

(1) Trump 'Not...

Russian diplomatic outposts have raised concerns that the two countries remain far apart.

The Trump administration last week ordered the closure of three Russian facilities in the U.S.: The San Francisco consulate and trade missions in New York and Washington. It was the latest in a series of escalating retaliatory measures between the former Cold War foes.

Putin said the U.S. had a right to close consulates but "it was done in such a rude way." "It is hard to hold a dialogue with people who mix Austria with Australia," he continued, an apparent reference to a decade-old gaffe by George W. Bush, who during a 2007 visit to Sydney referred to Austrian troops when he meant Australian troops. (AP)

(2) Disabled in War, ...

my country and I don't regret being wounded but when I see my wounds have no value for my government, then I do regret it." Safi says he received a one-off payment of 184,000 afghani (\$2,690) when he was disabled, besides 10,500 afghani (\$153) every month.

Unable to walk, he sits in a small booth in a market in the eastern city of Jalalabad, supplementing his pension with about 5,000 to 8,000 afghani earned from the sales of mobile phone scratch cards each month.

"I've built a small business to feed my family but now municipal workers harass me in the market," he said. "My family blames me for ruining their lives."

The government says it does what it can as it battles an insurgency that kills and wounds thousands of soldiers each year and tries to rebuild an economy destroyed by decades of strife.

Wounded soldiers usually get a year's pay and a monthly pension. About 130,000 severely disabled military and civilian individuals now receive benefits, said government spokesman Fatah Ahmadzai.

But officials say they know the sum is far too small for veterans supporting families of five or more.

"As much as we provide support to our disabled, it is nothing to what they have suffered," said defense ministry spokesman Dawlat Waziri.

"When I was wounded the second and third times, my mother cried and begged me to leave. She even tore up my army identification and hospital papers." Afghanistan has run several advertising campaigns to whip up pride in its security forces and has trumpeted an Afghan team's participation in the Invictus Games for disabled soldiers.

But the bitter reality is hard to counter, leaving many feeling painfully conflicted.

"When I think back to when I joined the army, I regret it and blame myself," said former soldier Riazullah, who lost both legs to a roadside bomb in the southeastern province of Ghazni.

"My family also blames me for what happened, but I tell my children to study, and one day, they will understand the value of what I did for this country." (Reuters)

(3) Shaheen to Take on ...

Football Team combination from among the best players of the premier league. But this year we will choose the best players from this tournament and will include them in the national team lineup. After that, members of the national team can start practicing under the supervision of the coaches," Mohammad Yusuf Kargar, the technical deputy of the Afghan Football Federation said.

APL Commissioner Shafiq Gawhari said: "This year we will hold the semi-finals and the final match at night which is good news. The lights of the stadium will be changed in accordance with international standards within two weeks."

Thursday's match meanwhile will see league log leaders Shaheen Asmayee take on De Spinghar Bazan, who along with Toofan Harirod, share the second spot.

This year, the opening ceremony will be broadcast live on TOLO TV, Lemar TV and simulcast on Arman FM and Arakozia FM. (Tolonews)

(4) Kabul Welcomes...

that adopted the Xiamen Declaration and the meeting agreed to strengthen cooperation against a range of terror groups.

BRICS powers for the first time named some Pakistan-based groups that they said posed threat to the security situation in the region. "We express concern on the security situation in the region and violence caused by the Taliban, the Islamic State, Al Qaeda and its affiliates, including the Haqqani Network, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad, Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan and Hizbut Tahrir," it added.

Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa make up the BRICS grouping founded in 2010. The group held its ninth meeting in China and deplored "all terrorist attacks worldwide."

In their joint declaration, the grouping condemned terrorism "in all its forms and

manifestations wherever committed and by whomsoever and stress that there can be no justification whatsoever for any act of terrorism".

They supported an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace and national reconciliation and ongoing international efforts, including the Moscow Format of consultations on Afghanistan and "Heart of Asia-Is- tanbul Process", as well as multimodal connectivity projects to promote peace and stability.

Shah Hussain Murtazavi, acting spokesman for the president, talking about the BRICS statement, said: "We welcome this statement and we wish this right understanding will lead to actions against countries that support terrorism."

He said the Afghan government had repeatedly announced that terrorism was a threat to the humanity and security of the region. "We expect the regional and other countries would take a collective action against threats to humanity and states from terrorism with right understanding," Murtazavi said. (Pajhwok)

(5) New US Strategy...

The National Unity Government must be and must be seen as the better alternative."

