

(1) Brussels ...

said President Ghani and CEO Abdullah would participate in a high level event, entitled 'Empowered women, prosperous Afghanistan' on Tuesday.

The event will provide a platform for the Afghan government to outline policy progress and plans on the protection and empowerment of women. It will include two panels, one focusing on the political and human rights of Afghan women and the other on their socio-economic situation. The event is open to accredited media and will be livestreamed.

A second high level event the same day on regional integration and prosperity will take place. The event is expected to set the next steps for regional economic cooperation projects that can attract the resources of Afghanistan, regional partners and the wider international community.

It will gather representatives from regional and international partner countries, as well as from international organisations.

Faisal said Afghanistan and the EU would sign an agreement under which the EU would spend its aid money through the Afghan government budget.

There were reports recently that the Afghan government and the EU had signed an agreement on deportation of illegal Afghan migrants in the EU.

The reports claimed the EU had linked its aid to Afghanistan with signing of the deportation agreement.

But Faisal said the migrants issue was not on the agenda of the Brussels conference and no discussion in this regard would take place.

The conference is expected to focus on three levels:

Joint international and Afghan efforts to increase the effectiveness of sustained international support and funding, on the basis of a new Afghan national development framework

Afghan reform efforts, including on economic reform, rule of law, improved public finance management and anti-corruption so as to ensure the provision of the most important services and public goods

regional efforts to support a political process towards peace and cross-border economic cooperation. (Pajhwok)

(2) 'We Never...

restrictions and sanctions on Hezb-e-Islami and meetings have been organized with the key embassies in Kabul in this regard.

Hekmatyar himself was designated by the U.S. as a "global terrorist" in 2003. He was blacklisted at Washington's request by the U.N. the same year, and has similar status with the British government. (KP)

(3) UN Envoy...

independent and self-reliant but, for still some time to come, this support of the international community will be critical in ensuring that the path that they have started to take for bringing back normalcy and putting them on the right growth path will require the continuation of the commitment from the international community, not just in terms of the development assistance but at the political level," Yamamoto said.

He also calls on the leaders of Afghanistan to think about the future of the country.

"The important thing is for the leaders to try to really think about the country and its future, and how to better serve the people. Of course, since it is a political system, each of the political leaders has their own constituency, where they have to be able to deliver upon the expectations of their supporters - but Afghanistan is facing severe challenges; not only security, but also in terms of the economic situation, the human rights situation and corruption," he said. "These are all things which will affect future stability, and also the prospects for the growth of the country. And if they really thought about how they should go about doing this, they have to think of how to exercise their statesmanship, and also try to look at the larger objectives together. It is a difficult thing to do, but they will have to try to understand the responsibility which they are charged with."

He said: "I believe that the development over the past 50 years, from when the international community first started working in Afghanistan, there has been much progress in many areas, of the situation, to try to provide the outlook for the country, as to where we should be going - I think that is something that we can provide."

He also said that President Ashraf Ghani and CEO Abdullah have a rather strong vision as to how the country should cope with corruption, and recently in particular, the government, under the strong leadership of Ghani, has been able to come out with strong reforms in terms of creating what they call an Anti-Corruption Justice Centre.

Yamamoto said this is a new system which will be insulated, to the greatest extent possible, from outside influence.

He also expressed his concerns over civilian casualties in the country and said that "is a major issue in Afghanistan."

"UNAMA produces regular reports on the situation and, in its report covering between January and June this year, it documented 1,601 civilian deaths and 3,565 injured civilians - an increase of four per cent in the total number of casualties compared to the first six months of 2015 and the highest half-year total since 2009."

"Every single casualty documented in this report - people killed while praying, working, studying, fetching water, recovering in hospitals - every civilian casualty represents a failure of commitment and should be a call to action for parties to the conflict to take meaningful, concrete steps to reduce civilians' suffering and increase protection," he said.

He also said that security is a fundamental challenge in Afghanistan.

"I would say that the most fundamental challenge is security. Security actually affects all activities of life in Afghanistan. After the draw-down of the international forces in 2014, the Taliban had tested the ability of Afghan national forces to defend the country. This had created a rather difficult situation in 2015, when the Taliban insurgency was able to make headway in terms of expanding their areas of control, and also the Afghan national security and defence forces seemed to be on the defensive," he said.

