

(1) UN Finds...

has been assured that the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) will continue its efforts to persuade the Taliban to attend the peace negotiation tables with government.

The report says that from 1 January to 24 September 257,881 people have fled their homes due to conflict in Afghanistan.

"In Sar-e-Pul Province, more than 2,000 people have reportedly been displaced from Sar-e-Pul and Sayyad districts to Sar-e-Pul City. In Trinkot, Uruzgan, some 2,800 petitions of displaced families have been submitted in the past three weeks, putting considerable strain on the few humanitarian partners present," read the report.

Based on the report, since January, 50,465 Afghan refugees have returned to their home country, just 38 per cent of the more than 130,000 refugees who had returned from January to September of last year.

The report further stated that during the past week, more than 40,000 displaced people, undocumented returnees and refugees received some form of humanitarian assistance across the country.

Members of an insurgent group reportedly issued warnings to health facilities in Uruzgan to close down. Some 30 clinics run by an NGO suspended their activities, according to reports, and the provincial hospital in Trinkot reportedly limited its activities to emergency services only. (Tolnews)

(2) Rabbani Assails...

relation to its global reputation and standing," he added.

Recently, Afghanistan presented Pakistan with yet another opportunity to engage in comprehensive state-to-state discourse on peace, security and prosperity.

"We hope -this time around - we will see a constructive engagement instead of plausible deniability and attempts to change narrative. An opportunity, even if embraced late, is nevertheless better than one lost," Rabbani said.

The Afghan view on cross-border terrorism was supported by India. "The international community cannot remain silent. It is the international community's first and foremost duty to ensure that the forces of terrorism and extremism do not find safe havens anywhere and at any level," said India's Permanent Representative Syed Akbaruddin.

"We must not differentiate between good and bad terrorists, or play one group against the other. The Taliban, Haqqani Network, AI-Qaeda, Daesh, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad and others of their ilk are all terror organizations, many of them proscribed by the UN," he said.

Akbaruddin said that these terrorist groups should be treated like terrorist organizations with no justifications offered for their activities. The situation in Afghanistan had remained particularly painful and disturbing with security worsening and visible signs of withering away of the gains, the top Indian envoy said, describing incessant attacks on hospitals, schools, funerals, international agencies and diplomatic missions as a matter of serious concern.

"The multiple crises that have been inflicted on Afghanistan have made Afghan territory attractive for criminal and terrorist groups, who are well connected to international terror and crime networks. These groups are stealing the resources of Afghanistan which ought to belong to the people of the country," he said.

Pakistan, however, spurned the allegations. Maleeha Lodhi, Pakistan's permanent representative of to the United Nation, rejected the insinuation directed at her country. She claimed the fundamental sources of instability in the minister's country "lay inside and not outside" Afghanistan.

More than 20 terrorist outfits were operating on Afghan soil, many of which were conducting terrorist attacks inside Pakistan, she regretted. Pakistan continued to bear the brunt of terrorists operating in safe havens inside Afghanistan, she asserted.

Afghanistan must do more to end such attacks, she said, calling upon the Taliban to end the violence and agree to peace negotiations. Pakistan was not prepared to fight Afghanistan's war on its own soil, she declared, stressing it would not approve any strategy that had failed in the past and that would continue to destabilise the region.

A coordinated effort to contain and defeat ISIL was critical, she said, emphasising the need to promote dialogue with insurgents willing to negotiate.

However, Afghanistan contested Lodhi's statement as yet another attempt to divert attention from that country's support for terrorism. Pakistan had a long history of using terror and violent extremism as an instrument of foreign policy, he charged, insisting instability in Afghanistan could largely be attributed to the export of extremist groups from Pakistan.

Earlier, UN's Special Representative Tadamichi Yamamoto said in a report that on the third anniversary of the creation of the unity government, he saw progress and daunting challenges, as well as opportunities for political engagement in the interest of peace.

