

(1) Pence, Abdullah ...

insurgency and international terrorists, such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda.

He stressed the need for Kabul's continued engagement and progress on necessary reforms, political inclusion and preparations for forthcoming elections – all critical to providing greater stability and opportunities for Afghanistan.

It was the first high-level meeting between leaders of the two countries at the White House since August when President Donald Trump unveiled his new South Asia strategy.

"They focused on president Trump's South Asia policy and its beneficial impact on the security situation in Afghanistan."

During the meeting in the historic Roosevelt Room of the White House, Pence also commended Abdullah's partnership with President Ashraf Ghani.

Meanwhile, ITV quoted Chief Abdullah as saying that terrorist sanctuaries in the neighbourhood still posed a big problem for Afghanistan. He hoped that Pakistan would help eliminate the safe havens on its soil.

Abdullah has met top officials of the Trump administration over the last few days, including Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and National Security Advisor HR McMaster. (Pajhwok)

(2) Govts. Keep Global ...

ratchet up ambition. It would be called the "Talanoa Dialogue, after a Fijian word for story-telling and sharing experiences.

And they made progress to draft a detailed rule book for the 2015 Paris agreement, which seeks to end the fossil fuel era this century, at the meeting in Bonn that ran overnight beyond a planned ending on Friday.

The rule book, covering aspects such as how to report and monitor each nation's greenhouse gas emissions, is due to be ready by December next year.

Many delegates said the work needed to go faster. (Reuters)

(3) Beijing to ...

the New Silk Road, he said Beijing was working for the greater involvement and development of regional countries.

While supporting the Afghan-led peace process, China was trying to improve Af-Pak relations as well, he added. "We will hold a trilateral meeting for good ties between Afghanistan and Pakistan."

Feng pointed out the Chinese foreign minister during a visit to Kabul and Islamabad discussed many issues with officials of both countries, including security concerns in the region and enhancement of economic relations.

Revival of the Quadrilateral Coordination Group involving Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and the United States were also discussed during the minister's trip.

According to Feng, all three sides agreed on the implementation of about 30 projects, including communications policy, infrastructure, livelihood and peacekeeping.

He said the issue of Afghanistan was complicated and the Af-Pak blame game not help defuse tensions but pave the ground for others countries to interfere.

"We don't want to interfere in the affair of the two neighbours and we can't judge who is right and who is wrong. But we can work on a mutually beneficial process," Feng said, adding it was a challenge for China to mediate between the neighbours.

Peace talks between the Afghan government and Taliban were approved at the third meeting of the Quadrilateral Coordination Group in Islamabad in 2016.

However, the fourth and fifth rounds of talks made Afghanistan's relations with Pakistan worse. The US president, while rolling out his new strategy for Afghanistan, accused Pakistan of supporting militants.

Last month, Pakistan army chief Gen. Javed Qamar Bajwa visited Kabul, and on the basis of an agreement, the sixth meeting of the joint coordination group was held after a one and a half year to pave the way for peace in Afghanistan.

However, details of the meeting are yet to be known. But Afghan officials have indicated that the talks will continue if Pakistan meets its commitments to peace in Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(4) Dostum Reportedly ...

This was the end of the vice president's agenda in Turkey and now he is preparing to return to Afghanistan," said Tayyanj.

For the past few months speculation has been rife as to why Dostum has remained in Turkey. Some have said he is there for medical treatment while others have said he is in exile.

News of his return, come however amid an ongoing investigation by the Attorney General Office's (AGO) into the Dostum-Eshchi issue. Recently a primary court sentenced seven of Dostum's bodyguards to eight years in prison after finding them guilty of illegally imprisoning former Jawzjan governor Ahmad Eshchi and of sexually abusing him.

"The AGO can investigate the allegations against the first vice president. But the court cannot rule in the case as a special court must

be established," Abdul Wahid Farzaie, deputy head of Afghanistan's Lawyers Union said.

In Dostum's absence, the office of the first vice president has also been in limbo – especially as most duties related to the office have been suspended. (Tolonews)

(5) Revoke Decision...

efforts in Afghanistan,

Earlier in the month, the US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) reported that the Department of Defense was no longer releasing data that had been publicly available for years.

They said: "We're writing [to President Trump] about a recent decision by the Department of Defense to discontinue public reporting of information essential to conducting oversight of US spending in Afghanistan."

Cummings and Lynch demanded an immediate reversal of this policy. They said classifying previously non-classified information would make it difficult for the Congress to track military spending in Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(6) IS Fighters Finding ...

more extreme – are also joining Daesh."

