighters in Afghanistan.

"No country is able to combat this global threat individually, we have to make collective efforts. We must put aside our political differences and stand against this global threat like a unifying force," he said.

Talking on the implications of instability in Afghanistan, Idrissov said that Kazakhstan is trying to redirect the attention of international community toward the importance of security in Afghanistan.

"The message which I am conveying from my president here in Kabul is that the security and development of Afghanistan has been among the top priorities of our government. Our membership in the (UN) Security Council is not only the membership of Kazakhstan, but also the membership of the whole region," said Idrissov.

Idrissov also shared concerns with the leaders of the National Unity Government about the expansion of activities of foreign militants in Afghanistan.

"Some nationals of Kazakhstan have aligned with terrorist groups; this could persuade Kazakhstan to take an interest in this region to ensure its own security, because the security of Afghanistan has an impact on the whole world including central Asia, and south Asia," said political analyst Nasrullah Stanekzai.

Kazakhstan is set to get a two-year membership of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) from January.

"Recruitment from the young population of Afghanistan by Daesh is at full pace, considering this, government, the international community, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and the entire central Asia including Russian, China, India and Pakistan are under serious threat," said military analyst Mirza Mohammad Yarmand. Although Kazakhstan has no common borders with Afghanistan, Kazakh officials have raised concerns over the infiltration of militants from Afghanistan to Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. (Tolonews)

(3) Hizb-E-Islami ..

trying to get them released. Meanwhile, Amin said around 2,600 members of Hizb-e-Islami are in the country's prisons and were arrested under the name of Taliban.

"The people who were arrested during operations, were all counted as Taliban. This is a problem in recognizing the prisoners. We want to recognize our prisoners," he said.

However, some political analysts believe that in the past 15 years, security forces and Hizb-e-Islami members rarely fought each other and that there were not that many Hizb-e-Islami members arrested.

"If government wants to release Hizb-e-Islami prisoners, then before releasing them, their documents should be assessed to make sure they are related to the party," said Ajmal Sayas, a

political analyst.

Based on the peace deal with Hekmatyar, prisoners related to Hizb-e-Islami should be released from prison after they have been identified as members of the group.

"First it should be assessed how many prisoners of Hizb-e-Islami are in the prisons. Then it should be clarified how many of Hizb-e-Islami's former members joined the Taliban before being arrested. After considering these issues, then government should release them," said Mirdad Nejrabi, head of Parliament's Internal Security Commission. Amin meanwhile said they expect government to send an official letter to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) next week to remove the sanctions against Hekmatyar and other commanders of Hizb-e-Islami.

"According to our information, government recently started discussions with the UNSC members. We expect that next week, an official letter will be sent to the UNSC and other related countries," Amin said. (Tolonews)

(4) Reps from...

penciled in for December 3 and 4 in the Amritsar city of the Punjab state.

Major hotels in the city have been booked for prospective attendees, The Times of India reported. Paramilitary forces and intelligence agents have arrived in the city to boost security.

The initiative is essentially aimed at forging cooperation among regional countries on peace and stability Afghanistan and the region at large. Involving 14 nations, the process is supported by more than 20 countries and international organisations. (Pajhwok)

(5) Alliance Has....

that killed thousands of people in Washington and New York in 9/11. And it was impossible to accept that Afghanistan remains the safe haven for international terrorists, there was a clear UN mandate and international community supported it and NATO there has been an instrument for the international community to fight terrorism and to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a safe haven for international terrorists.

The other lesson I think we have learnt from Afghanistan is that we should have started earlier to train local forces, because in the long run it is difficult. So it is much better that local forces, forces from the country itself can take responsibility for security and stability in their own country," he said.

"Therefore we have now ended our combat mission in Afghanistan. Since 2015 we are only in a kind of train, assist and advise mission where we train and advise local Afghan forces and I am absolutely certain that in the long run that is a more sustainable and viable solution," said Stoltenberg.