Key reforms had been made despite ongoing security challenges and, if consolidated and sustained, they would significantly strength-

en the foundation for a more self-reliant Afghan State. (Pajhwok)

(3) Government ...

from Warsaj in Warsaj district of Takhar to Khost Farang district, road construction projects from Pashtoon Kot of Faryab to Maimana, Ata Khan Khwaja to Dawlatabad, increase in project costs for citizens charter programs in Khost, Nangarhar, Paktia, Ghazni, Paktika, Baghlan, Samangan, Kunduz, Helmand, and Kandahar provinces, and procurement of 86 electrical items for Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat for Khak Jabar district in Kabul.

The other contracts approved during the meeting include procurement of 86 items for Kandahar Breshna Sherkat generators, water supply and canalization project for the residential township in Hairatan in Balkh, solar system and information technology work for Paktia university, and procurement of 24 color items for the ministry of defense's telecommunication department.

The national procurement commission also awarded a contract with the UNESCO unit for the preservation and documentary making of Mes Aynak area.

Contract for the procurement of 60 stationary items for the ministry of interior and procurement of fuel for the same ministry, and modification of the contract for the construction of compounds for the railway network project in Aqina port belonging to the ministry of public works, were among the other projects approved during the meeting. (KP)

(4) Afghanistan Wins ...

indoor rowing, powerlifting, road cycling, sitting volleyball, swimming, wheelchair basketball, wheelchair tennis and wheelchair rugby. Also, new to the sports line up will be golf.

There will also be a demonstration match of sledge hockey. All competitions will take place in state-of-the-art sport venues throughout Toronto.

The 2017 Games will introduce the first-ever Invictus Games relay, igniting the Invictus Games spirit across all 32 Canadian military bases and neighbouring communities. (Tolnews)

(5) 220,000 foreigners...

equipment for tourists, negligence in preserving historic heritage are some challenges being faced by the tourism industry. National policies should be devised and implemented for overcoming these issues."

Danish said the increase in the number of tourists visiting the country contributed to national revenues and Afghanistan with its ancient civilization background would be introduced as a proud country to the world by promoting the tourism industry.

He stressed private sector's role in development of tourism in the country, saying the private sector could take steps for attracting tourists by properly investing and establishing necessary facilities besides achieving their own interests as well.

Sayeda Muzhgan Mustafavi, MoIC's deputy administrative and finance head, said the increasing number of tourists and enhancing national revenues were general goals of her ministry.

She said UN's General Assembly had named 2017 as 'the year of sustainable tourism and tool for development' in the country. "In case this field is improved in Afghanistan, it will play a significant role in Afghanistan's economic development", she concluded. (Pajhwok)

(6) A Lot of Work ...

showing a surge compared to last year. Women's Affairs Director Ruqia Achakzai said most of the women in Kandahar endured family violence and 80 percent of these women lived in districts.

"Murder, self-burning, denial of hereditary rights, elopement, pre-adult and forced marriages and other incidents are forms of the violence committed against women."

AHRC director in Kandahar Fakhruddin Faez said more cases of violence against women were registered each year. "Two things matter here -- awareness among women about their rights that has gone up and increase in incidents of violence against women," he said.

He said it was a fact that women faced violence in Kandahar and the fact should be admitted and more work done to reduce the level of violence against the gender.

Raziqa, 40, a victim of family violence, is the resident of the second municipality district of Kandahar City. She said her husband would enter a dispute with her on small issues and finally set her alight. She recovered after months of treatment and separated from her husband after the incident.

Razeqa is currently living with her young son and works at people's homes as maid to earn alimony. She said she knew other women subjected to similar treatment but she could not raise her voice for them.

Health Facilities:

Apart from domestic violence, another big issue women face in Kandahar is the lack of health facilities. The Women's Affairs Department director said women in districts suffered the most due to the lack of health issues.

She said women were evacuated to health facilities only after their condition reached a dangerous level. In most districts, she said, clinics were not available and some families refused to take their woman patients to these

clinics, endangering their lives.

