

(1) Ghani to Discuss...

regional (countries) and the world in the fight against terrorism," said Menapal. But Afghans want the president to take advantage of the opportunity and raise the issue of leaders of terrorist groups operating inside Pakistani territory.

"In the session the Afghan government needs to tell the world about where the terror roots are and where they (insurgents) are being trained and equipped," said head of Rights and Justice Party Moeen Samkani. Meanwhile some lawmakers in parliament said the president should also focus on the role of regional nations during the UN summit so as to expand regional cooperation to help restore sustainable peace and security in the country.

"There are some countries in the region who try to prevent progress by the international community about the issues in Afghanistan, therefore the president, in the session, should take the stage to thwart such moves," said MP Sayed Ali Kazimi.

But Afghan officials said government has taken into consideration all necessary aspects which are needed to attract international cooperation towards fighting terrorism and discussing Pakistan's hostile policy towards Afghanistan.

"Afghan people have clear demands from Pakistan, unfortunately Pakistan never bothered to take action; the president will try to raise the voice of the people of Afghanistan to the world," said Sediq Sediqqi, the head of government's media center.

Ghani is meanwhile expected to meet US President Donald Trump on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly where he will discuss the implementation of America's new war strategy for Afghanistan.

A government source said on Sunday, on condition of anonymity, that Pakistani Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has also lodged a request to meet Ghani during the UN summit. (Tolonews)

(2) MPs Ask Ghani to ...

Senator Mohammad Rahim Hussainyar told today's session: "The president in the upcoming UNGA meeting and his separate meeting with US president Donald Trump should talk about realities in Afghanistan and the region."

He hoped Ghani's trip would have positive outcomes and said the president was expected to adopt a clear position regarding Pakistan's alleged support to terrorist organizations.

Lailuma Ahmadi, another lawmaker, said: "We hope the president may earn more pledges from the international community regarding support to Afghanistan and equipment for Afghan forces. The president should earn global community's continued support for Afghanistan."

Other lawmakers shared similar views and hoped the president would take decisive position against Pakistan.

Senate Chairman Fazal Hadi Muslimyar asked President Ghani to expose Pakistan's real face at the global forum and at bilateral meetings with world leaders in New York. (Pajhwok)

(3) National Consensus: ...

Mohammad Ibrahim Alokozay, said differences between the two parties had worried people.

A party statement quoted Alokozay as saying his party's delegation met twice with Gulbadin Hekmatyar and once with JIA's CEO and Balkh Governor Atta Mohammad Noor. The delegation first met with Hekmatyar, who had some suggestions and views and conveyed his message to Noor, he said.

In their meeting with Noor, he said, the JIA assured full support to the peace process and said the JIA had no differences with HIA and the party it was committed to serving national interests and working for peace, stability and unity.

When the delegation met again Hekmatyar, the former warlord also held similar views and said past events must be forgotten.

Hekmatyar said the HIA had no differences with JIA or Noor, adding his party was committed to coexistence and ready for any kind of talks to ensure security for upcoming elections in the country.

"Both the respected leaders assured us of being committed to Afghanistan's national interests," Alokozay said.

HIA media wing's member, Mohammad Nadar, confirmed to Pajhwok that the national consensus delegation had met with the HIA leader.

"The delegation said they would mediate and resolve the differences, but Hekmatyar told them that we have no difference with anyone even not with other parties and that our work is only aimed at strengthening security," Nadar said. Balkh governor's spokesman, Munir Farhad, also confirmed the delegation, which also contained two women, had met the JIA's CEO Atta Mohammad Noor. "The governor told the delegation that JIA supports any kind of steps that result in people's wellbeing, success, peace and rule of law," Farhad added. (Pajhwok)

(4) Indian Ambassador ...

The strategic partnership could be extended and strengthened as a result of burgeoning bilateral cooperation, he hoped. He informed the NSA about the decisions and developments during the last visit of the Afghan delegation to India.

Representatives were appointed by the two countries to oversee the implementation of decisions and commitments made during the visit.

Vohra welcomed the new US strategy as significant for Afghanistan and South Asia. With the implementation of the strategy, a new chapter of cooperation would be opened in the region, he remarked.