This year, a similar kind of intensified attack continued but, for the time being, the Afghan national forces are able to hold the ground, having learned lessons from last year. But still, they are posing a rather huge challenge to security in terms of, for instance, surrounding the provincial capitals in the south, he added. (Tolnews)

(4) Senators Push...

lack of food and equipment for soldiers there," said first deputy of senate speaker Farhad Sakhi.

"Millions of Afghans have been embezzled, but no outcomes achieved," said senator Afzal Shamil.

The Taliban increased attacks against some strategic towns in Uruzgan, Baghlan, Faryab and Helmand provinces this week.

This comes as the country's leaders report back to the international community at the Brussels Summit.

"ISI (Pakistan's intelligence service) has ordered the Taliban to flock to Helmand and fight," said senator Sher Mohammad Akhundzada.

"Last time the Taliban attacked provincial headquarters and similar attacks were launched on police compounds," said senator Mohammad Hanif Hanifi.

"The president himself is also one of the reasons of the insecurity and bloodshed in the country," another senator Hashim Alokozai said.

In recent weeks, Taliban insurgents have been trying to take the war into major towns in several provinces across the country in their bid to take control of provincial capitals.

The statements come a day after insurgents over ran the main square in Kunduz city for a second time in a year which critics regard a major setback to the Afghan government. (Tolnews)

(5) In Helmand, ...

respect every public representative

and tribal elder. However, I don't give anyone the right to misuse their positions."

Meanwhile, provincial council head Karim Atal assailed the provincial authorities for recommending their blue-eyed boysto the Education Ministry for appointments. He and the governor had launched joint efforts to address the matter.

"Wolesi Jirga members, in an effort to advance their petty personal interest, have been mounting pressure the education minister to appoint ineligible individuals," the public representatives said.

An official at the Helmand education department, wishing anonymity, said a dispute was ongoing among department officials over seats in the province. "A number of people bring letters against each other from higher-ups."

The dispute over appointments letters from the ministry has been ongoing for the past few months among administrative and teaching staff of the department and among managers at the district level.

Nad Ali district social council head, Mohammad Nabi, confirmed the dispute and called it a hurdle to the education process. "Department officials cannot warn a teacher or principal because they have disagreements among themselves and secondly teachers and principals have connections with higher-ups in Kabul."

There were also security concerns hampering teachers' presence, Nabi explained. As a consequence, he continued, students were deprived of a sound education.

Wasil, an 11th grade Chah-i-Injir High School in Nad Ali district, complained about problems during the current academic year. He blasted the education department for failing to pay due attention to resolving the problems being faced by students.

Acting Education Director Sardar Mohammad Samim confirmed certain issues. However, he had no knowledge about the people who had obtained appointment letters for the same positions.

He said the issue had been shared with the governor and other officials concerned. A number of letters had also been sent back to the ministry, the acting director revealed.

However, MoE spokesman Kabir Haqmal said administrative reforms were the main consideration in each appointment. "When needed, the minister has the power to appoint people as acting heads. But rules and regulations are respected in all cases."

Helmand has 387 schools, but 150 of them remain closed for security reasons. And 50 others are without buildings. At least 200,000 students, including 40,000 girls, attend schools in the province. (Pajhwok)

(6) Thousands ...

in Ghazni. "We have raised our voice several times, but the officials concerned have not taken any action," he said, adding most of government departments were housed in rented buildings, something that created problems for people. Nawroz said all government departments should be shifted out of the city to address traffic and security problems. The government should take decisive action for reclaiming usurped lands, he suggested.

Mohammad Ibrahim Amiri, a resident of Ghazni City, said besides private and government lands, some historical sites had also been seized. Residential buildings had been constructed at the ancient sites, he claimed.

"The lands are usurped and markets and houses built on them, but the government does not interfere because officials themselves are involved in such cases," he said. Governor Abdul Karim Matin confirmed land-grab, saying the issue had been shared with the president and a delegation tasked with investigating land-grab incidents would soon arrive in Ghazni from Kabul. He said efforts for retaking government lands in some areas were underway. According to Afghanistan Land Authority, senior officials, powerful individuals and other people have usurped around a million acres of land across the country. (Pajhwok)

(7) EU Pledges...

committed to increasing the ef-

fectiveness of their aid, as a sign of their confidence in the Afghan side to deliver on its reform programme. "As the State-building contract is indeed a contract, both sides agree to play their part. We will provide the funding on the basis of satisfactory progress in key reform areas."