Kandahar public health acting director, Dr. Mohammad Azim Zamaryal, told Pajhwok that special maternity hospitals had been constructed in other zones of the country; but unfortunately not in Kandahar.

He said currently a maternity ward was operational at the Mirwais Hospital of Kandahar but it couldn't cope with the increasing patients.

According to him, the Mirwais Hospital functioned on the southern zone level and its maternity ward was overcrowded compared to other wards. He said patients weren't offered proper health services due to lack of facilities.

Mirwais Hospital maternity ward head, Dr. Farishta Bawar, said they struggled with space shortage, facilities and personnel in dealing with childbirths.

However, she said despite all these issues they were able to manage 52 births on a daily basis including at least five C-section deliveries. She asked the central government to pay serious to women's healthcare and increase health facilities for them.

Education:

The women's affairs director, Ruqia Achakzai, said girls did not go to school in districts except those near Kandahar City. "This is a big tragedy of our society."

She said even some families in Kandahar City allowed their girls to attend school only until they reached adolescence and then restricted to home.

"About 30 percent of the girl students remain inside school in Kandahar and more than 4,000 girls are annually forced into leaving school by their families."

According to her, such issues have a negative impact on girls' education, preventing them from pursuing higher education.

Kandahar education director Eng. Abdul Qadir Piwastoon said nearly 13,000 girls were admitted to schools annually in Kandahar, but most of them later opted to drop out leaving their studies incomplete.

He said there were many issues preventing girls from getting education in Kandahar where he said only 200 girls graduated from 12th grade ever year.

No 12th grade girl graduate in 17 districts

In the past 16 years, not even a single girl could become a high school graduate in 17 districts of Kandahar mainly because of no female teachers.

Deputy women's affairs director Lailuma Noori acknowledged the Ministry of Women's Affairs was yet to deliver on its repeated promise of establishing a special market for women's handicrafts in the province. She told Pajhwok fortunately with her department's efforts a local trader allocated his business market's one floor to women's handicrafts in the Aino Mena area of Kandahar city.

Noori said about 60 shops would be given to women free of rent for one year in order they were able to improve their crafts. She said if this happened, women would be finally able to pay rents after one year. (Pajhwok)

(7) Pakistan's Army...

Dawlat Waziri.

Meanwhile, prominent Pakistani politician and chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party, Imran Khan, has said more violence, more bloodshed and more bombings in Afghanistan is not the answer.

He said dialogue was the solution.

"I think Donald Trump's policy is deeply flawed. He neither understands the history of Pakistan nor the character of the Afghan people," Khan said in an interview with The Associated Press.

"To blame Pakistan for this failed policy and then giving credit to India for some reason which does not border Afghanistan ... If Pakistan army, government had any leverage with the Taliban then surely they (the US) should ask Pakistan to play a role in building peace and getting them to the dialogue table but not what they are proposing - more violence, more bloodshed, more bombing ... I think Pakistan has done enough."

"More fighting and bloodshed is not the answer. I said it 17 years ago and I am still saying this now," he said.

Meanwhile, Bajwa is expected to meet with senior Afghan officials in Kabul this week to discuss key issues - including getting the Taliban to the peace talks table.

"We will ask Pakistan to act honestly, otherwise these trips will not have results," said MoD spokesman Dawlat Waziri.

In addition, a number of Afghan lawmakers in parliament have said that Afghan officials should provide the Pakistani side with solid evidence that they support the Taliban.

They said that the Afghan government should put pressure on Pakistan to abide by its commitment towards fighting terrorism.

"Pakistan should be asked to hand over the leadership of Afghan Taliban to the Afghan government and act solidly for the elimination of terrorist hideouts," said MP Fatima Aziz.

"The Afghan government should hand over all evidence to Pakistani side and categorically tell them this action is no longer acceptable to us," said MP Abdul Hai Akhundzada.

Khan meanwhile said that he felt Islamabad has done enough against terrorism and now other countries need to take action.

