

(1) US, Afghanistan's...

Ghani also stated that Afghanistan can achieve its goals from a political perspective and through sacrifices made by security forces. He emphasized that it was now the country's responsibility to end the 40-year crisis.

He made it clear that the past two years have been tough but that now with the new US strategy in place, Afghanistan has a better idea of its future.

Reacting to Trump's strategy for Afghanistan, Abdullah meanwhile said on Tuesday: "Our message to our neighbors is that the new US policy is a chance for them (countries in the region) to utilize and benefit from this opportunity."

Ghani also immediately welcomed the new policy and called on anti-government armed groups to lay down their weapons and join the peace process.

"After this there is no timeline or time-based conditions, the US will stay with the Afghan people to the end," said Ghani.

Trump early Tuesday announced his administration's new strategy on Afghanistan and South Asia.

Trump said: "I am here tonight to lay out our path forward in Afghanistan and South Asia."

He did not however reveal details in terms of troop numbers to Afghanistan.

"We will not talk about numbers of troops or our plans for further military activities," he said. "America's enemies must never know our plans or believe they can wait us out. I will not say when we are going to attack, but attack we will."

He said the US victory in Afghanistan will have a definition.

"Our troops will fight to win. We will fight to win. From now on, victory will have a clear definition - attacking our enemies, obliterating ISIS (Daesh), crushing al Qaeda, preventing the Taliban from taking over Afghanistan, and stopping mass terror attacks against America before they emerge. We will ask our NATO allies and global partners to support our new strategy, with additional troop and funding increases in line with our own. We are confident they will," Trump stated.

He said the new strategy of the US for Afghanistan will be conditions-based.

"As a result of our comprehensive review, American strategy in Afghanistan and South Asia will change dramatically in the following ways: A core pillar of our new strategy is a shift from a time-based approach to one based on conditions."

"Another fundamental pillar of our new strategy is the integration of all instruments of American power, diplomatic, economic, and military, toward a successful outcome," he added.

He also talked about giving more authority to the troops on the ground. "We will also expand authority for American armed forces to target the terrorists and criminal networks that sow violence and chaos throughout Afghanistan," Troop said.

He added that their mission in Afghanistan will be to eliminate terrorists.

"Ultimately, it is up to the people of Afghanistan to take ownership of their future, to govern their society, and to achieve an everlasting peace. We are a partner and a friend, but we will not dictate to the Afghan people how to live or how to govern their own complex society. We are not nation building again. We are killing terrorists," he added.

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On Pakistan, Trump vowed to change the US's approach to dealing with the Afghan neighbor, promising to crack down on Pakistan's harboring of terrorist and militant groups.

"They are housing the very terrorists we are fighting," Trump said, noting that the US gives Pakistan billions of dollars.

"That will have to change and that will change immediately. No partnership can survive a country's harboring of terrorists." (Tolonews)

(2) Mattis and Tillerson ...

numbers right now."

"There is a number that I'm authorized to go up to," he acknowledged.

Mattis said he and Gen Joseph Dunford, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, will first put together a plan before announcing the number of additional forces. Once that plan is public, "there will be visibility to troop levels," Tillerson said at a State Department press briefing.

But those numbers will be dictated by conditions on the ground, both men said, and not on political timelines, ABC reported.

"We've obviously been discussing this option for some time," Mattis said.

"I'll look at the number we have on the ground, reorganize those on the ground to align with the new strategy and bring whatever gap fillers I need."

ABC reported that Tillerson meanwhile

defended the non-disclosure stance as an important tactic, arguing that the US needs to be "as cagey and tactical" as the Taliban and other enemy groups.

"We have not been fighting that way," he added.

In June, Trump gave Mattis the authority to set troop levels in Afghanistan. Mattis reportedly favors sending in as many as 4,000 additional US forces to push back against gains made by the Taliban and Daesh.

Trump on Monday said that the US will forego a timetable for its military operations in Afghanistan and instead let "conditions on the ground" guide their tactics.

Dunford meanwhile called Trump's strategy "a new approach to Afghanistan and the region."

"Our Afghan partners know that our commitment is strong and enduring," Dunford said in a statement.

"Our future presence will be based on conditions and not arbitrary timelines. This new strategy means the Taliban cannot win militarily. Now is the time to renounce violence and reconcile. A peaceful, stable Afghanistan is victory for the Afghan people and the goal of the coalition."

