

(1) Afghan Influx ...

contributing to making Afghanistan safer," he added. Germany, a longtime contributor to international forces in Afghanistan, currently has 944 soldiers in the NATO-led Resolute Support training mission there. "Large amounts of development aid have gone to Afghanistan - so we can expect that Afghans stay in their country," de Maiziere said. "So I am saying very clearly today that people who come to us as refugees from Afghanistan cannot all expect to be able to stay in Germany." De Maiziere said Germany isn't going to declare Afghanistan a "safe country of origin," as it has with several Balkan countries, and stressed that asylum applications will be examined carefully on a case-by-case basis. However, he said Germany will work with the Afghan government to ensure that people are returned and that the European Union will negotiate a deal with Kabul so that it takes rejected applicants back. (AP)

(2) New Kabul ...

Bank has lost \$ millions over the past four years, according to Aqa, because of strict rules on its lending and investment. "According to the decision of the cabinet the bidding for the New Kabul Bank will continue for two months and the conditions are that the buyer should have \$ 20 million in his bank account and an official licensed even the buyer can be a foreign citizen," Muhammad Aqa Kohistani, treasury chief of finance ministry said. Kabul Bank was badly shaken and almost collapsed in one of "the worst banking scandals in history," in the past.

Previously, President Ashraf Ghani opened efforts to bring former Kabul Bank officials involved in the Kabul Bank Crisis to justice, extend and enforce prison sentences for those previously convicted, and seek to recover hundreds of millions of U.S. and Afghan taxpayers' dollars in funds stolen or lost by embezzlement, corruption, and fraud by the bank's insiders. Ghani vowed to seek to continue the investigation of the Kabul Bank crisis and fight corruption in Afghanistan.

In October 2014, the Ghani Administration in Kabul reportedly officially re-opened the investigation. (ATN)

(3) Concerns Raise...

that the Taliban is recruiting teenagers from madrassas. "They use children and students from madrassas but the security forces are over the legal age and they know who the enemies of Afghanistan are," said Gen. Murad Ali Murad, the deputy chief of staff of the Afghan National Army.

Another concern for the security forces is that the Taliban insurgents are using women and children as human shields in their war against Afghan troops.

"They [the Taliban] have complicated the war. They are using women and children as human shields," said Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum, the first Vice President. Meanwhile, MPs have termed recruiting children and teenagers as a violation of human rights and even a war crime.

"Taliban militants have been weakened; they have turned towards children and locals. They push people to join the war by giving them money and using their force," said Farhad Seddiqi, an MP.

"Sharia Law does not allow such an act - to recruit children in war. The Taliban will not hesitate to do any bad act," said Qazi Nazir Ahmad Hanafi, an MP. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) meanwhile says engaging children and teenagers in war is one of their main concerns.

"Engaging children in war is a matter of concern for us. We urge the warring sides to avoid involving children in their war," said Sayed Maruf Hamdard, UNICEF media officer.

The Afghan government has several times condemned the use of children in suicide attacks or in other acts of war. (Tolnews)

(4) Pak Civil, ..

upcoming trip to the US, came up for discussion. The civil and military leadership agreed that if the Afghan government was serious in pursuing talks with the Af-

ghan Taliban, it should publicly say that.

Attendees at the meeting included army chief Gen Raheel Sharif, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, Advisor to the PM on National Security and Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Tariq Fatemi, DGMO Maj Gen Sahir Shamshad Mirza and DG ISPR Lt Gen Asim Saleem Bajwa. Sources said most participants noted with disappointment that no major breakthrough could be achieved during Premier Nawaz's Washington visit. Since the US administration has two major concerns in the region - Afghan peace process and US relations with India - it did not listen to Pakistan's reservations vis-à-vis India nor did it offer to mediate to defuse tensions between Pakistan and India.

Kabul issues tepid response to Nawaz's latest offer. Sources said the Pakistani delegation failed to impress the US administration with the three dossiers containing what they called evidence of India's role in stoking terrorism in Pakistan. President Barack Obama diplomatically handled the matter saying that he would 'privately' ask Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to re-engage with Pakistan. On the situation in Afghanistan, US officials asked Pakistan to use its influence on the Afghan Taliban to bring them back to the negotiating table with officials of President Ashraf Ghani's administration, according to sources. The Americans are worried over the resurgence in Taliban violence in Afghanistan and the stalemate in peace process.