"I think Pakistan has done enough. I think now the others players involved need to do more," added Khan.

This comes ahead of a summit Russia hopes

to hold where delegates from at least 50 countries can meet to discuss the ongoing crisis in Afghanistan. (Tolnews)

(8) Mattis Seeks Indian ...

Sitharaman said, following talks with Mattis. Defence ties between India and the United States have expanded rapidly, with New Delhi buying U.S. weapons worth \$15 billion over the last decade, moving away from traditional supplier Russia.

Military experts say U.S. weapons transfers aim at bolstering Indian capabilities to develop a counterweight against China's growing assertiveness in recent years.

Indian and U.S. negotiators are now trying to move forward with a deal to supply the Indian navy with 22 Sea Guardian drone aircraft, whose June approval by the U.S. government was the first such clearance to a non-NATO ally.

India wants the unarmed drones to help its navy lengthen the duration of its surveillance in the Indian Ocean, where Chinese naval ships and submarines make regular forays. Expanding naval cooperation with India was a top priority, Mattis said, adding that three-way exercises involving the United States, India and Japan boosted operational cooperation.

CHINA LOOMS LARGE

The United States has been critical of China's build-up of military facilities in the South China Sea. But New Delhi turned down a U.S. suggestion of regional joint patrols with the Indian navy, for fear of a Chinese backlash.

"China looms very large for both countries," said Dhruva Jaishankar, a specialist on India-U.S. relations at Brookings India.

"The strategic underpinning of India-US defence ties is in the common concerns they have over China, over its revisionism."

The Indian air force has also asked for 90 armed Avenger Predator drones that experts say could be deployed for cross-border strikes, such as targeting militant camps India says exist on Pakistan's side of disputed Kashmir.

Such a sale would need White House and Congress approval, sources said. But Pakistan and, possibly, China could see the move as de-stabilising.

Dronemaker General Atomics is pleased the Indian government has won approval for the surveillance version of the drone, said Vivek Lall, its chief executive for U.S. and international strategic development.

"Not only will this platform enhance India's capabilities in the areas of maritime domain awareness and security, but the interoperability with one of the U.S.'s most important strategic partners will contribute to security across the region."

The two sides will also discuss Lockheed Martin's offer to build F-16 fighter planes in India as part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's drive to build a domestic military industrial base.

"We look forward to sharing some of our most advanced defence technologies," Mattis said.

Sweden's Saab is the other contender for the deal to supply at least 100 single-engine combat planes. (Reuters)

(9) US Calling for...

Meanwhile, Yamamoto Tadamichi, the UN secretary general's special representative to Afghanistan, told the UN Security Council on Monday night that the security situation in the country remains a serious concern.

He pointed out that the Taliban continues to resist appeals to negotiate with the Afghan government.

He said that at the current rate of death due to conflict, by 2020, tens of thousands more Afghans will have been killed.

He said all sides agree that there is no military solution to the conflict but that there are now renewed efforts to work towards peace and some countries in the region are actively working to assist in this process.

"I am convinced that a political settlement is possible," he said.

"I appeal to the countries in the region to conduct a profound reassessment of their strategic interest and renew work towards a viable peace process leading to an Afghan owned solution to the conflict." (Tolnews)

(10) Taxpayer Call ...

the reform. By opening of this center, communication with taxpayers and national traders will be conducted through a single window."

Paul Sisk, USAID representative, said: "Public awareness is very important. Opening this center is a great achievement that has reformative aspect."

Khan Jan Alokzay, Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce acting director, said: "The Ministry of Finance shined well. The opening of the center for business and private sector is a good message." It is worth mentioning that, the taxpayers could make complaint, suggestion and demands through the following numbers: 0755840111- 0755840112- 0755840113- 0755840114

USAID microfinance training program

Meanwhile, 75 young Afghan women graduated from "USAID Promote: Women in the Economy (WIE)'s Microfinance Institute Training (MFI) program."

