Ghani, Guterres Talk Terrorism, Peace Process

WASHINGTON - The Trump administration is looking at a long-term strategy to combat the Islamic State in Afghanistan, US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson told lawmakers on Wednesday. “We have an Afghanistan policy, under review as we speak, in the interim, those of us, we have had interagency discussions with the president about the how to preserve the opportunity for a long-term solution,” he said.

During his testimony, the secretary pledged the US would never allow Afghanistan become a platform for terrorism against the United States or certainly other nations.

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Rahimullah Aman

KABUL - A special operation involving air and ground forces has kicked off in eastern Nangarhar province of Afghanistan for the elimination of the militants affiliated with the so-called State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization in Afghanistan, IS Afghanistan, BS Khurasan.

The provincial government’s spokesman, Abdul Babar, said the campaign has started in Chacharip and Pucher Agam districts.

This comes as the Afghan security forces have been conducting operations against the terror group under name of Hajran operations, mainly covering the Kot and Arghandab districts.

The US forces based in Afghanistan are also occasionally providing air support to the Afghan forces fighting the terror group.

The latest campaign has been launched... (More on P4)

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Rahimullah Aman

KABUL - The UN Secretary-General António Guterres arrived in Kabul on the country’s difficult situation and respect for neutrality, freedom and independence. The UN Secretary-General welcomed adoption of the resolution by the General Assembly on Jan 2 announcing suspending Telecommunication and Information Technology (MCIT). The minister was ordered suspended until pending Telecommunication and Information Technology investigations financial matters of the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology (MCT). The minister was ordered suspended until investigations finish.

Before the accusations,... (More on P4)

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Rahimullah Aman

WASHINGTON - The Pentagon has been pushing for the first time after assuming office to express solidarity with the people of Afghanistan for peace, stability and development.

During a meeting, President Ashraf Ghani thanked the UN chief for his visit to show solidarity with the people of Afghanistan in the difficult hour. Both leaders discussed different subjects, specially the peace process, terrorism regional and international issues, a statement from Ghani’s office said during his meeting with Pakistan’s Prime Minister Imran Khan.

US General Assembly Approves New Counter-Terrorism Office

UNITED NATIONS - The UN General Assembly approved on Thursday the request of UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to set up a new office for counter-terrorism on Thursday.

The General Assembly President Peter Thomson said the resolution was “the first major institutional reform presented by Guterres,” who took office on Jan 1.

Chief UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said that the secretary-general welcomed adoption of the General Assembly resolution “which endorsed his proposal to establish a new UN Office of Counter-Terrorism.”... (More on P4)

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Rahimullah Aman

WASHINGTON - The Pentagon on Thursday said it has not yet reached a decision on future troop levels in Afghanistan, amid speculation that Defense Secretary Jim Mattis may have favorable plans for an increase in forces to help break a stalemate with the Taliban.

“No decisions have been made,” said Defense Department spokesman Jeff Davis, when asked about an Associated Press report that Mattis had decided on sending about 4,000 additional troops. Well, that figure could be in line with previous comments by US officials, speaking on condition of anonymity. Reuters has reported that US deliberations were focused on sending between 3,000 and 5,000 troops to Afghanistan, where American forces have been fighting for nearly a decade.

One official told Reuters last month that 3,800 troops could be sent but cautioned that could change, given discussions... (More on P4)

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Rahimullah Aman

Special Air and Ground Campaign Kicks off Against ISIS

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan Adviser to Prime Minister Sartaj Aziz has said that China’s Foreign Minister Wang Yi will undertake visits to Kabul and Islamabad in the current month to mediate between Pakistan and Afghanistan for improving their bilateral ties.

The official said China will facilitate the negotiations between the two neighbors.

Pointing to a recent meeting between Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and Pakistan’s Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in Astana on the sidelines of SCO summit, the adviser said that the meeting took place in a friendly environment.

At the meeting, the two sides agreed that strengthening cooperation between the two countries is one such opportunity to involve it.

He said that top diplomat further said at the Astana meeting, “We have an Afghanistan policy, under review as we speak, in the interim, those of us, we have had interagency discussions with the president about the how to preserve the opportunity for a long-term solution,” he said.

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