He asked the regional countries to forge ideological unity in the fight against terrorism. Atmar hailed India as a trusted ally of Afghanistan, thanking New Delhi for inviting the Afghan delegation. The Afghans would step-up efforts for the implementation of strategic commitments between the two countries. He acknowledged India's military cooperation was significant for Afghanistan. Last week, during a visit to India, a delegation led by Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani discussed political and military cooperation with Indian leaders. (Pajhwok)

(5) Pakistan to ...

"The way for peace is opened, any group will go for peace, the Afghan government is ready for it," said deputy presidential spokesman Dawa Khan Menapal.

"The High Peace Council which has taken the initiative and entered into dialogue and consultations with armed opponents should clarify the information, sources and all individuals involved in the process with the media," said senator Nisar Haris.

This new development takes place just a few weeks after Trump unveiled his new strategy for Afghanistan and South Asia in which he severely criticized Pakistan over its continued support of the Taliban and its brutal offshoot the Haqqani network.

He warned that the US could take tough action against Pakistan if Islamabad does not change its policy towards insurgent groups including the Taliban. (Tolonews)

(6) Ghani Emphasizes ...

an invaluable contribution to the peaceful settlement of the situation in Afghanistan and the sustainable social and economic development of the entire Central Asian region.

"Afghanistan, as well as the whole world, appreciate and fully support the peaceful policy pursued by President Berdimuhamedov, as well as his international initiatives, aimed at strengthening the stability and general well-being in the region," the Afghan president added.

President Berdimuhamedov confirmed Turkmenistan's commitment to the traditionally friendly, constructive dialogue with Afghanistan and the readiness to continue to render all possible assistance in the economic and cultural revival of the neighboring country.

"The Turkmen people are in solidarity with the Afghan people in their quest for a peaceful and stable life," President Berdimuhamedov said.

The construction of the Turkmen section of TAPI pipeline was launched in December 2015. Currently, exploration work is underway to construct the Afghan section of the pipeline. Ashgabat expects that the gas pipeline, with a capacity of 33 billion cubic meters of gas, will be launched in 2019. The project is promoted by the Asian Development Bank. (Trend)

(7) MPs Welcome...

president, CEO and politicians for their patience. I hope to see such agreements and good relationships with General (Abdul Rashid) Dostum," MP Gulalai Akbari said. But some MPs have said politicians stand against each other based on personal interests and not for the good of the people or the country.

"As I see, 80 percent of them are following their personal interests; not the interests of the people or society," Mirbat Khan Mangal, another MP said.

The head of the Meshrano Jirga (Upper House of Parliament) meanwhile blamed both officials from central and local government for creating problems resulting in political standoffs.

"It is clear that central and local government officials have their own problems," senate head Fazlulhadi Muslimyar said.

MPs also said sometimes politicians create ethnic tensions among the people and officials. (Tolonews)

(8) Ghani Holds ...

routes between Central Asian countries and Afghanistan are extremely important and that with this in place, Afghanistan could easily be linked to Europe and other foreign markets.

"Central Asia is a rich region in terms of natural energy and Afghanistan can benefit from these countries by following proper approaches," economic analyst Shabir Bashiri said. The expansion of trade relations with Central Asian countries, especially Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, were the focus of the agenda for the meeting between the three presidents, Menapal said. (Tolonews)

(9) Govt. to ...

to a number of countries including the UAE and India. However Afghan saffron is yet to make its way to the lucrative Chinese market. Saffron exporters have called on government to take steps to open up the Chinese market for them. (Tolonews)

(10) Herat: Aid for ...

from the Economy Department shows \$101 million was provided to Herat by foreign countries and organisations for the capacity development of women from 2014- March to 2017. But no constructive work has been done to address women's problems or facilitate them in a tangible manner.

Younis Rahnoud, the economy director, said 280 projects for women were implemented in

2014 at a cost of \$42 million, 261 (\$35 million) in 2016 and 81 costing \$18 million in the first three months of 2017. Some 30 projects worth \$6 million were executed to boost women's capacity, without any substantial results.