To a question about most focus on the war and fighting in Afghanistan in the new American strategy instead of a political solution, the NATO representative admitted sustainable peace could be brought about through military means alone.

"What is needed is an inclusive political settlement. That is why we continue to support an Afghan-owned and Afghan-led peace and reconciliation process."

He said peace would not come overnight and the alliance encouraged all Afghans to work towards an inclusive political settlement and a sustainable peace.

About President Trump's blaming of Pakistan for supporting terrorists and their sanctuaries, Ambassador Cornelius Zimmerman said they encouraged all regional actors to play a constructive role in promoting regional stability.

"At the same time, we urge them to do their utmost to shut down sanctuaries for extremist groups."

He said Afghanistan neighbours' must understand that peace and stability in Afghanistan is in their own interest.

"They can all benefit from a good relationship with Afghanistan, for instance with increased access to the Afghan market. We should go from a lose-lose situation to a win-win one."

About NATO's fresh contribution of troops to the war in Afghanistan under the new US policy, the NATO representative said their allies and partners had already committed to increasing their presence in Afghanistan.

"In recent weeks, more than 15 nations have pledged additional contributions to the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission. The force generation process is ongoing and we should have more clarity in the coming weeks."

To a question about opposition to the surge in foreign troop numbers by some Afghan political parties and lawmakers, Ambassador Cornelius Zimmerman said he would enter into the Afghan domestic political commentary.

"Discussion and debate is a healthy sign of democracy. NATO is one of Afghanistan's most steadfast and committed partners. NATO allies and partners support the Afghan population by helping build the capacities of the Afghan security forces and has done so for many years."

He said since January 2015 the Afghan security forces and institutions had full security responsibility, with their bravery and professionalism increasing. "We continue to support them to develop further, so that they can become fully self-sustainable."

About the impact of the new US strategy on the morale of Afghan and US forces, he said the new US strategy had been widely welcomed in Afghanistan and across the international community.

"It is fully aligned with the commitment to Afghanistan by all NATO allies and partners. Ultimately, it represents a firm step to ensure that the Afghan security forces and institutions continue to make progress and that Afghanistan never again becomes a safe haven for terrorists that threatens Afghanistan's security and the security of our own countries." (Pajhwok)

(6) Nangarhar Slate ...

factories for processing precious stones until many of such factories were activated in Nangarhar province following a presidential order.

Around 7,000 people directly and up to 15,000 individuals indirectly work in the mines extraction companies in the province, but their number has been on the decline with each passing day now.

There are 38 extraction firms and 24 processing factories of slate stones in Nangarhar operating in Sheikh Mesri Industrial Park and different parts of the province.

Besides extension of their contracts, slate officials of factories also demand security,

electricity and other facilities.

Sayed Anwar Omar, owner of Salman Shirzad Stones Processing Factory, told Pajhwok Afghan News that extracting the stone was a difficult job with a very limited advantage.

"We extract the stones with many difficulties and under insecurity pressure in Sherzad district and then we transfer them on un-asphalted ways to Jalalabad city and Sheikh Mesri Industrial Park, we first process them here and then export them to other Asian, European and American countries via Pakistan," he said.

He said the stones were used in 130 different objects but it was fully processed by a few countries. Omar said they were now able to process the stone by 50 percent inside Nangarhar.

Abdul Wahab Zazai, owner of Afghan Talak Processing Factory, said they accepted all conditions of the contracts with the government, but they were provided no facilities.

"I brought power cables, pylons and transformer at my personal expenses, but the government at least does not connect the power cables to our factory," he said.

An association of slate stones processing factories also exists in Nangarhar for resolving problems of its members.

Haji Wali Khogyani, head of the association, told Pajhwok that 38 extraction companies and 24 processing factories of slate stones were available in Nangarhar.

Besides the lack of electricity and adequate security, another major problem was not extending of slate stones processing contracts by MoMP, he said.

The companies and factories with millions of dollars investment provided job opportunities for 7,000 people directly and around 15,000 people indirectly in Nangarhar, but some of them remain totally inactive due to expiry of their contracts.

He said the number of workers was reducing with each passing day and some factories had collapsed. "These factories would suffer millions of dollars if the MoMP does not extend contracts with them."

The owners of these factories say they have invested from \$500,000 to \$2.5 million and they may face many problems if the government continues to ignore them.

Haji Wali Khogyani said the factory owners might start a protest movement in defense of their rights.

People working in these factories also said the government should extend contracts of the firms.

Abul Zafar, who is working in Ahmad Shah Talak Processing Factory, said around 150 people would alongside him but their number now reduced to 50.