The latest Afghan assessment on Islamic State in Afghanistan, also known as IS-Khorasan province, runs counter to much of what U.S. and coalition officials have long been saying. Those officials, while careful not to minimize concerns, have depicted a terror group in retreat.

Targeting IS in Afghanistan

U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis himself characterized the fight against IS in Afghanistan as going "in the right direction" this past July, following an airstrike in Kunar province that killed then-IS-Khorasan leader Abu Sayed.

"Every time you kill a leader of one of these groups, it sets them back," Mattis said at the time.

The July strike followed an operation in April that led to the death of the previous emir, Abdul Hasib, following what U.S. officials described as a brutal, three-hour firefight in Afghanistan's Nangarhar province.

And just two weeks before that, on April 13, the U.S. targeted an extensive IS tunnel-and-cave complex in Nangarhar with the largest non-nuclear bomb in the U.S. arsenal, a GBU-43 Massive Ordnance Air Blast bomb.

As a result of the sustained efforts, U.S. officials estimated the terror group's ranks in Afghanistan had been cut from a peak of about 3,000 fighters to about 600, believing most of them to be disgruntled former Taliban fighters.

But if the new estimates from Afghan officials are to be believed, IS has not only rebuilt its presence in the country in a span of about four months, but they have replaced them with new fighters, not worn down after losing the group's strongholds in Iraq and Syria. It would also seem to indicate that the terror group is capable of doing more than just leveraging local insurgencies to keep its brand alive.

IS in Afghanistan's north

One area of particular concern is Afghanistan's northern Jawzjan province, a remote area where IS has been relocating fighters, many aligned with the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, as well as their families.

"They're establishing a military presence. They're implementing social control," said Caitlin Forrest, with the Washington-based Institute for the Study of War (ISW). "They're collecting taxes."

According to Forrest and ISW's Jennifer Cafarella, some IS supporters and fighters are flocking to the region from Central Asia, places like Tajikistan and Chechnya, while others have come from as far away as France and Sudan.

"It's a sign of what's to come," Cafarella said. "This kind of consolidation of foreign fighters in one place is a signature of an external operations node."

And without much pushback from local or national Afghan forces, IS fighters have also been free to recruit both men and children from towns and villages, seemingly undeterred by the fall of the physical caliphate.

"ISIS is still cashing in on the image of itself as the defender of the weak," Cafarella said, using an acronym for the militant group. She said the group is still able to sell the idea that it alone is willing to stand up to the West or to defend Sunni Muslims from Shi'ite forces controlled by Iran.

IS threatening West, Russia

There are also concerns that Afghanistan may not be the only area in which IS has managed to secure new footholds, and based on the type of propaganda, some counterterror analysts believe many of these IS nodes are bent on finding ways to strike the West and Russia as well.

"The long wind-up to the fall of Raqqa and Mosul gave ISIS the window to prepare for its future in the so-called post-caliphate era," said Katherine Zimmerman with the American Enterprise Institute's Critical Threats Project.

"ISIS began planning attacks in Europe from Libya, and all indicators point to ISIS

strengthening in Libya," Zimmerman said, adding, "ISIS will continue to cultivate its branches in the Sahara and Nigeria."

Some analysts also argue that even the presence of a small number of foreign fighters in certain areas has allowed IS to grow.

But top U.S. military officials argue that will be difficult.

"I think they had aspirational views of going to other places," Joint Staff Director Lt. Gen. Kenneth F. McKenzie told Pentagon reporters Thursday. "But I would tell you, because of the global coalition that we've assembled and the ability of those nations in these disparate areas of the world to operate effectively against ISIS when it arises, that plan has not been terribly successful for them."

As for Afghanistan, officials there worry Islamic State will find a way to persist and strengthen, co-opting other extremists along the way.

"The brutality will continue to increase, which is why we need to address it so rapidly," said Afghan Ambassador Mohib. "The more time it takes, the more radical some of these groups become and their ideologies start to sync with each other." (VoA)

(7) Ghani Pledges ...

will be created in order to support this property registration system.

He also pledged to resolve the issue of land-grabbing and said government will confiscate all land that has been usurped illegally.

He said reforms will also be brought to municipalities and that mayoral elections will be held.

Touching on his upcoming trip to Uzbekistan, he said he will sign 14 agreements while in the neighboring country. (Tolonews)

(8) TIR Membership ...

Qoyanj said.

According to ACCI, the lack of programs in place to make better use of the TIR, the lack of information among drivers about the laws around TIR and the lack of an effective program within government for the better utilization of opportunities and other challenges are among the key issues that have had a negative effect on the issue for the Afghan business community.

What is TIR?

TIR is the world's only universal transit system, allowing truck drivers to safely move goods across borders with minimal delay while saving much-needed time and money for customs authorities.