Rahnoud alleged most of the money meant for women's capacity building was embezzled by the women rights watchdogs. He admitted most capacity-building projects executed in 2016 and this year in Herat were not effective. Civil society organisations were awarded the projects on the basis of their political affiliations, he maintained.

Most of these projects were short-term, according to Rahnoud, who accused the government of not executing long-term schemes. He, however, promised long-term projects such as construction of schools, dams, roads, bridges, culverts, hospitals, local industry, power supply and poultry farms would be implemented at a cost of \$117 million.

Embezzlement charges

Meanwhile, some women in Herat City and districts said they were unaware of the entire process, despite the huge amount spent on their capacity building.

They told Pajhwok Afghan News only few capacity-building programmes for a few weeks had been conducted in districts. Such programmes more than an eyewash, they said.

An official from the Women Council for Guzra district who wished to go unnamed said: "Most of the money spent of the women capacity building and uplift are embezzled therefore the capacity building projects were not effective."

Khadija Rahimi, women affairs director for Shindand district, said half of the money provided by donors for the capacity building of women landed in the pockets of officials and their relatives. In most cases, officials bring their relatives to seminars and workshops. Fatema Jafari, a Provincial Council member, said: "A small group, say about 20 percent of civil society organisations, works for women's capacity building."

Fatema Azzizi, a resident of Herat, said in seminars and workshops, a specific group of women having links with certain organisation took part. She complained a lot of money was being wasted but there was no strategy to resolve the basic issues facing women.

Zuhail Akbari, another resident of Herat City, said: "In my view, most women-related projects be executed in districts and far-flung areas because there is a lot of ignorance there and women don't know much about their rights."

Ineffective projects

Officials of some organisations acknowledged certain figures with suspect backgrounds were part of civil society and apparently worked for women's rights. But, in fact, they worked to promote their personal interests, they added.

Nazir Ahmad Ghafoori, head of Rada, expressed concern over the exploitation of civil society by some elements. He said such civil society activists defamed women's rights advocacy groups and activities.

Susan Behbodzada, head of Herat Mothers' Association, said: "Women's capacity building is paid close attention and a huge amount of money has been invested in this area after the fall of the Taliban regime, but such projects haven't yielded the desired outcomes."

She added most of the projects tended to focus on reports and statistics only instead of delivering meaningful services – a key reason for their failure to produce change.

However, Abdul Qadir Rahimi, regional head of Afghanistan's Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) in Herat, said women's empowerment was being paid enough attention. But it was the responsibility of justice and economy departments to oversee how organisations spent the aid money in the area, he reasoned.

He asked the government to ensure security in districts, where women would benefit from projects the way their counterparts did in the provincial capital.

Hawa Gul Siddiqi, a woman from the Farsi district of Herat, said all projects approved for women were implemented only in districts close to the provincial capital. Remote districts of the province were ignored, she gumbled.

Women in Farsi district be provided with tailoring, embroidery, paste-making and bakery projects to make them financially self-reliant, she suggested.

Inadequate supervision

Wahida Samadi Qalam, the founder of Tahmina Organisation, said many started raising slogans of supporting women – a vulnerable group of society – after international aid began flowing into Afghanistan and establishment of the provisional government.

She alleged a large number of civil society institutions – supposedly working for safeguarding women's rights – had been created to grab foreign assistance to Afghanistan.

Qalam charged such organisations with exploiting the slogan of 'women's support', using personal relations, obtaining major projects and huge amounts of money. In concrete terms, she said, they were doing nothing effective. Examples of such ineffective organisations abounded, she continued.

The absence of a proper mechanism to supervise projects and corruption caused large amounts of aid money to line personal pockets in the name of supporting and defending women's rights.

Analyst Mohammad Rafiq Shahir believed the organisations that abused the 'women's rights' slogan rather contributed to violence against women.

Social media complaints

A number of Herat residents said the activi-

ties of most civil society institutes were limited to only obtaining projects. They are doing nothing effectively to build women's capacity in the province.