"We believe -- we already know -- there are certain moderate elements of the Taliban who we think are going to be ready and want to help develop a way forward," he said, adding later that the US no longer believes Afghanistan needs to have a democratic government, as long as it meets America's security needs.

"Afghanistan and the Taliban representatives need to sit down and sort this out. It's not for the US to tell them it must be this particular model, it must be under these conditions," he said. Although previous administrations have tried to push democracy in other countries, he said, "In a lot of places, it doesn't work."

Trump said in his speech on Monday that his original instinct was to pull troops out of Afghanistan but that, after taking office and consulting with military leaders, he changed his views.

He warned Monday against a hasty withdrawal that would allow terrorists safe haven, and he criticized the US troop withdrawal from Iraq, completed in 2011, which Trump said led to the rise of Daesh.

He also chastised Pakistan for harboring terrorist groups, saying the country has "much to gain from partnering with our effort in Afghanistan." (Tolonews)

(3) Indonesia, ...

Ulema Council of Afghanistan was set to visit Indonesia for meeting the country's ulema and scholars.

Rahman said his country was in favour of everlasting peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Salahuddin Rabbani, acting foreign minister, also spoke on the occasion, saying bilateral trade ties between the two countries had recently strengthened. "We are very happy that Indonesian traders have expressed interest in investment in Afghanistan."

He called Indonesia a finest cooperator and announced that Afghan traders would attend a trade session in Indonesia this year.

"Since 2001, Indonesia has been beside us in times of happiness and sorrow. The country has also assisted us in eradicating poverty and in other spheres."

Rabbani said Afghanistan opened its embassy in Indonesia in 1954, adding Afghanistan was among the first countries that formally recognized Indonesia as an independent country. (Pajhwok)

(4) MoF Launches

"Before taxpayers would write their revenue and expenses on paper that was time consuming practice and prone to corruption. But from now on the procedure of sharing information is going to be electronic and computerized."

He said a total of 500 large taxpayers were registered with the MoF, but currently only 300 companies were operational who could avail the new system.

Zadran promised medium and small taxpayers would also benefit from the system next year.

According to him, companies generating revenue amounting to more than 300 million afghanis on annual basis are listed as large taxpayers.

Khan Jan Al Alokzay, acting director of Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI), welcomed the new system and said it would reduce corruption.

He called the online system a big step towards increasing coordination between the private sector and government departments. (Pajhwok)

(5) Govt. Spends...

spent most part of their budgets by investing it in projects.

However, the ministries of telecommunication, defense, transport, border affairs and Hajj and religious affairs have spent the least amount of money so far.

Analysts said the lack of budget spending is among the issues which will increase corruption and affect the generosity of

international donors.

"If it is not spent, it is questionable for the international community which finances projects," said Zabihullah Naseer, an economic affairs analyst.

Reports say that ministries spend the first six months of the fiscal year planning and assessing their development needs and then they focus on the implementation of projects over the next six months. Analysts say this affects budget spend in government organizations.

Ministries that have spent their budgets:

- Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation spent more than 73 percent
- Ministry of Finance spent more than 62 percent

- Ministry of Agriculture spent more than 51 percent

- Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation spent more than 41 percent

- Ministry of Economy spent more than 40 percent

Ministries that have still to spend their budgets:

- Ministry of telecommunication spent just over five percent

- Ministry of Defense spent just over seven percent

- Ministry of Transportation spent just over 11 percent

- Ministry of Border Affairs spent about 12 percent

- Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs spent about 13 percent (Tolonews)

(6) Health Facilities ...

facilities across the country face major deficiencies.

More than half of the facilities are experiencing structural and maintenance problems and a majority of the facilities need urgent repairs, the report finds.

Almost half of the facilities are in poor hygiene and sanitation conditions with a quarter of them not having toilets.

Four out of 10 health facilities lack potable water system while one in every five facilities has no electricity at all.

Access to health facilities is mentioned a major problem in the IWA report that claims two-thirds of the health facilities do not have ambulances, adding to difficulties in accessing clinics and hospitals.

But despite these problems, a significant number (99 percent) of the facilities remain operational during day time, the report says.

Furthermore, lack of adequacy among hospital staff was observed in public sector healthcare facilities, especially among female medical staffers who were culturally required to attend female patients

Speaking to reporters in Kabul, Integrity Watch Afghanistan director Sayed Ikram Afzali: "The study shows that for adequate health services delivery, it is not enough to just build clinics and hospitals."