The government should extend contracts for the sake of people's jobs, he said.

Eng. Abdul Hadi Safi, a worker with Nabi Afghan Processing Factory, said 120 people were working there but they might lose jobs if the government did not extend the factory's contract.

Meanwhile, MoMP spokesman Abdul Qadir Mustafa, said efforts were underway for resolving problems concerning small factories. "But winners of big contracts have to adjust themselves with the new method of the ministry."

He said in the past many problems plagued contracts after they were signed, but the new method had resolved these issues.

Nangarhar governor's spokesman, Attaullah Khogyani, said the problems of electricity and security in Sheikh Mesri Industrial Park had been resolved somehow.

He said a plan was being developed for full solution to the mentioned problems.

He said a security post had been established at the end of the park and some factories enjoyed enough electricity, but all did not receive the service for being in short supply. Khogyani said all problems facing the factories in Nangarhar would be resolved according to the new plan. (Pajhwok)

(7) Media Should ...

to perform their duties.

Dr. Al-Awwad said that since the time of the founder late King Abdul Aziz and until today in the era of Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz, the kingdom plays a great role in the service of the Two Holy Mosques and has implemented mega projects in the two holy mosques and the holy places.

He stressed that the Kingdom strives to unite ranks and achieve security and peace in various parts of the globe and to fight terrorism that targets Islam and works to distort its image.

He noted that terrorism targeted the holiest places but God has defeated its evil.

Media should be a tool to combat extremism and terrorism and to combat hate speech and that our media should convey the message of peace and spread love and coexistence with peoples and cultures. He said Dr. Al-Awwad thanked the media for the efforts exerted and the excellent coverage of the Hajj season, which contributed to the integrated media coverage of a great event that made the world know about this great event and follow the news and learn about

the feelings of the pilgrims and share their stories and spiritual experience through the provision of media platforms with a global dimension.

The Minister of Culture and Information also praised the role played by the local media and the Saudi press in highlighting the bright and vital aspects of all the distinguished services provided by the Government of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz in all fields.

Then, other speakers, representing Arab, Asian, European and African delegations, delivered speeches in which they expressed thanks for the generous invitation and hosting of the media delegations participating in the coverage of the Hajj season this year.

They congratulated Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and the Crown Prince on the success of organizing the Hajj this year, pointing out that it was a special season.

They highlighted the role of the Kingdom and the services it provided and the projects carried out in the two holy mosques and the holy places, which had a great impact on enabling pilgrims to perform their rituals.

They appreciated the distinguished role of the Government of the Kingdom and its various institutions in caring for Muslims affairs and interests around the world, in addition to its main role in combating terrorism and maintaining the stability and security of the region. (Pajhwok)

(8) Saudi Backs ...

and stability. Karim was talking with a group of Afghan media in Jeddah, after they performed Hajj.

Afghan envoy said cordial relation with regional countries, including KSA was Afghanistan's top priority. He said the issues of at least 200,000 Afghans were being addressed. The process of computerise passport distribution to Saudi based Afghans had been launched, the envoy added.

Jalal said as many as 1,100 forms for had been distributed to Afghans by the Afghan embassy in Riyadh. He added Saudi government has been told Afghans who came to the Kingdom on Pakistani passports would distribute with Afghani passport.

He said the Hajj rituals were performed in peaceful environment and no issues emerged during Hajj.

He thanked the Saudi government for proper arrangement and successful conduct of Hajj despite 20 percent increase in the number of pilgrims this year compared to the previous year. Over two million pilgrims from around the world, including 30,000 from Afghanistan performed Hajj. (Pajhwok)

(9) Number of IDPs ...

number of displaced people are Kunduz with 28,261 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), Nangarhar with 27,401 IDPs and Uruzgan with 17,062.

Humanitarian Response stated that in the central parts of the country heavy clashes erupted in the past week over the control of Baraki Barak, in Logar - however no new displacements were recorded.

Clashes meanwhile continued over the control of Janikhel, Paktia. The area has reportedly already been abandoned by most residents some weeks ago.

In 2017, a total of 11,990 people have been verified as displaced in the central region, just over five per cent of the total displacement.

However, insurgent activity in villages in Garziwan district, Faryab, led to about 700 people being displaced to Garziwan district center.

In addition to this about 5,200 people were displaced from more than half a dozen villages in Chardarah district, Kunduz, due to military operations that intensified on September 2, according to first reports. Those displaced either moved to Kunduz City, Alibad district or remain in Chardara district.