Meanwhile, Afghan security officials have said that NATO's long term commitment particularly the US's commitment to Afghanistan must lead to the mobilization of well-equipped Afghan forces.

"In military spheres we do our best to create coordination. If there are any problems either from our side or NATO's side it needs to be resolved," said Mohammad Radmanish, deputy spokesman to defense ministry.

The Afghan security forces took charge of protecting Afghans following an end to NATO's combat mission in Afghanistan almost two years ago. But there is speculation that NATO has not done enough to ensure the mobilization of strong armed forces.

"Today you compare the weapons of the terrorists and the weapons of our security forces, what kind of equipment and funding is this, there is no change on the conventional and old weapons held by our security forces, and also we still do not have a strong air force," said senator Rafiullah Gul Afghan.

Currently up to 13,000 NATO and US troops are deployed in the country which are pursuing an advisory role to train, assist and advise the Afghanistan security forces.

However on different occasions, western officials have criticized the withdrawal of foreign combat troops from Afghanistan. (Tolonews)

(6) US, Japan Pledge...

Refugee and Repatriation had welcomed the American assistance and urged other countries to follow suit.

He said the Japanese government had also announced \$5 million in aid for refugee families. He said the Afghan government had set aside 100 million afghanis for rehabilitation of the returning families.

He said the Afghan families who had been living in Pakistan illegally would be provided 3350 afghanis each.

Deputy Refugee and Repatriation Minister Fazal Ahmad Azimi thanked Japan for the aid at a press conference in Kabul and said the assistance would be distributed to the returning families through the International Organization of Migration (IOM).

The aid included cooking tools and some other materials to protect the refugees from cold weather conditions, he said, hoping Japan would continue helping needy Afghans.

Azimi said around 920,000 Afghan refugees had returned from Pakistan and

Iran during the past one year. Each returnee received \$400 from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Japanese ambassador to Kabul, Mitsui Suzuki, said his country had pledged \$5 million in aid for Afghan refugees at the Brussels Conference.

He said Japan had been providing relief goods to affected people through the IOM since 2008.

IOM head Laurence Hart said the organization's partnership with Japan had a long history in helping Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(7) Watchdogs ...

president by issuing two separate decrees has appointed Najibullah Ahmadzai, Abdul Qader Quraishi, Maleh Hassan, Wasima Badghisi, Maazullah Dawlati, Rafiullah Baidar and Gul Ajan Abdul Badi Sayyad as IEC commissioners and Gulam Dastagir Hidayat, Abdul Basir Faez, Ali Reza Rohani, Humaira Haqmal and Abdul Aziz Aryae as IECC commissioners.

The Selection Committee had introduced 21 persons to the president as nominees for the IEC and 15 others for the IECC.

President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah jointly interviewed the candidates and agreed on appointment of seven IEC members and five IECC members.

Electoral reform was one of the unity government agreement's main points and the introduction of the commissioners to run the two electoral bodies is part of the agreement that followed disputed presidential election in 2014.

Also the Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan (TEFA), Khat-i-Naw organisation and National partnership organisation in a joint statement asked the newly-appointed commissioners to swiftly launch their work so they could be able to conduct parliamentary and district council polls in the beginning of new solar year. (Pajhwok)

(8) More than...

the process was different.

"In the past receiving a medal was very difficult. Only the people who had accomplished extraordinary work had the chance to receive a medal," said Khalil Roman, who received a medal for good governance during the government of former president Mohammad Najibullah. (Tolonews)

(9) Hoisting of...

measures near the Durand Line to remove the real hurdle to peace and stability in both countries.

It also opposed the Pakistan government's pressure on tribespeople across the border to visit Afghanistan after acquiring visas. The MoFA rejects the decision as unilateral and unacceptable. (Pajhwok)

(10) Do More to ...

murderer as saying that he had killed his daughter and nephew to salvage his family honour.

Maulvi Mohammad Alam Maskinyar, a senior official at the Haj Ministry, said: "A truly religious leader will never speak against women's rights. Islam has clearly outlined the rights of women and men.

