

### (1) New NATO Commander...

The two sides discussed the priorities of the Afghan armed forces, the U.S. strategy for South Asia and its positive outcome, ARG Palace said. In his turn, Gen. Miller thanked President Ghani and reaffirmed all-out support to further strengthen the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces. Gen. Miller on Sunday took over the responsibility of the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission and the command of the U.S. forces in Afghanistan from General John Nicholson. (KP)

### (2) UK's Defense...

cells in the UK with the aim of potentially carrying out attacks. This was the first time the British government has stated Daesh in Afghanistan poses a direct threat to the UK, Britain's Independent reported.

The US has said there are around 2,000 Daesh fighters operating in the country, their numbers bolstered by militants fleeing Iraq and Syria, read the report.

This comes after former US Forces-Afghanistan and Resolute Support commander Gen. John Nicholson told VOA recently that Daesh has "been able to replenish a portion of their losses by recruiting from other violent extremist organisations. Despite this recruiting they are losing fighters and losing ground." Williamson's comments came as an extra 440 British troops arrived in the country, following a request from the US. It brings the total number of British personnel in the country to 1,100, the third largest behind the United States and Germany, the Independent reported.

While in Kabul, Williamson met with President Ashraf Ghani and CEO Abdullah Abdullah. In a tweet after the meeting the UK embassy in Kabul stated: "We remain absolutely committed". The tweet stated Williamson "reiterated #UK's support & commitment to strengthening & mentoring ANDSF." (Tolo news)

### (3) US Confirms Death of...

allies are in Afghanistan to maintain pressure on trans-regional terrorists attempting to plot, resource and direct attacks from here."

Orakzai was killed along with 10 other fighters from the terrorist group in the airstrike. Provincial officials say Afghan and coalition forces carried out the strike based on a tip-off from the Afghan spy service. (Pajhwok)

### (4) UNHCR Hails Ayatollah...

to that country. "From the 1.35 million Afghans about 900 thousand are refugees, and 450 thousand are passport holders; there are a number of illegal ones, whose number is not known," Deputy Director of the Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrants Affairs, Mohammad Ali Salehi Najafabadi said. He pointed to Afghanistan as part of the Muslim World and an important neighbor of Iran, and said, "Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei has ordered that all the Afghan children in Iran should be allowed to education like the Iranians."

Salehi Najafabadi also said that the safer Iran's neighbor, the better for Iran, and added Iran is trying to raise a dynamic generation of Afghans to be able to return to their country.

He said once there were about 450 thousand Iraqi refugees in Iran, but after the return of security to Iraq, most of them went

back to their country, adding, "There are about 40 thousand Iraqis in Iran now." (FNA)

### (5) Drought Hits...

in search of water and that was why the Natural Disaster and Assessment Committee's team has been investigating to determine the extent of damages caused by drought.

He admitted the 1500 tons of wheat that would not be enough but said the agriculture department was trying approach charity organizations for more assistance. Meanwhile, Provincial Council member Mohammad Ali Mahmoodi told Pajhwok that the Waris district had been hit hard by drought, where Shai, Sakharjoe, Moshak and Panjandod villages lacked drinking water and villagers fetched drinking water from a five kilometers distance. He said local residents were deeply concerned about the drought and they had no option but to sell their livestock at low prices.

Mahmoodi said in a month or two, Waris district residents might leave their homes due the drought.

Ali Mohammad, a resident of Panjab district, said he migrated to Bamyan City with family for lacking food to eat. (Pajhwok)

### (6) Projects Worth...

The other contracts approved during the meeting include transportation of 20 thousand metric tons of chemical fertilizers from Mazar-e-Sharif fertilizers factory to the provincial capitals and districts of 34 provinces, and design project for the construction of the new museum in Kabul by the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing.