He said major issues in the public sector hospitals included lack of maintenance, unavailability of medical staff, lack of female health-care staff, and poor management.

"These deficiencies weaken the capacity of healthcare delivery in public hospitals and clinics," he added.

"The research provides a number of lessons to learn," said Ezatullah Adib, Research Manager at Integrity Watch Afghanistan, who worked on the report.

"Observation of our surveyors provides an insight into the nature of shortcomings that limit the capacities to deliver quality services in the health facilities," he said.

"Buildings of the health facilities are in a poor state have structural problems like leaked ceiling, cracked walls, lack of water supply or sanitation. It has been learned that people in some areas do not have access to hospitals or clinics due to bad condition of roads or uncertain security situation."

Abid continued many health facilities in the country reported non-availability of medical equipment and supplies while poor management and irregularities were seen in other facilities, indicating poor planning and budgeting.

"Weak monitoring results in bad maintenance and mismanagement that leads to bad service delivery" Afzali said.

"Therefore, to avoid such problems, regular monitoring by the government and the communities around the facilities is a dire need", he added.

Recommendations:

To accrue returns from both past and future investments in public healthcare, it is urgent for MoPH to first focus on rectification of the problems (structural, operational and management) of the current facilities and then undertake forward planning for new expansion and construction.

For realistic planning, visits to operational facilities to reduce existing problems. For best results, the site inspection team should be composed of ministry officials, civil society organizations, community representatives, medical professionals, engineers and budget and audit specialists.

The inclusion of expertise on budget is essential for estimating realistic budget needs for construction, operation, maintenance and monitoring.

Community monitoring and oversight is

an option that should be considered. (Pajhwok)

(7) Govt. to Keep...

Afghanistan was now a history and the country's direction was very clear.

He insisted the end of terrorist organizations was inevitable. He said Afghanistan had always stated that the roots of terrorism lied outside the country, something acknowledged as a clear fact clearly in the new US strategy.

Referring to militant groups, the president said: "You cannot win by force, you cannot divide this geography, if you think you can win, remove it from your mind. Your ideas of violence have no outcome except the loss of youth, disgrace to the country and its dignity."

The president reiterated Afghanistan wanted cordial relations with all countries particularly Pakistan. He viewed insecure Afghanistan in the interest of no other country and Pakistan would directly suffer from instability in Afghanistan.

He said the new US strategy provided a chance to Pakistan to review its old policy regarding Afghanistan and build upon relations based on mutual respect and interest. (Pajhwok)

(8) Ministry Says...

tasked to operate it cannot fulfill its requirements.

According to ministry officials, they will finalize their review on the Hajigak mine in the near future.

Mines ministry said offers by a Canadian company to run the first phase of the mine has been rejected and that the ministry has called for an assessment.

Mines and petroleum ministry spokesman, Abdul Qadeer Mutfi, said if the Indian consortium does not fulfill Afghanistan's suggestions, new contractors will be found to run the mine.

"If the Indian consortium can fulfill the technical, legal and other related issues, then the contract will be signed and the next steps will be taken. If the consortium cannot and problems exist, then it is completely natural that the process will be put out to tender," said Mutfi.

Meanwhile a number of factory owners said considering the demand for iron on the local market, Hajigak iron mine would benefit local businesses.

A number of iron smelters said they import raw material and if Hajigak is mined, it will help grow the economy.

"Afghanistan's mines, especially the biggest one - Hajigak - has lots of iron. If it is extracted, it will fulfill all iron needs for factories and domestic industries," Paroz, a factory owner said. (Tolonews)

(9) Breshna ..

electricity if they had paid for it.

Tawhidi confirmed that the first meters will be installed in government institutions and in the homes of individuals who consistently fail to pay their bills.

"Smart meters are equipped with a card; it depends on consumers on how much electricity they buy whether they buy for 100 Af or 1,000 Af, but their card gets credited which they then use for their meters," said Tawhidi.

Kabul residents meanwhile welcomed the move - especially that of getting their bills monthly but were concerned about an increase in costs.

"If the bill comes on a monthly basis it would be very good, because the people are very weak financially," said Kabul resident Noor Agha. (Tolonews)

(10) US Envoy Briefs

16 years ago.

The military statement quoted Bajwa as saying Pakistan wants peace in Afghanistan.