Sources said the Pakistani delegation has told the US administration that the Taliban have strengthened their position against government forces in Afghanistan by capturing several areas and posing a threat to urban centres. Since the Taliban are in a bargaining position now, they would try to dictate their terms in negotiations. (Agencies)

(5) Kerry to Discuss...

protection strengthening of the Tajik-Afghan border, as well as the prospects of development of various infrastructure project aimed at development of economic cooperation of the Central Asian countries.

John Kerry will left for Austria on October 28, according to the State Department spokesman, John Kirby.

The Secretary of State will hold bilateral and multilateral meetings with the foreign counterparts to discuss the ongoing crisis in Syria. The meetings are scheduled for October 29 in Vienna. After, John Kerry will arrive in Bishkek, Samarkand, Astana, Dushanbe, Ashgabat, where he will conduct bilateral talks with government leaders of these countries.

This is the first visit of the Secretary to Central Asia and his first ever visit to all five Central Asian countries within one trip, said Kirby. John Kerry will take part in the opening ceremony of the new campus of the American University of Central Asia (AUCA) and new building of the U.S. Embassy in Bishkek.

In Samarkand, the Secretary will participate in a joint meeting with the foreign ministers of all five countries. This meeting, a new format for dialogue between the United States and the Central Asian republics known as the "C5+1," will allow the Secretary and ministers to discuss regional and global opportunities and challenges.

In Astana, the Secretary will participate in the fourth meeting of the U.S.-Kazakhstan Strategic Partnership Dialogue and deliver remarks on Central Asia's role in addressing global issues at Nazarbayev University.

While in Ashgabat and Dushanbe, the Secretary will discuss a range of bilateral and regional issues of mutual interest with senior government officials. (AKIpress)

(6) Afghan, Pakistan...

authority said the nation's dead now were at 267, with 220 people killed in the northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and another 47 elsewhere in the country.

Afghanistan has reported 115 dead and 556 wounded, while three people died on the Indian

side of the disputed region of Kashmir, reports ABC News.

The head of the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority, Wais Ahmad Barmak told parliament that 7,630 homes had been destroyed and around 1,000 animals killed. In battered northwestern Pakistan, more than 10,000 homes were damaged, as well as 147 schools, officials said.

The quake, which struck Monday, was centered in Afghanistan's sparsely populated Badakhshan province bordering Pakistan, Tajikistan and China.

The poverty-stricken region is vast, with mountains and valleys that make it difficult to reach affected areas. Taliban are active in some parts, further complicating access, Barmak said.

Survey teams have been sent to assess casualties and damage in areas that can be reached only on foot or donkey. Once the information they bring back has been assessed, food and non-food supplies would be delivered, Barmak said.

Badakhshan is often hit by earthquakes and other disasters, including floods and landslides. Other regions, too, such as Nuristan and Kunar provinces in the east were presenting access challenges, he told parliament. "We have got some problems like security challenges and road blocks, and unfortunately all roads from Nuristan's capital to its districts are still blocked and some roads are blocked in Kunar too," preventing delivery of help. Meanwhile, funerals of the victims continued Wednesday and in Pakistan's worst-hit town of Shangla, residents demanded the government's help to rebuild their homes.

According to Pakistan's disaster management authority, the quake damaged 10,586 houses in the country's northwest. Shangla is the worst affected town, with 49 people killed and 228 injured. Another 32 people died in Chitral, the Pakistani town closest to the epicenter of the quake.

Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority said it had distributed 15,519 tents, 25,700 blankets and tons of food. Further supplies would be delivered to remote areas once roads had been cleared and reopened. In Shangla, 70-year-old Zurqun Nain said his extended family was living at a relative's home after the quake damaged his house. "I had my own home before the earthquake. Now I am homeless at this old age," he said.

Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif visited the northwestern city of Peshawar on Wednesday to attend a briefing on quake damages. In televised comments, he pledged his government would provide "maximum compensation" to the victims. "We are going to start the provision of compensation to those whose homes were damaged," he said, adding that 200,000 rupees (about \$2,000) would be given to each person to rebuild their homes. (AKIpress)

(7) HPC Asks ...

promised to bring significant changes to the council leadership no changes have been made. He called on the international community and the Afghan government to resume peace talks with the Taliban.

"Now the conditions have been created for peace and the government and the neighbors and international community must act sincerely and understand that peace in Afghanistan means peace in other countries as well," said Abdul Hakim Mujahid, HPC acting head.

Meanwhile a number of women raised their concerns over losing the gains made in the past few years arguing the NUG and the international community must also play a significant role in the peace talk's process.

"There are no women in the High Peace Council and decisions are made by men. Women just have a symbolic role," said Malalai Shinwari a presidential adviser.

In addition, a number of parliamentarians and civil society members criticized government over the lack of strategy for peace talks and said that there is a wide gap between the nation and the government.