Nazir Ayubi, wrote on his Facebook page that most of civil society activists had nothing substantial in recent years. In addition, he claimed, the organisations had made no significant achievements in the past either.

Some of them made pious noises on seeing projects, but did not wake up even if the city was drowned, he remarked.

Omar Khalid, another social media user, said civil society activists were only thinking about projects, money and trips to the US and other Europe countries.

Government's response

The Herat governor's spokesman, Jailani Farhad, confirmed embezzlement by some civil society institutes. However, he said: "We cannot compare a limited number of self-interested civil society institutes that misused opportunities and resources to other helpful groups."

He added women in remote areas, whose rights were trampled on by some institutes, should benefit from short- and long-term projects.

Local officials say more than 200 civil society organisations are active in Herat, with 36 working for promoting women's rights. (Pajhwok)

(11) NATO to Decide...

chief Jim Mattis told NATO allies they must finish the job in Afghanistan or risk allowing the insurgency to bloom.

"The bottom line is that NATO has made a commitment to Afghanistan for freedom from fear and terror, and freedom from terror demands that you can't let this be undone," he said in June.

Allies are expected to give a firm answer when the committee reconvenes in October, NATO Supreme Allied Commander US General Curtis Scaparrotti told reporters.

NATO says "more than 15" countries have pledged additional support, but has yet to give details on extra troop numbers.

Albania, which has 83 soldiers in Afghanistan, has said it is ready to send about 30 more.

Last month US President Donald Trump cleared the way for the deployment of thousands more US troops to Afghanistan, backing from his promise to swiftly end America's longest war, begun after the terror attacks of September 11, 2001.

He did not specify how many soldiers would be sent but officials have said the additional troops could number some 4,000, on top of 11,000 already on the ground.

Scaparrotti did not reveal details of the discussions in Tirana, but said the coalition's aim was to train and equip Afghan special forces and to help provide the country with air support. "What we would like NATO to provide: TAA actually, that's train, advise and assist," he said. "There's an effect on the morale of the Afghan troops when it's their own air force support. So to the extent that we can get more advisers in there we can effect a faster development of their force, and it's better for everyone," he added. NATO transferred security responsibilities to Afghan forces in 2014 but has around 13,000 soldiers stationed in the country on the alliance's longstanding mission. (Monitoring Desk)

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(12) Conflict in North ...

had been thrust on the Afghans and some individuals, who did not want peace, had been hired for the purpose.

The ex-prime minister a handful of individuals those wanted war in Afghanistan. Most of the nation desired peace and supported HIA policies in this regards, he claimed.

"For durable peace and stability in the country, we have met every stakeholder, urged them to forget the past and make a firm commitment to the security and stability of the country," he continued.

The HIA leader said they had no intention to take revenge and had extended the hand of brotherhood to all. He demanded an intra-Afghan dialogue for dispute resolution.

Hekmatyar asked political parties and influential individuals to stop creating alliances against one another, help pave the way for the upcoming parliamentary elections and accept the result. (Pajhwok)

(13) Haq's ...

Pakistan was the main supporter of terrorism and the Taliban. He added remarks from Haq and other Pakistani officials would have no impact on the new US strategy for Afghanistan. The new policy indicates Pakistan is aiding terrorism and the region would face threats until the scourge exists there.

Abdul Shakoor Salangi, an international affairs expert, said religious leaders of Pakistan spoke the language of its notorious spy network Inter Services Intelligence (ISI).

"The Pakistani clerics, including Samiul Haq, have changed the ideology of the Afghan Taliban. They give them directions and use them for the implementation of their agenda." Political analyst Bashir Bezan said Samiul Haq and Mulana Fazlur Rahman were the two religious leaders of Pakistan who reflected the true mindset of the Taliban.

He said the Taliban had been created to execute mega projects and were still being used to realise Pakistan's strategic goals through their destructive activities.

Bizen added there was no doubt that Pakistan's politics was guided by "despotic institutions" controlled by the Panjab. ISI was at the centre of these organisations.