Hakimi, said: "The State Building Contract is an effective mechanism that aligns EU's development assistance with the Afghanistan's reform agenda. As an on-budget funding, it gives the Government of Afghanistan the required fiscal space to implement its development priorities that will improve the lives of the Afghan people."

The first State-building contract for Afghanistan would provide up to €200 million in direct budget support over a two-year period from 2017 onwards.

It would assist the government of Afghanistan in defining its own strategic development priorities and policies, as outlined in the new Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework. (Pajhwok)

(8) Dostum Takes ...

presence. The cleared areas include the first police district, second and third police districts of the city as heavy casualties have been incurred to the Taliban insurgents, a source in the ministry said.

The source further added that the operations are currently being implemented in Zakhil, Ali Khel, Bagh Sherkat, Charkhab, and Achin districts. (KP)

(9) 600 Attempted ...

said suicide cases had emerged as a challenging issue in recent years in Herat.

"Root causes of suicide attempts among youngsters are poverty and negative cultural traits. Unfortunately, some youth copy their lifestyles from movies and TV drama serials which are against our culture," he noted.

Ministry of Public Health officials acknowledge suicide attempt cases are on the rise in the country, where more than a thousand such cases were registered in 2012. The number jumped to around 10,000 in 2016. (Pajhwok)

(10) Germany to....

"Germany in the past 15 years gave more attention to supporting infrastructural projects in Afghanistan and we thank Germany as a strong donor to our country," he said.

Provincial council head, Ahmad Bashir Samim, said the local government should closely oversee implementation of the projects to prevent poor quality constructions.

Dr. Frank Pool, a commissioner of German Economic Cooperation and Development, said the 10 school buildings would be constructed in eight Badakhshan districts and the 1.8 kilometers retaining wall would control seasonal floods in the Kukcha River.

He said the project implementation would cost 4.3 million Euros to be paid by Germany.

"We assure Afghan people that Germany will continue to cooperate with Afghanistan in its development and reconstructions," he said. (Pajhwok)

(11) Taliban Press ...

were involved in the attack. Mohammad Yusuf Ayubi, the head of the Kunduz provincial council, said the city has become a battlefield, with fighting going on in many areas. "We can't go to our (council) office because the area is under the control of the Taliban," he said, adding that council members instead were gathering at a location about 1.5 kilometers (a mile) from the city. The militants have planted mines around the city, making movement extremely difficult, he said. "Local people are trapped in their homes."

Gen. Dawlat Waziri, spokesman for the Defense Ministry, said five Afghan security personnel had been killed in the fighting and 13 others wounded so far. "We are very careful in using airstrikes and artillery in this fight, to avoid civilian casualties," Waziri said. Kunduz is the capital of a province with the same name, a breadbasket region that borders Tajikistan to the north and sits on a major cross-road in the country.

Its fall last year sent shockwaves across the country and among Afghanistan's backers in the international community as it marked the Taliban's first capture of an urban center since the group was driven from power in 2001. Since then, Afghan officials and U.S. military leaders have said it will never fall again.

The city came under threat again in April, when U.S.-backed Afghan forces pushed the Taliban back into surrounding districts.

Sediqqi said Monday's attack could be a Taliban show of force to coincide with a Brussels aid conference where Afghanistan's international partners are expected to pledge billions of dollars in aid through to 2020.

U.S. military spokesman in Afghanistan, Brig. Gen. Charles Cleveland said the Afghan military had moved reinforcements into Kunduz overnight but insisted that the fighting was sporadic and that the government still controls Kunduz.

There had been no U.S. airstrikes overnight but "there was one US air-to ground engagement by helicopter on the outskirts of Kunduz city to defend friendly forces," Cleveland said. "U.S. forces ... will provide support as needed." (AP)

(12) Tourism Picking

places in Afghanistan. The government will provide them all facilities.

According Shams, a tourism development board will be established and in the near future, a semi-government institute of tourism set up in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. (Pajhwok)

(13) Critics Slam....

has failed to deliver on the promises it had made to the people of Kunduz; large scale operations were not launched, reconstruction projects stopped, promises on investment and development projects also were not implemented," said former acting governor of Kunduz Hamdullah Danishi.

Afghan army officials had promised to eliminate the Taliban outposts in Kunduz.

"Those who are acting as traitors must be identified, why did Murad Ali Murad not fight yesterday, why did the police chief not fight," said MP Fatima Aziz.