Some 450 people reportedly displaced from Dasht-e-Archi and Emamsaheb districts in Kunduz to Taloqan City, Takhar province.

In total, more than 2,100 displaced people arrived in Taloqan City during the reporting period from Badakshan, Kunduz and Takhar provinces.

Since January, 90,190 people have been verified as displaced in the northern and north-eastern regions, 40 percent of this year's total.

Humanitarian Response said no significant new displacements have been reported from the eastern region during the reporting period.

Since January, 36,708 displaced people have been assessed in the eastern region - 16 percent of the total displacement in 2017. (Tolonews)

(10) Cooperation with...

with a more detailed strategy and plan. Frankly, I don't see much difference in what he has to say as opposed to what we had been doing earlier."

Answering a question if Trump is offering an exit strategy for Afghanistan, he said, "I don't see there is an exit strategy; quite the contrary, it seems to me it's a commitment

we will stay here even though, many people including military leaders have said there is no military solution. And of course the Taliban said they will not negotiate until US troops withdraw. So it looks like a continuation of the stalemate we've had for many years."

Answering the question, "Why are Trump and his advisors choosing the same path that has already failed many times?" the retired general said, "Because there really doesn't appear to be a good alternative. If you take political considerations into account, Resident Trump apparently wants to project the image of military strength, so he probably doesn't consider withdrawal a viable option." (IRNA)

(11) 'Afghanistan ...

Afghanistan in 2016 were books, printed matter, rubber tyres and tubes, desiccated coconut, tea, parts of refrigerating or freezing equipment.

The main import products from Afghanistan were telephone sets, toys and electrical transformers, processed food, precious stones, office machines, electric motors and generators. (Pajhwok)

(12) Logar Airstrike...

condolences to the bereaved families and shared the grief with them, a statement from the Presidential Palace said.

Eleven civilians have been killed and 16 others injured in the foreign forces airstrike in Logar last week. (Pajhwok)

(13) Kidnapped Red...

the border with Turkmenistan.

Six of their colleagues were killed in the attack, which prompted the ICRC to suspend operations in Afghanistan for a time.

"We are relieved and grateful that our colleagues are now back with us unharmed," the ICRC head of delegation in Afghanistan, Monica Zanarelli, said in a statement. At the time of the attack, officials in the area blamed Islamic State gunmen but the ICRC said it would not comment on the identity of the abductors, their motives or details of the release.

Kidnapping has been a major problem in Afghanistan for many years. Most victims are Afghans abducted for ransom but foreigners or Afghans working for foreign organizations have also been targeted. (Reuters)

(14) 13 Rebels ..

in Helmand province.

Lt. Col. Mohammad Rassol Zazai, the spokesman for 215th Maiwand Military Corps in Helmand, said the depot was discovered during an operation of Afghan commando forces in Greshk district on Monday night.

He said nine pistols, 14 different weapons, three machineguns, 11,000 bullets of M4 and 100 bullets of M240 machineguns and some other ammunition were seized from the depot.

A statement from governor's house also confirmed the operation.

Taliban militants did not comment yet on the issue. (Pajhwok)

(15) Afghan Officials...

guests firing into the air in celebration.

If confirmed, the deaths would be the latest in a series that has seen at least 24 civilians killed in Afghan and U.S. air strikes over the past week.

Afghan officials said the helicopter came from the NATO-led Resolute Support coalition but there was no immediate confirmation from Resolute Support headquarters in Kabul that U.S. or coalition aircraft were involved in the incident.

"We are aware of reports, but have no further information at this time," a spokesman said in an emailed statement. (Reuters)

(16) Herat: 4 Die, ...

He said another 39 people injured in street fights, 29 others with stab wounds and 11 more with bullet wounds have also been delivered to the hospital during the period. "In three days of Eid, 129 incidents occurred, recording a 50 percent increase in traffic mishaps as compared to the Eid last year."

Meanwhile, residents expressed concern over the surge in traffic incidents. Herat city resident, Sayed Akbar, said: "Youth and youngsters do not obey traffic rules." (Pajhwok)

(17) Qarabagh Residents

out by foreign troops in helicopters. Resolute Support has not commented in this regard.

According to the locals the incident happened in Jarchi village after guests at the ceremony opened fire in celebration.

One of the victims killed in the air strike was a policeman who, after four months on duty in Maidan Wardak province, returned home on vacation.

The policeman, Ahmadzai, joined the police two years ago.

Relatives of the victims urged government to investigate the incident and find those who were involved.. (Tolonews)