Security sure, time for int'l community's cooperation to rebuild Afghanistan

The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) has openly voiced its plan for government building and seriously fighting any types of insurgency, especially suppressing threats from ISIS-K and other militant groups everywhere in the country.

Besides continuing humanitarian aids, the U.S. should also unfreeze the Afghans money and ease the liquidity crisis to avert the country's economic collapse and help pay the salaries of thousands of government employees.

The newly appointed U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan Tom West expressed concern over what he said "an uptick in attacks by Islamic State's affiliate in Afghanistan."

Speaking to reports on U.S. talks with the Taliban and holding a consultation on a roadmap toward recognition of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, after the Islamic Emirate takeover of the country in mid-August, the U.S. diplomat made his first briefing to reporters since he assumed his post last month.

"The Taliban have voiced very clearly and openly their desire to normalize relations with the international community, to see a resumption in aid, to see a return of the international diplomatic community to Kabul and to see sanctions relief," he said.

West said that Washington and its allies were continuing humanitarian aid for Afghanistan, but added the Joe Biden administration has "not made a decision" on proposals to ease the liquidity crisis being considered by U.N. and nongovernmental humanitarian groups.

He went on as saying that his country wanted the Islamic Emirate to be successful against the militants of the ISIS-Khurasan province insurgency which has also become a matter of concern for the Afghan people.

The assertions by the U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan comes amid the dawn-to-dusk struggles from the security personnel of the General Directorate of Intelligence (GDI) of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan to tackle all types of insurgency in the country.

The GDI has recently announced that at least 600 ISIS-K members have been arrested within the past three months across the country.

"Nearly 600 members of Daesh involving in subversive acts and killings were detained, in some parts of the country," said Khalil Hamraz, a spokesman for the GDI, while speaking to reporters in the Government's Information and Media Center (GIMC) here in Kabul.

He added that the detainees included some top members of the outfit who have now been jailed.

Spokesman for the Islamic Emirate and Deputy to the Information and Culture Ministry for Publication Zabihullah Mujahid, who had also joined the press conference, once again downplayed Daesh and said that the outfit was not a major threat in Afghanistan adding that more than 20 sanctuaries of them have been eliminated in several provinces.

"We are making effort to uproot Daesh and the menace has highly been reduced," Mujahid said.

The IEA welcomes any world countries' efforts to provide aids for the heavily conflict battered Afghans as harsh winter is due to arrive and the prices are soaring, besides drought and freefall economy, but unfreezing the nation's wealth by the U.S. is the most needed, as the move can help strengthen good governance in the country, prevent severe unemployment and growing people flee.

On the other hand, time has now reached for government-building and strengthening the country's economic capacity. Afghanistan needs its educated, skilled and professional individuals to continue serving their rather to leave abroad and those who have left, including those skilled pilots who recently left the country to return home and rejoin their duties.

The international community's support and cooperation is most needed to help the IEA reach the goal.

Since security is sure countrywide, the international community should stay alongside the Afghan people who have just emerged from all-out war and feared to enter into a humanitarian crisis. Providing short-term aids are welcomed but not enough as much as to address all requirements in the long term.

Recognizing the legal system of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, unfreezing the people assets, returning world's diplomatic missions to the country and resuming and strengthening economic relations would widely help Afghanistan and the people remain safe, stable and stronger than ever against any types of insurgency including the threat felt from Daesh.

The IEA assures the world that not to be worried about the so-called Islamic State group as domestic forces can easily crackdown on the militants everywhere in the country and is committed to all legal principles that ensures national and international interests. **The Kabul Times**

200 cadets complete military trainings in Khost

KABUL: 200 military cadets have recently received their certificates after completing a period of military training in the country's southern Khost province, Bakthar News Agency (BNA) reported.

The IEA is planned to establish an armed force with the capability of protecting the people and defending national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country, the agency said.

In the meantime, Abdul Rashid, Commander of the Khost Military Training was also introduced and officially started his work.

The agency quoted Mawlavi M. Nabi Omari, Governor of Khost, as saying that the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan was planned to form an army having the capacity of protecting the people and defend the country without any discrimination.

