

(1) Ghani and US Amb ...

saying it is "better to be right than fast." Recently the US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo also praised the Afghans' courage for taking part in the elections, but he said that all necessary steps need to be taken to ensure the transparency of the process.

Ghani said that there is a broad consensus for achieving a dignified and sustainable peace and that the peace process is a priority for the current and future government, the statement added.

This comes after NATO's Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said on Monday that the alliance welcomes the resumption of peace talks between the US and Taliban, on the condition that the Taliban shows a "willingness to make real compromises at the negotiating table." (TOLO News)

(2) Afghan Government ...

in Afghanistan in 2016.

Meanwhile, sources close to the Taliban claim that hidden talks had been continuing between the U.S. and the Taliban negotiators after U.S. President Donald Trump said the talks with Taliban are dead.

"The talks will be resumed from the point it ended and the two sides will reach a final agreement before the launch of intra-Afghan talks," said Waliullah Saheem who is following the Afghan peace talks. (ATN)

(3) India Hands ...

to Afghanistan and the country has invested millions of US dollars in education, agriculture, reconstruction and infrastructure projects since the collapse of the Taliban regime in 2001.

The country had gifted four Mi 24d gunship choppers in December 2015 and two Mi-35 attack helicopters in May 2019. (ATN)

(4) Pakistan Makes ...

extended an invitation to Rahmani to lead a parliamentary delegation to Pakistan to discuss the outstanding bilateral issues, including relaxation in visa regime as well as expansion of trade and commerce between the two neighbours.

He also urged Rahmani to help end India's "siege" of Kashmir. (ITV News)

(5) Poor Diets ...

generations," said Abubakar Kampo, UNICEF Afghanistan Country Representative. "We see this in Afghanistan where children who are stunted perform poorly at school and are more likely to experience other health problems. Anaemia in adolescent girls reduces physical and mental capacity and threatens future motherhood. Malnourished or anaemic mothers have weaker babies who are more vulnerable to stunting. Breaking this inter-generational cycle by ensuring that families access and choose the right food in the right amount at the right age is the nutritional challenge of our time." The report provides a comprehensive assessment of child malnutrition, describing how undernutrition, hidden hunger caused by a lack of essential nutrients, and overweight among children under the age of five affect millions around the world.

In Afghanistan, poor eating and feeding practices starting from the earliest days of life are major contributors to poor nutrition. Though breastmilk contains all the nutrition babies need for the first six months of life, only half of women practice exclusive breastfeeding for children in this age group (Demographic Health Survey DHS 2015).

As children begin transitioning to soft or solid foods around the six-month mark, too many are introduced to the wrong or insufficient food. Worldwide, nearly 45 per cent of children between six months and two years of age are not fed any fruits or vegetables. In Afghanistan, only 16 per cent of children receive a minimum acceptable diet (Demographic Health Survey DHS 2015). These practices are influenced by cultural norms, food insecurity, poverty, and lack of access to services.

Today, a third of adolescent girls in Afghanistan are anaemic. Many report eating meals with little or no fruits and vegetables even when these are in season. Meanwhile, highly processed foods are becoming widely available, leading to increasingly unhealthy diets. Thus, there is an urgent need to improve the availability, affordability and awareness of nutritious food and healthy practices, including exclusive breastfeeding, amongst communities.

The greatest burden of malnutrition falls upon the poorest and most marginalized communities, including those affected by conflict. The report also notes that climate-related disasters cause severe food crises. Drought, for example, is responsible for severe losses in agriculture, dramatically altering the availability, quality and price of food. In 2018, 18 out of Afghanistan's 34 provinces were affected by drought, with 13.5 million people fac-

ing crisis levels of food insecurity.

To address Afghanistan's growing under-nutrition crisis, UNICEF urges governments, the private sector, donors, parents and communities:

Empowering families, children and young people to demand nutritious food and to practice healthy habits through communication, education and mobilization.

Promoting healthy food environments and strengthening food systems so communities and individuals can access and choose nutritious foods for themselves and their families.

Strengthening support systems in health, food, water and sanitation, and social protection to reduce undernutrition risks due to unavailability of healthy or fortified foods, diseases such as diarrhoea, and poverty.

Integrating nutritional services into other sectors such as health and education, directing their energies and resources towards a shared goal of preventing under-nutrition.

Reducing the risk of undernutrition and hidden hunger amongst the most marginalized children and women by bridging between humanitarian assistance and development, and by empowering communities to withstand disasters and sudden shocks.