U.S. officials and analysts have long said Pakistan tolerates the presence of the Afghan Taliban and the allied Haqqani network, which are leading the insurgency against Afghan and U.S. forces. (AP)

(11) Chinese Delegation...

Meanwhile, Habibullah Timori, Herat public works director, said four types of high-quality marbles - finely crystalline marble ranging in colour from pure white to a subtle light green white, Carrara, and Granite Marbles - had been identified in Chasht-i-Sharif district of the province.

He said Herat marbles were considered finest in the world and the stone had many times secured first position among 52 countries of the world.

Marble mines are situated 125 kilometers east of Herat city, stretching over from Obad district till Chasht-i-Sharif district. (Pajhwok)

(12) US Stance on

stance of the US and condemn it."

Karzai said the Afghans' demand was everlasting peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region, not expansion and fueling of war and continuation of killings and destruction.

"Instead, the US should make efforts to end the war in Afghanistan and the region through dialogue, negotiations and peaceful steps."

The statement said the only good point in the new strategy was the US admission of its past mistakes and breaking silence

towards terrorist safe havens in Pakistan.

"Such remarks have been repetitively heard from American leaders in the past, but we hope this time the words are translated into action." (Pajhwok)

(13) US May Sanction ...

officials said on a conference call with reporters that also includes demanding more from the Pakistani government when it comes to combating terrorist groups.

"I think the important takeaway for the Pakistani government last night is that, you know, they should understand that they're on notice from this president, from this administration," the official said. "The United States has been really patient with Pakistan for a really long time. We haven't been getting a good deal from them."

The call was held for administration allies and surrogates, not the media, but some news organizations who learned of the call dialed in, including POLITICO.

As part of the new strategy, the official said the US could conceivably impose sanctions on terrorist groups including the Haqqani network, which has links to elements in the Pakistani government, as well as on any Pakistani officials "who are tied to these kinds of groups, you know, in ways that they shouldn't be."

That the Trump's announced strategy was devoid of specifics regarding the exact number of troops set to be deployed or a timetable for that deployment was by design, multiple officials from his administration said Monday.

Such decisions will be made based on "conditions on the ground," Vice President Mike Pence told NBC's "Today" show Tuesday morning.

"In the past, it's always been time based on when we were going to get out, or based on the number of troops or based on all kinds of things. Now it's results based, and that works," US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley said Tuesday morning on CNN's "New Day."

"It works when the president speaks up and says this is what we're going to do, we're going to stomp out terrorism and he follows through with it." (Tolonews)

(14) 38 New Projects ...

prevent the waste of 40 percent of water, cover 15 percent of new area and increase production by 20 percent, the minister added.

He said 295 irrigation networks had been built over the past two and a half years and the number would increase to 320 by the end of current solar year.

Shafiqullah, a representative of a construction company implementing the projects in Laghman, assured his firm would focus quality and meeting the timescale. (Pajhwok)

heads of state come under pressure and how some nations press us to secure their interest," the writer remarked.

Basharat believed it might be the first time a journalist accompanying the president on foreign trips had written a book. He encouraged other journalists to pen down important events they had attended during their trips with important dignitaries.

It is the writer's fourth book being published. Two more books by him are expected to come out in the near future. (Pajhwok)

(15) Book on ...

operations as well as one night raid operation over the period, according to the statement.

The operations were aiming to dismantle the insurgency's mid-level command structure and its supply line, it added.

In the southern Zabul province, a local Taliban leader named Mullah Saifulah was killed together with three militants during a raid in the province, 340 km south of Kabul. Meanwhile, another setback for the Taliban was the loss of local leader Abdul Raziq Surgul who was killed with five other militants after Afghan air force struck their hideout in eastern Wardak province. (Xinhua)

(16) ANSF Keep ...

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(17) Call to Constitute ...

If it was not possible in a short period of time or at the government level, then journalists of the two countries can begin work in this regard through social media and joint groups, Afghan delegates suggested. (Pajhwok)

(18) 5 Including ...

and 38 others wounded in the attack.

A scholar of the mosque, who wished anonymity, said: "Students were busy in learning lessons when the explosion occurred. Many of them wounded were evacuated to hospital for treatment."

He said a large part of the mosque was damaged. No militant group has so far claimed responsibility for the bombing. (Pajhwok)

(19) Taliban Shadow...

chief for Chak district was killed along with three of his accomplices two days back in foreign forces airstrike.

The Taliban have not yet commented about the incident. (Pajhwok)