"People of Afghanistan ... are ready for peace but the armed oppositions must also show that they are from this land and they are honest to the country," said

Farkhunda Zahra Nadiri MP.

"Suppose we made peace with Taliban under Mullah Akhtar Mansour leadership then what should we do with Lashkar-e-Taiba, al-Qaeda, Jundullah insurgent groups and many other terrorist groups," said civil society member Ahmad Sayede.

The first round of peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban was held on July 17 in Islamabad in Pakistan but after the announcement of the death of Mullah Omar in Pakistan the second round of talks was canceled, resulting in a deadlock. (Tolnews)

(8) Afghan Woman ...

organised by the OIC International Business Centre, in cooperation with the OIC, the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade and supported by the Malaysian government.

The Malaysian politician and Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom said "Because of this, it is our responsibility to use our great minds and capabilities for the betterment of our communities and the world.

Before officiating the sixth Muslim World Biz 2015 Award, Baharom said "It is important that the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) nations support each other as we each strive to reach our goals and improve our countries."

"Rise of the Industrial Golden Era", Baharom said, adding that the leaders of the OIC must rise to the occasion in order for regional and global trade to realise their full potential. (KP)

(9) MPs Criticize...

security problems in Kunar, Nuristan and Badakhshan provinces but we have searched alternatives and we have agreed with a number of organizations to help the affected people there," Barmak added.

"We are distributing relief packages to the people while in some areas we distribute food parcels for the affected residents. We are using every way to help them," Barmak said.

Some lawmakers also raised the issue of Kunduz displaced families and blamed the government for not helping them.

"Kunduz residents have been highly affected. Why is the government not paying attention to them?" asked Kamal Safi, an MP from Kunduz.

The session was interrupted after the MPs raised different issues and arguments broke out. (Tolnews)

(10) India to Send ...

is threat perception (to Indian facilities in Kabul) and that is why we are there. We are sending in 35 more commandos for security duties there," Chaudhary said on the eve of the 54th Raising Day of the force.

The DG said a joint review in this regard was undertaken by the Intelligence Bureau, Ministry of External Affairs and the Home Ministry after it which it was decided to increase the strength of the force.

The force has about 300 commandos stationed at these five locations as of now keeping in mind the threat emanating from terror groups like al Qaeda to Indian assets and its diplomatic staff there.

While the DG refused to go into the specifics of threat faced by these Indian facilities in Afghanistan, he said "various reasons" were taken into account for increasing the strength of the ITBP squad at these locations.

"It was not that there was any lack of manpower but it was felt necessary to augment the strength and hence these men are being sent," he said.

These men are given special training in VIP protection, combat tactics and weapon firing before they are sent for this special task in Afghanistan.

The ITBP is credited with having an excellent crop of mountain-trained agile commandos among all the central paramilitary forces.

Two major attacks in the past have been the terror strike at the Indian Embassy in capital Kabul in 2008 in which killed over 50 people and diplomatic staff, in 2014 the Consulate in Herat was attacked. (Agencies)

(11) US Weighs ...

could view some of the options as more viable than others as he

approaches the final stretch of his presidency.

Still, Obama's administration is under pressure to ramp up America's effort, particularly after the fall of the Iraqi city of Ramadi to Islamic State in May and the failure of a U.S. military program to train and arm thousands of Syrian rebels.

Two U.S. officials, who spoke to Reuters on condition of anonymity to discuss ongoing deliberations, said any deployments would be narrowly tailored, seeking to advance specific, limited military objectives in both Iraq and Syria.

That option includes temporarily deploying some U.S. special operations forces inside of Syria to advise moderate Syrian opposition fighters for the first time and, potentially, to help call in U.S. air strikes, one official said. (Reuters)

(12) Ghani Welcomes ...

Ghani said on Tuesday night that the government welcomes the decision by Britain to continue its cooperation with the government and people of Afghanistan in areas of development, military and security.

"Britain's assistance for Afghanistan will continue in two areas - military assistance that includes cooperation in the war on terrorism and training of National Security and Defense Forces (ANSDF) as well as assistance in development and economic areas," he said.

"The cooperation is grounded in shared threats and interests between the two governments and peoples. The government of Afghanistan believes that inasmuch as terrorism threatens the region and the world, joint action against this phenomenon can ensure peace in the region."

He went on to say: "One of the prerequisites to completely eliminate insecurity and other risks that threaten our country and international partners is the prosperity and economic development of Afghanistan; to that end, the government of Afghanistan thanks its international partners like Britain for their assistance." "Sustaining international cooperation to strengthen ANSDF augments the commitment and effectiveness of these forces to fulfill their grand mission, and further boost their morale," he added.