Committing to funding and carrying out actions to support nutrition until the goal to end all forms of undernutrition by 2030 is achieved.

Collecting, analyzing and using good-quality data and evidence to guide action and track progress.

"Afghanistan has already shown its strong commitment to children's future by developing strong nutrition policies and plans such as the National Nutrition Strategy and Afghanistan Food Security and Nutrition Agenda," said Kampo. "Now it is time to invest in making this commitment a reality and to ensuring that every child, adolescent and mother accesses a healthy diet, and in doing so, breaks the cycle of undernutrition." (PR)

(6) Real Time Data ...

that Salaam telecommunication company will be first to be connected to the system in the next two weeks.

On the issue of phone blackout in some regions during the election day on September 28, Hashimy said that 49 communications towers had been destroyed by the Taliban

He, however, said that despite militant threat, the companies continued to provide services to customers.

The official said that a strategy was being developed for security of telecommunication companies. (ITV News)

(7) Minister ...

"Also, we can have cooperation with Iran in transferring the technology to produce medicine in the next phase," Firouz said. In relevant remarks earlier this month, Iranian Ambassador to Kabul Bahador Aminian said that his country's exports to Afghanistan were 3 times more than what it sent to 28 member states of the European Union, highlighting that trade with Afghanistan was of high value to Tehran. Developing trade ties with Afghanistan is Iran's priority because the two countries are neighbors, Aminian said, addressing the Working Group for Export Development and Council for Organizing Border Exchanges of Southern Khorasan Province.

"Afghanistan is Iran's priority in our resistance economic policies as it is our neighbor and has a good share of our exported products," he added.

He mentioned that Iran's exports to the 28 European Union (EU) countries was only a third of what it exported to Afghanistan. Aminian called on Iran's private sector to play a more prominent role in exports to the country's Eastern neighbor. (FNA)

(8) Afghanistan's ...

urged the international community to take required measures about the US sanctions on Iran.

In this meeting, the two sides signed an MOU on establishing a regional center for capacity building and conducting investigations to promote drug rehabilitation quality and to improve public immunity and health.

Momeni arrived in Vienna on October 12 to meet and talk with senior UN officials including the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Austrian Police Chief, the Slovak Police Chief, and some other senior Austrian drugs officials.

Despite high economic and human costs, the Islamic Republic has been actively fighting drug-trafficking over the past four decades. The country has spent more than \$700 million on sealing its borders and preventing the transit of narcotics destined for European, Arab and Central Asian countries. The war on drug trade originating from Afghanistan has claimed the lives of nearly 4,000 Iranian police officers over the past four decades.

According to reports, in 2018 alone, Iranian forces carried out 1,557 operations against drug traffickers, seizing approximately 807 tons of different types of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

According to the latest World Drug Report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in 2017, Iran had seized the largest quantity of opiates, accounting for 39% of the global total. (MNA)

(9) Handwashing Day ...

than urban.

Other vulnerable groups such as people with disability have poorer access to handwashing facilities with water and soap.

"Handwashing with water and soap plays a key role in our health, therefore all teachers, students and public should make it their habit... it should become an important part of culture and both teachers and students should support this culture at schools, their homes and in their communities" said Minister of Education Mohammad Mirwais Balkhi.

Handwashing with soap could reduce diarrhea by up to 44%, especially before eating, and after using toilets, said Feda Mohammad Paikan, deputy minister of public health

"UNICEF has been supporting the government of Afghanistan to ensure children gain access to safe drinking water, improved sanitation facilities and practice good hygiene at all time and everywhere.

"UNICEF puts special emphasis on improving the practice of handwashing with soap in schools and health centres under the Health Centre Hygiene Programme," said UNICEF Deputy Representative Sheema Sen Gupta.

She suggested handwashing with soap after using the toilet, changing baby's nappy and disposing of feces, before feeding children or before contacting food. (Pajhwok)

(10) 22 AAF Pilots ...

pilot training programme." Addressing the pilots, he said: "I am proud of you, the Afghan National Army and AAF.

"You have successfully completed the training programme. In all of you we see the values of integrity, patriotism, devoted service and excellence in defending our country and the people of Afghanistan."

The graduation ceremony was attended by the deputy head of the Defence Policy and Strategy Section Radomir Jahoda, Czech Minister of Defence of Czech, Leslie Keith Dunson, PEO-SIRI, Faisal Naseri, the class leader of pilots and other guests.