Implemented by the Afghanistan Microfinance Association (AMA), the nine-month apprenticeship program equips young women with technical and managerial skills needed to secure jobs in banking and micro-

finance.

The program operates in Kabul, Herat, and Balkh provinces, with trainees placed in the First Microfinance Bank of Afghanistan (FMFB), Afghan Rural Finance Company (ARFC), Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA) Afghanistan, and OXUS Afghanistan.

To date, 11 of the trainees have already been offered full time jobs within the MFIs they trained under during the program.

"An important step towards improving access to finance for women-owned businesses and self-employed women is increasing the number of women in mid and senior level positions in banking and microfinance, including commercial lending," said Susan DeCamp, Director of USAID's Gender Office.

"Increasing the number of women in the financial sector - particularly in decision-making and lending roles - will make it easier for women to obtain financial services."

Following the success of the first training program, WIE and AMA are preparing for a second round of trainee placements in Kabul, Herat, and Balkh.

MFIs Mutahid, Exchangerzone, and Hand in Hand, additionally entered the program and have agreed to accept female trainees.

"In addition to increasing the number of women employees in the financial sector, the program provides opportunities to our member MFIs to hire trained and dedicated women employees, which will help them to provide better financial services to women entrepreneurs," said Najibullah Samim, Executive Director, AMA.

WIE's Private Sector development program is currently assisting more than 125 women-owned companies or those that employ women through a variety of innovative programming designed to improve access to finance and new markets, develop business capacity, and increase growth and profitability. (Pajhwok)

(11) Transport Ministry ...

to Tahmasbi, one big problem was the widespread practice of using fake customs documents. However, a new system will be introduced where from next month it will be virtually impossible to forge the documents.

"The current papers they use can be easily forged; because it lacks specific signs - without any security marks. We have ordered the printing of new documents, which will be printed within the next month and distributed countrywide," Tahmasbi added.

Transport ministry officials also said in the last month they managed to collect an additional 17 million AFs in road tariffs from four points of entry into Kabul. The ministry said by next year scanners will be installed at Kabul entrances, which will also help generate more revenue.

Meanwhile a number of economic analysts said transport was a potentially viable sector in terms of revenue generation for government but they called for reforms to be brought in the sector.

"If government increases transparency and accountability, doubtless everyone will pay the tax and customs fees," economic analyst Abdul Wasee Haidari said. (Tolnews)

(12) UN Envoy in...

increased by 10 percent compared to a year earlier.

The money earned by illicit drugs production is mind-blowing, he said, adding that total sales of heroin in Afghanistan amount to \$28 billion per year.

The UN official further emphasized that despite some security issues, UNODC is assisting Afghanistan and Iran in the campaign against illicit drugs.

Iran, which has a 900-kilometer common border with Afghanistan, has been used as the main

Despite high economic and human costs, the Islamic Republic has been actively fighting drug-trafficking over the past three decades. (Tasnim)

(13) Violence Against...

efforts at creating awareness among the females about their rights.

Khost governor Hukam Khan Habibi said illiteracy, use of drugs and old traditions contributed to the violence against the gender.

He said if the authorities concerned and religious scholars joined hands in preventing crimes against women, the situation could further improve. (Pajhwok)

(14) 20 Daesh, Taliban ...

launched an operation clashing twice with Taliban militants during the past 24 hours.

He said 12 insurgents were killed and nine others wounded in the clashes. The injured included Taliban's shadow district chief for Dawlat Shah district, Mualvi Habib Rahman. He said during the operation security forces also recovered four body armors, a landmine-making factory, and some other stuff used in making bombs.

There has been so far no word from insurgents in this regard. (Pajhwok)

(15) Dozens of Militants ...

He said dozens of houses were damaged in the crossfire in Shiwan, Grany and Ganjabad villages. He said the security force left the area yesterday concluding their operation.

Abdul Hakim, a resident of Grany area, confirmed Sayed Ahmad's account and said security forces had left after clearing areas near their check-posts. He said the Taliban had returned back to the area. (Pajhwok)