Afghanistan - a TIR member

Afghanistan became a member of the TIR Convention in 1975, but after decades of conflict, the country only reactivated TIR in 2013 and is now beginning to implement its procedures. Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani has made the country's potential transit operations a national priority for government. During a conference earlier this year, representatives from the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation and the Afghanistan Customs Department spoke on efforts to leverage the country's transit potential to boost trade and government revenue. (Tolonews)

(9) Pakistan Must ...

very shamelessly, continues to support terrorists and continues to shell rockets on Afghanistan provinces," Waziri said in response to a question about the recent cross-Durand Line incursions by Pakistan.

"Pakistan must stop supporting terrorists," he said.

Last week, more than 500 missiles landed in Kunar in the eastern part of Afghanistan after being fired off from across the Durand Line, local officials said.

The missiles landed in Shultan, Dangam, Shegal and Marwa districts in Kunar province – in the east of the country, displacing dozens of families, local officials told TOLONews.

Meanwhile, the Defense Ministry spokesman said "the enemy is losing in Afghanistan". He said terrorists activities have increased by 13 percent this year but in the meantime, insurgents suffered heavy losses this year, compared to last year.

"The movements of the enemy increased by 13 percent compared with last year and their casualties increased by 11 percent if compared with last year," he added.

"Terrorists wanted to move their hideouts to Afghanistan and it was the main reason for the increasing war in the country."

He said they call on the international community to further help Afghanistan in the fight against terrorism.

At the same event, the Interior Affairs Ministry's spokesman Najib Danish spoke out about achievements of the Afghan National Police across the country.

"The (Ministry of Interior's) counternarcotic department launched 2,000 operations against (drugs) smugglers this year and arrested 2,647 (suspected drugs smugglers)," he said.

He said the police force members carried out at least 100 operations recently and that "45 people, who were included in the recent insecurities were killed during Operation Danish". (Tolonews)

(10) NDS Personnel ...

he said.

Humayon termed the search of his house against the law and said security personnel found nothing and left without apology.

He told the lawmakers: "Are you ready If I send formal letters to the NDS for searching your houses?"

A close relative of Humayon said the house and office of the deputy speaker were searched last Wednesday.

Second deputy speaker Ahmadzai wanted speak, but other lawmakers prevented him. Fawzia Kofi, a lawmaker from Badakhshan province, said private issues should not be brought to the house and must be settled outside the house.

The NDS media office could not be reached for comment on Humayon's house and office search.

Earlier, Mohammad Iqbal Safi, a lawmaker from central Kapisa province and Senate Chairman Fazal Hadi Muslimyar had claimed Humayon had created a system through which telephonic conversations could be traced. (Pajhwok)

(11) Pakistan Needs...

have got a make it clear to the Pakistani government that we can't tolerate that sort of support that will undermine our efforts in Afghanistan where our troops have been fighting and we've had over 2,000 of our Americans killed in that conflict," Rood said during his confirmation hearing.

Rood was responding to a question from Senator John McCain, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Rood claimed that Pakistan sheltering the Taliban and Haqqani network had been "a real undercut" to the US's efforts in Afghanistan.

"...and unfortunately, this is a problem that's persisted really over the 16 years of that conflict, a very stubborn problem to solve," he said.

Rood also spoke about the new strategy, which calls for regionalising the approach, involving India more in the reconstruction and the support of the Afghan government. (Agencies)

(12) US-Funded...

Durani said the networks construction would create job opportunities and their completion would prevent 40 percent of water from going waste and increase agriculture production by 20 percent.

Aqa Mohammad, in-charge of a construction company in Baghlan, assured of high quality work on the irrigation networks, saying the facilities would be put into service ahead of the stipulated time of one year.

Lal Mohammad, Irrigation council head in Safid Khan Village of Baghlan's Dand-i-Ghor district, expressed happiness over the projects, asking the agriculture ministry to implement such programs for farmers across the country. (Pajhwok)

(13) Lawmakers ...

Wednesday President Ashraf Ghani had removed Najibullah Ahmadzai as the head of the IEC through a presidential decree.

According to the presidential order, a copy of which was obtained by Pajhwok Afghan News, the removal of the IEC head from his post was in line with the decision of the election commission.

Ahmadzai was elected as the head of the IEC almost a year ago by the members of the election commission.

Haji Zahir Qader, a lawmaker who represents the people of Nangarhar province, alleged that by removing the IEC head the President sought to influence the upcoming elections in his favour.

"IEC is not a private property where the president could bring one person and remove another," said Qadir.