The statement further added that the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum also shared information regarding Shahidai Copper Mine in Herat province. The meeting approved the recommendations and procurement related issues of the mine and it was decided that the project should be shared for further discussions during the cabinet of ministers meeting. The meeting also approved the previous decisions regarding the construction of 23.7kms of road from Bamyan to Doshi, and recommendations for the establishment of construction laboratory by the Ministry of Public Works. According to ARG Palace, the meeting was also attended by the representatives of the budget and national economic committees of the parliament, Afghanistan Transparency Watch Foundation, and representatives of SIGAR and NATO-led Resolute Support Mission. (KP)

### (7) Taliban Prevents...

to them," said Basmillah Watandost the convoy's spokesman.

"The current situation in Afghanistan has affected all Afghans. If peace in the country is achieved it will be to the benefit of all Afghans but if the war continues it is a loss for all Afghans," Watandost added.

The convoy members have meanwhile called on the Taliban to let them continue their journey in order to deliver their peace message to the residents of the country.

"Residents of Kunduz are the same as Helmand residents and are tired of war and therefore we came to Kunduz in order to join Kunduz residents' voice and to strengthen our voice for long lasting peace in the country," said Malik Hamdard member of the convoy.

Kunduz residents have meanwhile also called on the Tali-

ban to respond positively to the overtures of peace. (Tolo news)

### (8) 3,000 Drought...

and livestock, meet their economic needs by selling their produce. The drought has landed them in serious financial trouble. (Pajhwok)

### World's Biggest Cargo Plane Refuels at Airport in Turkmen Mary

ASHGABAT - The An-225 "Mriya" ("Antonov" air transport unit, Ukraine) has refueled at the international airport of Mary (Turkmenistan), the local TV channel "Turkmenistan" reported on Monday.

This airliner is the largest cargo aircraft in the world. It holds a number of world records, including the absolute record in cargo carrying capacity - 253.8 tons.

Today, the transport segment is among the defining directions of sustainable development, directly affecting the stability and balance of world economic relations, it becomes the most important factor in the global economy, designed to give it a new meaning and a powerful creative impetus, the message says.

Turkmenbashi, Mary and Turkmenabat international airports, the air terminal of Dashoguz city are functioning in Turkmenistan, which, along with the international airport of Ashgabat city, have become integral parts of the national transport and logistics system.

From a geographical and economic point of view, Turkmenistan's air terminals have an extremely advantageous location for transit flights, as well as technical landings and appropriate aircraft maintenance, which determines their role as important links in the international system of transport communications connecting countries and continents, the state news agency "Turkmen Dovlet Khabarlary" noted in its comments. (Trend)

### PM Seeks Comprehensive Report in a Week for Implementation of Five Mln Housing Plan

ISLAMABAD - Prime Minister Imran Khan Monday sought within a week, a comprehensive and coherent plan of action for the materialization of PTI's manifesto promise, for construction of low-cost five million houses to address the lingering issue.

Chairing a meeting on the construction of affordable houses at the Prime Minister Office, the Prime Minister said the construction plans were the priority of the government and would not only address this long standing issue in major cities but would also promote economic growth and create job opportunities. The prime minister directed formation of a committee under Secretary Housing and Works to study international models and come up with a road-map, in consultation with experts and representatives of concerned departments, while taking into account all aspects.

He said it should include the legal framework, availability of the land, banking support and raising of required resources for smooth implementation of the project.

The Committee would submit its initial recommendations to the Prime Minister within one week. The Prime Minister said there was a need to simultaneously devise a comprehensive mech-

anism for regulating katchi-abaadis and slums without displacing the poor and ensuring provision of all civic amenities to the people in those areas.

The meeting was attended by Yaqoob Izahar, Najeeb Haroon, Arshad Dad, Secretary Housing & Works Dr. Imran Zeb Khan, Secretary Law Justice (R) Abdul Shakoor Paracha and other senior officers.

The Prime Minister said the private sector should be encouraged and provided maximum facilities to all those who would be partnering with the government in the implementation of the 'Five Million Housing Program.' (Monitoring Desk)

### Uzbekistan may Join Turkic Council

TASHKENT - Uzbekistan intends to join the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States (CCTS), Sputnik reported referring to the Press Service of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic.

The intention of Uzbekistan to become a member of the Turkic Council became known during the 6th summit of the heads of Turkic-Speaking States in Kyrgyzstan.