Asked if women were allowed under Shariah to go out of homes and work, he replied Islam did not allow women to move out without a family member. He, however, explained a woman was not allowed to cross the limits set by the Shariah.

Women's Affairs Director Najiba Qureshi claimed much had been done in cities and rural areas to protect the rights of women. If women raised their voice against violations of their rights today, it was a proof of the success of awareness programmes, she argued.

She said 96 cases of violence against women had been recorded across the province so far during the current year, including 10 murder, six suicide, 26 elopement and 54 torture incidents.

The director also referred to growing incidents of violence, such as denying boys and girls a say on issues related to their future, a low level of awareness, widespread poverty and forced marriage. (Pajhwok)

(11) Afghan Soldiers ...

still under Taliban's captivity, he said. A security official, who wished to go unnamed, said the Taliban had transferred the pilots to Qatar.

The Taliban had demanded releasing Qari Salahuddin, their shadowy governor for Faryab, in exchange for releasing the hostages.

Qari Salahuddin was arrested during an operation led by first vice-president, Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum, in Faryab last year. (Pajhwok)

(12) Regional Rail ...

A Torkham-Kabul rail track between, which would be later extended to Tajikistan and other Central Asian countries, would usher in a new era of development for Pakistan and Afghanistan, remarked Rafiq.

The minister said the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) was playing an important role in expanding trade and economic relations among the countries concerned. (Pajhwok)

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(13) Access to Safe ...

conference that under the resolution, all ministries were responsible to continuously implement their commitments to providing clean drinking water to Afghan citizens.

Besides working on above issues, all ministries were responsible to make programs for addressing public toilets' scarcity and increase people's access to healthy water.

Shahryar said government organs that participated in the conference pledged to construct public toilets and sanitation facilities in all crowded areas, particularly in schools and hospitals.

"We are trying to increase people's access to clean water from 58 percent to 76 percent through the National Citizen Charter (NCC) program over the next four years," he said. (Pajhwok)

(14) Balkh ...

but a kilo of onion was sold for just two afghanis.

Khan said he cultivated poppy on 15 acres of land this year and would sell the harvest next year and earn some money.

Not only in Charbolak, farmers in Chamtal, Balkh, Dawlatabad, Dehdadi, Khalam and some other districts also grow poppy, he said.

Local Balkh officials confirm poppy cultivation in the province and term it illegal. Governor's spokesman, Munnir Farhad, said farmers grew poppy in some parts of the province, but the government would not remain silent. (Pajhwok)

(15) Asylum Seekers ...

being knows little about the strike, "but we are updated on developments," Fridfeldt said.

"We do not have possibility to do anything beyond that. Their guardians are the ones that, together with the reception center, handle the situation," he said, adding that the UDI "rarely experiences such massive protest actions in which many youth participate."

The UDI official said that, in case the protest is prolonged, the municipal health services will be informed and monitor the situation.

"It should not go very long before one must intervene using coercion to stop the situation," he said.

The reception is managed by the company Hero Norge AS in the name of the UDI. According to its regional manager in the northern Norway department Marita Thomassen, the company has good routines when situations like this arise.

"We try to talk to them to resolve the situation," she said. (Xinhua)

(16) Al-Qaeda Operatives..

three hundred families of militants arrived there in Khak-e-Afghan areas where the Taliban were ruling," said Atta Haq Bayan a member of the provincial council in Zabul.

This new development comes after a recent report by the UN cited there are approximately 11,000 foreign militants fighting in Afghanistan at the moment. (Tolonews)

(17) Insurgency ...

attack against police in the neighboring Laghman province Friday morning claimed the life of police personnel after a police vehicle ran over a mine planted by Taliban militants on a road in the restive Dawlat Shah district.

Taliban militants, according to local officials, also fired a mortar on a village in Ali Negar district of Laghman province Thursday night, which slammed on a wedding party killing a seven-year-old girl, and injuring seven others including three children, an act denounced by locals as a crime against innocent civilians.