Mohammad Akbar Stanikzai, a member of the Wolosi Jirga from Logar province, criticized the government for the ouster of Ahmadzai and on behalf of the people of the country asked for an explanation for his removal.

Many other lawmakers also slammed the removal of Ahmadzai, asking the government for an explanation.

First Deputy Speaker Humayon Humayon also expressed his concern over the removal of the IEC chief by saying that "IEC is not a private organization, it is a state institution with dealing with election. The removal of IEC chief ordered by the president was against the law."

He also demanded the ousted IEC chief to appear before the lawmakers to divulge his allegations regarding the president's interference in the IEC affairs. (Pajhwok)

(14) AFF Nominated ...

Football Confederation on Saturday announced the full list of nominees for this year's AFC Annual Awards gala to be held in Bangkok, Thailand, on November 29.

The nominees for the awards to be presented at the AFC Annual Awards 2017 event are:

AFC Dream Asia Award 2017
 Chinese Football Association
 Japan Football Association
 Football Association of Singapore
 AFC Member Association of the Year Award 2017

The prestigious award is given to a Member Association in recognition of its professional administration and governance as well as its exceptional contribution to the development and promotion of the game at all levels within the country.

This includes grassroots and youth development work, women's football development and social responsibility.

Recognizing the diversity of MA's in terms of facilities and resources and looking to ensure that more MAs will receive recognition for their efforts and achievements in developing football in their country, the AFC in 2013 introduced three winners for the Member Association of the Year Award.

Inspiring

Football Federation Islamic Republic of Iran
 Japan Football Association
 Korea Football Association
 Developing
 Lebanese Football Association
 Tajikistan Football Federation
 Vietnam Football Federation
 Aspiring

Afghanistan Football Federation

Guam Football Association

Other categories of the awards include:

AFC President Recognition Award for Grassroots Football 2017

AFC Coach of the Year Award 2017

AFC Futsal Player of the Year Award 2017

AFC Player of the Year Award 2017

AFC Referees Special Award 2017

AFC Youth Player of the Year Award 2017

AFC Asian International Player of the Year Award 2017 (Tolonews)

(15) Nine Badakhshan...

"We are using Tajikistan companies' SIM cards. The cost for these SIM cards is expensive. We cannot contact local numbers properly," said Gul Ahmad, a resident of Wakhan district.

The residents said they pay 50 Afs for every minute they talk on the phone while the cost for one minute with a local company costs one to two Afs.

Badakhshan telecommunication directorate's Rabbani Haidari said the areas without local coverage is because of insecurity and remoteness.

"There are problems in the bordering districts (in Badakhshan) including insecurity, long distance, dispersed communities. These issues have impeded telecommunication services to the areas," he said.

He added that they will invest \$100,000 USD in collaboration with China to overcome the problem next year (Tolonews)

(16) Snow, Avalanches ...

He said the provincial administration has appealed to the disaster management body to take immediate and effective steps to mitigate the losses sustained in the snow and provide protection to the vulnerable communities in the remote mountainous areas.

Three more casualties have been reported by the provincial administration in the eastern Nangarhar province's remote Achin district bordering Pakistan's restive tribal areas. Most vulnerable to the harsh weather are the growing numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs). The UN in Afghanistan said earlier this week that the ragging violence here has displaced an additional 19,000 more people piling the total of IDPs up to 338,000 this year alone. (AA)

(17) Saudi Arabia, ...

condolences to the victims' families, the Afghan government and people.

In a statement, the ministry wished the wounded a speedy recovery and reaffirming the kingdom's support for the friendly people of Afghanistan against extremism and terrorism.

Pakistan also strongly denounced the bomb attack. "We are deeply grieved at the loss of precious lives in this dastardly terrorist attack," the Foreign Office said. (Pajhwok)

Food Traders Union head Fazal Rahman said a 49-kg sack of Pakistani sugar rose in value from 1,800af to 1,850af.

He said rates of other food items remained stable. The wholesale price of a 50-kg Kazakhstani flour bag remained unchanged at 1,160af and 24-kg bag of Pakistan rice at 1,850 and 16-kg tin of Khurshid ghee at 1,070af. (Pajhwok)

(19) Security Forces ...

from the governor's house said security forces backed by air support had advanced three kilometers inside Dorahi area between Marja and Nad Ali districts.

The forces also defused 15 landmines during the operation, the statement said. Ali Ahmad Darwishi, a former provincial council member, said if the government wanted to have successful operation against militants, it should clear 3rd and 4th police districts of Lashkargah.

A security source in Nad Ali district said they were lacking personnel, but hundreds of youth in the district were ready to join the forces, but the government had stopped the biometric process. (Pajhwok)