"On behalf of the CCTS member states, I would like to welcome President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev, who is among us. I would like to note and support Uzbekistan's intention to join the Turkic Council as a member state," President of Kyrgyzstan Sooronbay Jeenbekov said.

"This step will create favorable conditions for expansion of our union, will increase its credibility on international arena," he added. (Trend)

### Iranian, Afghan Officials Call for Closer Economic Ties

Tehran - Muhammad Dawood Sultanzoy, a senior advisor to the president of Afghanistan, and the secretary of Iran's High Council of Free Trade Zones explored ways to enhance bilateral economic ties.

During a recent meeting in Tehran, Sultanzoy and Morteza Bank agreed to boost mutual economic and transit cooperation in a bid to link Afghanistan to other countries through the Indian Ocean, the port of Chabahar, and the high seas, IRIB news agency reported on September 3. Sultanzoy described the political ties between Tehran and Kabul as very good, calling for the development of relations in the fields of industry, transit, tourism, and banking and financial services.

Bank, for his turn, voiced the Islamic Republic's resolve for enhanced ties with its neighbors and stressed the importance of closer ties with Afghanistan as an old friend. (Trend)

### Blast Leaves Wolesi Jirga Candidate Dead, 3 Injured

KABUL - Wolesi Jirga candidate from central Parwan province has been killed and three others injured in a blast in capital Kabul, an official said on Monday. Police Spokesman Hashmatullah Stanikzai told Pajhwok Afghan News the magnetic bomb blast took place on Sunday evening in the Sherpur locality on Maulvi Mohammad Anwar Niyazi's vehicle.

Four people were wounded in the blast, including Anwar, who later succumbed to wounds in the hospital.

Niyazi hailed from the Bagram district of central Parwan province. (Pajhwok)

### Security Deteriorating in Ghor, Says Public Rep

FEROZKOH - The Taliban could overrun the Saghar district of western Ghor province if the government did not pay attention to the security environment, a public representative warned on Monday.

Provincial Council's Deputy Chairman Abdul Rahman Atshan told Pajhwok Afghan News the rebels attacked the district and captured a check-post after a clash late on Sunday night.

He said one policeman was killed, four were wounded and three others had been missing. He feared the rebels might take control of the district if proper steps were not taken by provincial authorities.

Meanwhile, Abdul Hai Khatibi, the governor's spokesman, confirmed the insurgent attack and casualties but denied the fall of any checkpoint.

He claimed the fighters had lost the ability to capture the district, where reinforcements would be dispatched as soon as possible.

The Taliban have not yet commented in this regard. According to some reports, the militants are planning to capture some western districts of the province. (Pajhwok)

### Iran Currency Hits All-Time Low against Dollar

TEHRAN - The Iranian rial hit another all-time low against the US dollar on Monday in spite of central bank efforts to stem the decline.

The rial has lost around 15 percent of its value on the open market in the past three days, bottoming at 128,500 to the dollar by Monday evening, according to Bonbast.com, which monitors Iran's rates. The drop followed a speech by central bank governor Abdolnaser Hemmati on Saturday, in which he announced tighter restrictions on allocating foreign exchange reserves, said financial journalist Maziar Motamedi.

"Hemmati said that he wishes to be much more careful in allocating foreign currencies at government rates, signalling a potential forthcoming shortage of hard currency," he told AFP.

The rial has lost 70 percent of its value in the past year, primarily due to increased hostility from the United States and its withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal in May.

Official statements have done little to calm the markets.

Hemmati, who took over in August after his predecessor was sacked, "seems to have had a point when he said in (his inaugural speech) that he will try to minimise public remarks, as every comment coming from high-ranking officials aiming to calm the market has spurred negative reactions," said Motamedi.

The central bank puts tight controls on how much foreign currency is pumped into the system, and hands out a special government rate of 42,000 to certain importers, such as those buying essential goods like medicines.

Another factor may be demand from pilgrims heading to Iraq for the upcoming Arbæen religious festival, attended by some two million Iranians last year.

The central bank has tried to calm the market, first by trying to end open-market trading in April, fixing the rate at 42,000 and shutting down exchange shops. (AFP)