On the ground, the Taliban once again started a resurgence in the province. "They deceived the people and did not fulfill their commitments, how long must the people of Kunduz be deceived, Taliban controls each part of Kunduz and the war continues," said MP Shukria Paikan.

"Those who have committed negligence and failed to detect the plans of the enemy must be held accountable by the government of Afghanistan," said deputy minister of interior for security Ayoub Salangi.

Concerns exist that the presence of the Taliban in Kunduz impacts Baghlan, Takhar, Badakhshan and Samangan provinces. (Tolnews)

(14) Sherpao Urges...

development of Pakhtuns at every forum. He also highlighted the need for uniting the Pakhtuns to ensure progress in the region. (Pajhwok)

(15) Student Stabbed...

father, Nazir, also confirmed Ghulam Kal killed his son. He said his son had no dispute with anyone and he was just a student. (Pajhwok)

(16) Hundreds Rally..

They carried photos of the victims and chanted slogans like "death to spy agents," "death to negligent officials," "we want Achin massacre perpetrators punished," "President please protect Shinwari." Ubaidullah Shinwari, a provincial council member and participant of the protest, said all those killed in the Achin airstrike were civilians. He said the government must investigate the incident. "The UN has already investigated the incident and found the people killed were civilians, but the government did nothing so far and remains silent," he said. "It is the demand of all people from Shinwari that the president must investigate the attack, we set the government a 20-day deadline for investigation otherwise we would block Torkham-Jalalabad highway," he added.

Nayk Amal Shinwari, another pro-

testor, told Pajhwok Afghan News that the Nangarhar government did not work for betterment of the Shinwari region.

He asked the central government to appoint an independent team for investigation into the Achin airstrike.

The protestors in their resolution letter demanded compensation for the victims' families and an end to insecurity in the Shinwari zone, assistance to families displaced in the area and implementation of development projects.

They warned of closing the Torkham-Jalalabad highway and of boycotting the government if it did not respond to their demands.

On the other hand, Nangarhar governor's spokesman Attullah Khogyani said the provincial government had investigated the Achin incident but an independent delegation from capital Kabul should also investigate it.

Local residents' investigation had found that all those killed in the airstrike were civilians but government officials' investigation showed some Islamic State (IS) fighters were also among the dead, he said.

However, he said an independent delegation would thoroughly investigate about the incident. (Pajhwok)

(17) IS Militants....

Offensive in parts of Achin Monday night, the statement noted.

The militant group has yet to make comments. (Xinhua)

(18) US Suspends....

humanitarian aid from reaching civilians in need.

In response to Washington's decision, the Russian Foreign Ministry said Monday that the U.S. is trying to shift the blame on Russia. (Xinhua)

(19) UN General ...

introduced during the previous session of the General Assembly in a bid to make the selection process transparent.

Georgieva is expected to be tested for the first time in the next straw poll, a secret and informal vote, by the Security Council, the sixth one scheduled for Wednesday.

The UN Charter says only the 15-member council shall recommend its choice of candidate to the General Assembly for secretary-general. It is a five-year position normally limited to two terms. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is retiring Dec. 31 after two terms. (Xinhua)

(20) Russian Finance ...

2015. Russian President Vladimir Putin has ordered the Finance Ministry to control the budget deficit within 3 percent of the GDP in 2016. (Xinhua)

(21) EU Lawmakers ...

To date, 62 parties, accounting for 51.89 percent of global emissions.

That means the first condition is already met. Tuesday's vote allows the second to be met too as the EU accounts for some 12 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, thus triggering the entry into force.

With the approval by the European Parliament, the Council can formally adopt the decision via a written procedure. That means the EU, together with the seven member states that have completed the ratification process, can hand over the ratification to the United Nations headquarters by Friday. (Xinhua)

(22) Indonesia....

was identified as the mastermind of terror attack in Jakarta in January and the failed plot to launch rocket bombs to Singapore from nearby Indonesia's Batam island in August this year.

The 31-year-old Arif Hidayatullah was arrested by Indonesian police anti-terror squad of Densus 88 in Jakarta's outskirts city of Bekasi in last December. (Xinhua)

(23) Foreign Direct....

the same period of last year. FDI from Chinese investors amounted to 1.66 billion dollars, with U.S. investors taking up 20.4 percent of the total with a 3.07 billion-dollar spending. FDI into South Korean manufacturers jumped 46.2 percent over the year to 4.32 billion dollars in the January-September period, with the figure for services companies growing 14.9 percent to 10.23 billion dollars. (Xinhua)