Meantime, two hardliner militants were killed as their explosive device went off prematurely in Ghani Khil district of Nangarhar province on Thursday evening, local officials said.

Taliban militants who have intensified activities since mid April, according to local analysts, would do their best to gain more grounds and consolidate their positions ahead of snowfall and chilly winter in the mountainous Afghanistan. (Xinhua)

(18) Faryab Commander ..

and animals. He noted an 80 percent cut in robbery incidents.

Atta Murad, a resident of the district, said that Ghafoor had warned drug sellers of being forced to pay the rehabilitation cost of addicts if they continued their illicit business.

People now contribute beds, dishes and food to drug addicts under treatment, he said, adding the commander had fined a drug seller and the money was spent on purchasing food for addicts.

Meanwhile, Ghafoor told Pajhwok he had received complaints from people about drug users stealing everything coming their way. He collected 40 addicts and put them in a proper place for treatment in coordination with health specialists.

Ghafoor promised providing food to the drug addicts until they returned to normal life. Only bread was contributed by local residents. (Pajhwok)

(19) Roadside Bomb...

local police personnel on the spot. Zawak said investigation is underway, but gave no additional details.

Taliban militants who are active in parts of the eastern Laghman and largely relying on suicide attacks and roadside bombings are yet to claim responsibility for the attack. (Xinhua)

(20) Union Concerned ...

production factories are operating in the country and produce about 300 tons a day. However, this figure does not meet the market requirement.

Union members said Afghanistan imports more than 8,500 tons of oil annually which costs \$7 million USD.

According to them, the lack of access to raw materials, insufficient electricity, threats against investors and a lack of cooperation by government have overshadowed the production of this.

"We import raw materials from Malaysia and it takes a lot of time to bring the material to Kabul, this also delays our production levels," said Bilal Ahmad Jalalzai, chairman of a private oil production factory in Kabul.

"If the government supports domestic production, particularly the cooking oil production sector, and stops the import of oil from abroad, this would help increase domestic production," said Jabbar Safai, deputy head of the union.

Officials from the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) said that many investors are willing to invest in the sector in Afghanistan, but government has not showed any interest. (Tolonews)

(21) 12,000 Returning ...

quoted as asking the provincial authorities to take care of the returning families as a priority.

The governor said a commission had been mandated to distribute the plots under the relevant law and regulations to families who recently returned to the province.

He said health, drinking water and education facilities would be seriously considered in the second phase by the government and donor countries. (Pajhwok)

(22) EU Gets...

from Jan. 1 – a period that could coincide with the start of U.K. exit negotiations.

British Prime Minister Theresa May says she will trigger Article 50 of the EU's key treaty, beginning two years of exit talks, by March 31. She and her ministers have refused to set out in advance the type of deal Britain will seek, saying that would undermine their bargaining position.

In the meantime, EU leaders have grown increasingly firm in their insistence that Britain won't get an easy ride, and frustrated with Britain's vagueness about its Brexit plans. (AP)

(23) Syria Stresses...

security source said.

It urged the UN special envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, to say "a word of truth" to "those conspirators."

"They have repeatedly tried and failed; they have achieved nothing but more killing and destruction," the statement said.

The statement came as clashes were raging in Aleppo city, with the Syrian army making notable gains over the past 24 hours.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitor group said the Syrian forces had captured over 60 percent of Masaken Hanano, the largest rebel-held district in the rebel-held part in eastern Aleppo.

A military source, meanwhile, told Xinhua that military reinforcements also reached Aleppo on Friday. (Xinhua)

(24) EU Should ...

Members of the European Parliament voted 479 to 37 in favor of the non-binding motion urging the European Commission and national governments to implement what lawmakers acknowledge would be a largely symbolic freeze in negotiations that have been going on for 11 years but have long been stalled.

In response, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan warned on Friday that Turkey could open its gates for migrants to Europe if pushed into a corner by the EU. (Reuters)

(25) Turkey Threatens...

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 coup attempt.