They reiterated support for the Afghan security forces from the Czech Republic. Another batch of AAF pilots is currently receiving training and will graduate soon. (Pajhwok)

(11) Hebei Construction ...

the Company's strong strength and leading position in the construction industry in Hebei Province and will create good opportunities for the Company to further expand its market and business, improve its profitability and realize cross-regional development.

Hebei Construction Group has laid a solid foundation in Hebei Province in its long history. Leveraging on its high quality construction engineering services and geographical advantages, the Group has played an important role in the construction of Beijing new airport and Xiong'an New Area. Being the only non-state-owned company to participate in the construction of key components of Beijing Daxing International Airport, the Group has accumulated contract value of more than RMB3 billion. The development potential of Hebei Xiong'an New Area will continue to be growth drivers of the Group.

Early this year, the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the State Council of China have approved the "Master Plan for the Hebei Xiong'an New Area 2018-2035". On October 10, Xiong'an New Area released the "Notice for Transfer the Right to the Use of State-owned Construction Land of Xiong'an Business Service Center Project" 《雄安商務服務中心項目國有建設用地使用權出讓公告》 in which land of construction projects will be supplied through public transfer of rights. This implies Xiong'an New Area has transformed from planning stage to full-scale construction. More infrastructure projects are expected to commence in full fledge in the future. As one of the leading non-state-owned construction enterprises in China, the largest non-state-owned construction enterprise in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, and the largest construction enterprise in Hebei Province, the Group is expected to continue to benefit from the coordinated development of Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei and construction of Xiong'an New Area in the future.

Mr. Li Baozhong, Chairman and Executive Director of Hebei Construction Group, said, "Beijing new airport 'has caught the eye of the entire world and we are the only non-state-owned enter-

prise to participate in its construction. Winning the bid for the Beijing-Dezhou Expressway implies that we will participate in the construction of the main expressway from Xiong'an New Area to Beijing new airport as well. As a leading player in the construction industry of Hebei Province, we are set to embrace great development opportunities from the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei strategic development zone and Xiong'an New Area. We will work closely with the government, financial institutions, central and state-owned enterprises and major property developers to actively explore mutually beneficial cooperation opportunities and create more value."

About Hebei Construction Group Corporation Limited

Hebei Construction Group Corporation Limited was established in 1952 and rooted in Hebei Province for 67 years. It has benefited from the coordinated development of Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei and the construction of Xiong'an New Area. The Group has grown into a leading comprehensive private construction enterprise in China and has been included in the Fortune 500 Chinese Enterprises (2019). The group mainly provides integrated solutions for engineering contracting of building construction and infrastructure projects. According to Frost & Sullivan, Hebei Construction Group is the largest non-state-owned construction contracting company in Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and the second largest non-state-owned construction contracting company in China. (PR)

(12) Putin Visits ...

vital sectors," Sergei Kuznetsov, the Russian ambassador to the UAE, earlier said, adding that the visit will strengthen the relations between the two countries, especially in light of their strategic partnership. Kuznetsov also stressed that the Russian president's visit to the UAE represented a marked progress in the bilateral relations between the two countries. (Arab News)

(13) 37 Protesters ...

organized a referendum on independence, which was illegal under Spanish law. Despite a police crackdown on the referendum, organizers reported that 43% of residents cast their ballots with 90% of voters opting for independence.

In the ensuing weeks, the Catalan government made a vague independence declaration, but Spanish authorities soon after suspended home rule and arrested the movement's leaders. However, several leaders, including former Catalan premier Carles Puigdemont, managed to flee Spain and avoid detention.

The longest prison sentence, 13 years, was imposed on Oriol Junqueras, the former vice-premier in the region. He was charged with sedition and the misuse of funds.

Former Catalan foreign minister Raul Romeva, former government spokesperson Jordi Turull and Dolores Bassa, the former labor minister, were all sentenced to 12 years behind bars. Carme Forcadell, the former speaker of the Catalan Parliament, received an 11-and-a-half-year sentence. Joaquim Forn, the former interior minister, and Josep Rull, former territorial minister, were charged with sedition and sentenced to 10-and-a-half years.

Two Catalan activists who led separatist organizations but were not active politicians at the time -- Jordi Sanchez and Jordi Cuixart -- were both sentenced to nine years for sedition.

All of the leaders will also be suspended from holding public office as long as their prison sentences last. (Hurriyet Daily News)

(14) France Says ...

negotiators submitted a revised set of Brexit plans to Brussels.