Lawmaker Lalai Hameedzai termed Samiul Haq's viewpoint as an evil. He alleged Pakistani right-wing scholars always called jihad

compulsory in Afghanistan and ignored the need for the same obligation in their own country. (Pajhwok)

(14) Islamic Development ...

the Islamic Development Bank will provide the amount on the basis of returnable loan so that the project can be implemented.

Arya further added that the ring road having a length of 95 kilometers will be completed over a period of five years.

According to Arya, other public welfare projects such schools and clinics will also be built along the ring road.

He said Kabul ring road will connect Kabul with certain provinces via Kabul-Kandahar, Kabul-Logar, and Kabul-Balkh highways.

In the meantime, the Office of the President, ARG Palace, said the agreement for the grant was signed by minister of finance and deputy chief of the Islamic Development Bank in the palace today.

According to the ARG Palace, the project is estimated to bear a cost of around \$110 million. (Tolonews)

(15) US to Expand ..

staff in Kabul "will no longer need to take a Chinook helicopter ride to cross the street to a military base less than 100 yards outside the present Green Zone security district."

After 16 years of the US-led military presence in the Afghan capital, it added, the expansion project serves as a "stark acknowledgment that even the city's central districts have become too difficult to defend" against persisting terror bombings by Taliban insurgents.

This is while the US claimed at the outset of its military invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 that the occupation was aimed at rooting out the Taliban terrorists across the war-torn country.

The Green Zone expansion project, which will significantly limit access to the Afghan capital, was prompted by a massive truck bombing at a gate of the current zone on May 31, killing over 150 people and destroying most of the German Embassy.

In the first stage of the project – expected to take six to 12 months – an expanded Green Zone will be established, covering nearly 1.86 square miles – up from 0.71 miles – closing off streets within it to all but official traffic.

In the final stage, a larger Blue Zone will be created, covering most of the city center, where severe restrictions on movement – particularly by trucks – will be imposed. Eventually, all trucks seeking to enter Kabul will be routed through a single portal, where they will be X-rayed and searched.

The project is also aimed at protecting "another long-term American investment," given the troop surge in the country to 15,000 from the existing 11,000 as the Trump administration's new Afghan strategy calls for continued US military presence there well into the 2020s.

Unlike former US President Barack Obama, Trump has suggested that American forces should remain in Afghanistan until victory, although his own generals have admitted that a total military victory in the terror-ravaged country is not possible.

The US military mission in Afghanistan is expected to continue for many more years, despite its unpopularity with the American public and the rest of the world.

"It seems America is not yet ready to end the longest war in its history," said Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid after Trump announced his new Afghan policy. "As Trump stated, 'Americans are weary of the long war in Afghanistan.' We shall cast further worry into them and force American officials to accept realities." (Press TV)

(16) Logar Youths Show ...

responsibility for the attack near the stadium in Kabul, claiming that the suicide bomber targeted the intelligence personnel.

The officials are saying that three people including a security guard lost their lives in the attack and six others were wounded.

The attack briefly resulted into the suspension of an ongoing cricket match in a cricket stadium located in the vicinity of the incident area. The Taliban militants group had earlier denied the involvement of the group in the attack. The latest series of attacks claimed by the terror group in Kabul and other parts of the country comes as pressures on the rise amid ongoing offensives led by the Afghan security forces besides the US forces based in Afghanistan conduct regular airstrikes against the hideouts of the terror group. (KP)

(17) Top Taliban ..

Afghan and American forces.

Kunar, located in eastern parts of Afghanistan, borders the tribal regions of Pakistan and is home to several terrorist groups.

The Afghan Taliban insurgents as well as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group's offshoot, ISIS Khorasan, operate in some of the restive districts of the province. (KP)

(18) Afghan-Austrian ...

"I see myself half Austrian and half Afghan. Maybe I am somebody with one foot in two different societies," said Hak-Hagir.

The conceptual and visual arts that Hak-Hagir wants to promote in Afghanistan are new to most Afghan artists. "A few years ago there was a center named Afghanistan's Modern Arts Center and many youths were working on conceptual art there. But unfortunately in the last two years this center has become inactive and we do not see any activity by the artists there," Mohammad Agha Zaki, a photographer and filmmaker said. (Tolonews)