Turkey has helped reduce significantly the number of migrants crossing into Europe via the Aegean Sea under a deal reached with the EU in March. (Xinhua)

(26) 2016 Sees ...

from the 3,574 men, women and children who were reported drowned over the same period in 2015.

By far the deadliest this year, the central Mediterranean passage linking North Africa with Italy has claimed the lives of 4,172 people.

A further 429 individuals have perished on the eastern Mediterranean route, while 62 have died on western Mediterranean passages. (Xinhua)

(27) Former PM...

but it could. I'm just saying: until you see what it means, how do you know?" said Blair, who added that he was not planning to return to British politics because of hostility toward him.

Blair is unpopular in Britain for his decision to back then-U.S. President George W. Bush's 2003 invasion of Iraq and the justification he used for going into a war that cost the deaths of 150,000 Iraqi civilians and 179 British soldiers. (Reuters)

(28) Syrian Army...

watchdog said the Syrian forces captured over 60 percent of the neighborhood, which was also the first area stormed by rebels in eastern Aleppo in mid-2012.

Observers say capturing the Hanano area will expose the Sakhour neighborhood to the Syrian army, enabling it to isolate the northern part of the rebel-held areas in eastern Aleppo from the southern one.

The Observatory, which says it relies on a network of activists on ground, said the Syrian forces were achieving rapid progress in eastern Aleppo, where over 250,000 civilians are trapped. (Xinhua)

(29) 1,638 Women...

keeps track of homicides against women based on reports by media and NGOs, to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, which falls on Friday.

Some 240 women have been murdered across Turkey over the past year alone, while 201 lost their lives even though they had applied for protection by the authorities.

According to the statistics, about 341 women were murdered during divorce period by their husbands, and around 305 were killed after experiencing a sexual harassment.

Almost 60 percent of the murderers have been caught by the police, while 17 percent of them committed suicide, the statistics showed. (Xinhua)

(30) IS Truck ...

exploded among them. It was a suicide attack," he told AFP. "There are at least 70 dead, fewer than 10 are Iraqis, the rest are Iranians."

Videos circulating on social media showed debris scattered over a large area along the main highway linking Baghdad to the main southern port city of Basra.

"There are completely charred corpses at the scene," said Radhi, who added that at least 20 wounded were transferred to nearby hospitals. (AFP)

(31) China on...

2012, the central authority has championed improving combat capabilities as the ultimate goal of building a strong army. Hence, a new round of reforms focusing on removing systematic barriers that hinder military development have been rolled out.

In December 2015, military flags were conferred on the general command for the PLA Army, the PLA Rocket Force and the PLA Strategic Support Force; Days later, China reshuffled its military headquarters under the Central Military Commission, the country's top military organ; In February, the military was regrouped into five PLA theater commands. (Xinhua)

(32) Passenger Trains...

there. Khabbaz said the stationary train had been standing on a main line outside the station. A local official told state TV that the remote location of the crash had slowed rescue efforts. "So far only one helicopter has reached the scene because of access difficulties," said local Red Crescent chief Hasan Shokrollahi. (Reuters)

(33) Nawaz Visits

keen to improve connectivity with the Central Asian States by establishing transport and communication links, which will be conducive to tapping the potential of trade, economic interaction, people-to-people contacts and tourism, a statement by the Foreign Affairs Ministry said on Thursday. (Monitoring Desk)

(34) Turkmenistan to ...

partnerships Mr. Wu discussed the upcoming two-day Conference, which will feature plenary sessions, thematic discussions, a business forum and side events. He also highlighted that "all modes of transport – road, rail, aviation, ferry and maritime – will be addressed, in both developed and developing countries, in landlocked and transit countries. (AKIpress)

(35) Early Voting...

passed away after suffering a stroke at the age of 79 on Sept. 2. Candidates from four political parties of Uzbekistan participate in presidential election - Uzbekistan Liberal Democratic Party (UzLiDeP), People's Democratic Party (PDDPU), Milly Tiklanish (National Revival) Party, and Adolat (Justice) Social Democratic Party. (Trend)