The talks between the U.K. and Barnier must advance before the summit, the French official said, as negotiations on Brexit won't happen during the EU leaders meeting, the official added.

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(15) Turkish, Kurdish ...

The renewed battle for the border town follows the deployment of Syria's army near the Turkish border, after Syrian Kurdish forces -- saying they had been abandoned by their U.S. ally -- reached a deal with President Bashar Assad's government to help them fend off Turkey's invasion.

Assad's return to the region his troops abandoned in 2012 at the height of the Syrian civil war is a turning point in the conflict, giving yet another major boost to his government and its Russian backers and is like to endanger, if not altogether crush, the brief experiment in self-rule set up by Syria's Kurds since the conflict began.

Washington said Trump was sending Vice President Mike Pence and national security adviser Robert O'Brien to Ankara as soon as possible in an attempt to begin negotiations over a stop to the fighting. Pence said Trump spoke directly to Turkish leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who promised not to attack the border town of Kobani, which in 2015 witnessed the Islamic State group's first defeat in a battle by U.S.-backed Kurdish fighters.

A Turkish military official, meanwhile denied reports that Turkey had begun an assault on the Kurdish-held town of Manbij, without giving further detail.

The Manbij region is home to U.S. outposts that were set up in 2017 to patrol the tense frontiers between Turkish-controlled areas and the Kurdish-held side of northern Syria. A U.S. official said troops are still in the town, preparing to leave.

On Monday Syrian fighters backed by Turkey had said they had started an offensive to capture Manbij, which is on the western flank of the Euphrates River, broadening their campaign east of the river.

Erdogan for his part defended Turkey's offensive in an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal, calling on the international community to support Turkey's effort to create what it calls a resettlement "safe zone" for refugees in northeast Syria, or "begin admitting refugees."

"Turkey reached its limit," Erdogan wrote in reference to 3.6 million Syrian refugees in his country. He said Turkey's warnings that it would not be able to stop refugee floods into the West without international support "fell on deaf ears."

Mroue reported from Beirut. Associated Press writer Suzan Fraser contributed from Ankara, Turkey. (AP News)

(16) EU Countries ...

action, and in accordance with international humanitarian law. »

At a separate meeting of E.U. foreign ministers in Luxembourg, they agreed to draw up a list of possible sanctions over Turkey's «illegal» drilling activities off the coast of Cyprus.

Several countries -- including France, Sweden, Finland and Germany -- have already imposed arms embargoes against the Turkish regime led by Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Politico reported. Norway most recently suspended arms sales to the country.

On Tuesday, President Trump said he will impose sanctions on Turkey through an executive order.

Turkey's military operations began last week after the White House ordered U.S. troops to withdraw from their posts in northern Syria. The move represented a shift in alliances for the Kurds, who fought alongside American forces against the Islamic State but now feel abandoned. Ankara's aim is to drive back Syrian Kurdish fighters from its border with Turkey. Turkish leaders consider the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) terrorists because of their links to an insurgency inside Turkey.

Syrian officials said they would deploy troops to help Kurdish fighters along the border with Turkey. (Fox News)

(17) India Blocks ...

Shopian. Residents said two masked gunmen told the driver to move his vehicle because it was blocking the road, but it skidded and got stuck.

"The gunmen then fired at the truck and set it on fire," a witness told AFP.

Apples are a sensitive issue in Kashmir, which exports vast quantities of the fruit to markets across India. Many orchard owners say they are refusing to harvest this year to protest against the government's move to scrap occupied Kashmir's autonomy.

Indian authorities claim that "militants" have been intimidating farmers and businessmen.

Separately on Tuesday, officers arrested half a dozen women activists protesting in Srinagar.

They included the sister and daughter of former chief minister Farooq Abdullah, one of several hundred local politicians, lawyers and others in custody since early August, mostly without charge.

Kashmiris have been fighting for three decades some 500,000 Indian soldiers deployed in the territory, demanding independence or to join Pakistan. (Pakistan Today)

(18) Japan Typhoon ...

who were initially left without power but a cause for concern in northern areas where temperatures are forecast to fall.

The highest toll was in Fukushima prefecture north of Tokyo, a largely agricultural area where the Abukuma River burst its banks in at least 14 places.

At least 25 people died in the area, including a mother and her child who were caught in floodwaters. Her other son, who was caught up in the flood with her, remains missing. (Aljazeera)