According to a statement issued by the UK's defense ministry: "The decision follows a planned review of the UK's commitment in light of the performance of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANSDF) over the year and the overall security situation."

"Non-combat roles being carried out by UK Armed Forces personnel include mentoring instructors in the Afghan National Army Officer Academy (ANAOA), advising in the Afghan Security Ministries and providing vital support to NATO's mission in Kabul, including leading the Kabul Security Force," read the statement.

The pledge to maintain UK military support in Afghanistan follows the announcement by US President Barack Obama recently that the US will also uphold its military presence throughout 2016. The UK will work with the US and other NATO Allies and partners to ensure that the delivery of invaluable support to the ANSDF continues.

The defense ministry said in its statement that "the terrorist threat to the UK from this region has reduced, and although the UK's combat mission has ended, we continue to support the Afghanistan government to build a peaceful, secure and prosperous future for the country. The UK has a long-term commitment to Afghanistan, including financial aid and political support, which was reaffirmed by Prime Minister David Cameron during a phone call to the Afghan president on 26 October." (Tolnews)

(13) Afghan Refugee ...

with the UNHCR and its partner, the Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrant's Affairs (BAFIA), to help female refugees join the workforce and take charge in their own communities. His staff of 13 - most of whom are Afghan refugees - includes five women who work to assemble ten different inventions.

Mohammadi's female employees work from home so as to avoid cultural barriers, regulating

their own hours and profiting financially from their hard work.

"Since I started to work at home I became more confident and I am able to help my family to cover their expenses," Maryam, an employee said. The pride the women take in their work boosts their confidence, and Mohammadi has requested that even more women join his team.

"In one case, I gave some work to a 20-year-old lady who had never attended school," he said. "She was supposed to return the finished work in one week, but she came back in two days with all the work perfectly done. I first suspected she got outside help, but then I saw that she had done it all by herself. She even taught me how to do the task more efficiently." (Agencies)

(14) Taliban Takes ...

were injured," Hakimi said. He said that security forces are still fighting to regain control of the district.

A number of local officials believe that insurgents moved into the area after being driven out of Dashti-e-Archi district in Kunduz province by security forces over the past few days.

However, Gen. Murad Ali Murad, the deputy chief of army staff, said early Wednesday that they launched a military operation earlier in the day to clear insurgents in Takhar.

Local officials meanwhile said that ex-Jihadi leaders, residents and security forces have gathered and launched an operation to re-take control of the district.

Officials said that more troops have also been sent from the center of Takhar to support local forces. Meanwhile, clashes still continue in Khuja Ghar district of Takhar. So far ten Taliban insurgents were killed and four others injured, according to officials.

The Taliban confirmed in a statement that they have taken control of Durqad after clashing with security forces. (Tolnews)

(15) 105-Year-Old ...

travelled for 20 days to reach Europe, with her 67-year-old son and her 19-year-old grandson often carrying her on their backs.

One relative said: "She has had problems many times, suffered a lot."

As they carried her into a train that took them further west towards Slovenia, her grandson Muhamet said the family was hoping to reach Sweden.

Asked where she is going, Uzbeki said: "Sweden, I am going to Sweden."

"I became homeless, a migrant, I've been on the road for a long time," she added.

She said her son carried her on his back, and that she "fell and broke (injured) my head".

Croatian police said they checked her documents and she is 105 years old, as her grandson said.

Her age could not be independently verified as her documents were being processed by the Croatian police.

More than 260,000 migrants have passed through Croatia since September 15, when Hungary closed its border with Serbia, diverting the flow of refugees to Croatia. (Tolnews)

(16) New Afghan ...

regional cooperation, resulting in Afghanistan's membership in South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC), strengthening Afghanistan's membership in Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), and formulation of the process of Regional Economic Cooperation Conferences on Afghanistan (RECCA).

Ambassador Saikal has a Master's Degree in International Development from Deakin University of Melbourne, as well as two bachelor degrees from the University of Sydney and the University of Canberra. He graduated with First Class French Baccalaureate from LyceeEsteqlal of Kabul.

Born on 1 January 1962, Ambassador Saikal is married with two children. (ATN)

(17) Migrant Crisis...

it was pivotal to "deny entry at the border for people with no right to come".

"It will require some force, it will require massive logistics and expense, it will gnaw at our consciences," Abbott said.

"Yet it is the only way to prevent a tide of humanity surging through Europe and quite possibly changing it forever. (Xinhua)