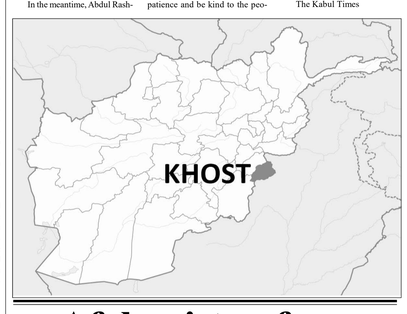
The governor advised all related personnel to behave with patience and be kind to the people.

"The government will protect its people and soil with full assurance," said Mahboob Shah Qanit, the provincial police chief.

Abdul Rashid further assured the people that they will protect their soil and religion.

He added the security forces of the country were prepared for any kind of sacrifices in the way to serve the people.

The Kabul Times



Private universities facing challenges

After the IEA took over Kabul administration, different sectors got shut for a long time including public and private universities as well as schools and other educational institutions. IEA, however, time and again has announced to reopen the institutions in near future, but nothing concrete is seen so far. Students of all categories were already hit hard by COVID-19 and were unable to attend their terms, i.e. semesters in a normal way.

The doors of public universities are, although, still shut for the desperate students, many private universities opened as instructed by the Ministry of Higher Education whereby instructions included a segregation of male and female students, wearing hijabs for girls, even same gender teachers. In spite of this, what does this reopening and resumption of academic terms look like?

"Normal duration of a semester is 6 months including exams period and a gap of some days until next semester. However, since coronavirus pandemic, this is our third semester that roughly lasts for two or three months," Sayed Mukhtar a student of a private university told The Kabul Times.

An official of the university said that decrease in academic term was not the only problem we faced. Our students, he added, have become cold-hearted and their attitude towards learning is full of pessimism and depression.

Another female student, though satisfied with the current rule and state of affairs, shared other concerns those of related to teachers. "As students are falling in number day by day, the universities are not capable of paying their staff, particularly teachers, which form the core of educational institutions," she said.

"As a result," added the student, "teachers are getting hopeless and willing to leave the university." "Private sectors thrive when there is both economic and political stability in a country," an analyst said, "because private sectors operate monetarily not only from provider (owner of the business) side, but also consumer side. Similarly, unlike public universities, private universities, on one hand, shoulder the bulk of expenses, including rents, electricity bills, and salaries of staff members, etc. On the other hand, the consumers who are students in this case, should also pay fee to the university. In public universities you use government buildings; you do not have to pay your staff; and electricity bills do not concern you, as the government does all of that for you.

The same goes for the students, as they also need not worry for the tuition fees, for it is not required." These differences, the analyst further clarified, bring private universities the current situation.

The incident that went viral a few days ago shocked the general public. A private university teacher, holding a master's degree, was carrying a sack of cement in a house under construction.

"If the situation persists to be as it is right now, we have no other alternatives, rather get our hands in day labor or leave the country through any way possible," another faculty member of the university said.

'Any way possible', are the words of faculty member of a well-known university due to the conditions emerged from the recent developments in the country, let alone teachers of public and private schools with the lowest salaries in private and government sectors.

Rahmat Shah Faraz

Afghanistan faces raging measles outbreak: WHO

A raging measles outbreak has sickened thousands and killed nearly 100 in crisis-ravaged Afghanistan this year, the World Health Organization said Friday, warning that many more would die without urgent action.

The UN health agency said the outbreak was particularly concerning since Afghanistan is facing surging food insecurity and malnutrition.

"For malnourished children, measles is a death sentence," WHO spokeswoman Margaret Harris told journalists in Geneva via video-link from Kabul.

She stressed the need to urgently scale up disease surveillance and testing in the country, but said that even without sufficient monitoring, it was clear that "a measles outbreak is raging."

"We have seen higher numbers of cases this year and we are seeing new cases every day," she said.

Since the start of the year, more than 24,000 cases of the highly contagious disease have been diagnosed clinically in Afghanistan, including 2,397 laboratory-confirmed cases.

"Sadly, we've had 87 deaths reported," Harris said, warning that "we will see so many more if we don't move on this quickly."

The United Nations has repeatedly warned that Afghanistan is on the brink of the world's worst humanitarian crisis, with more than half the country facing "acute" food shortages and winter forcing millions to choose between migration and starvation.

Harris said Friday that over three million children under the age of five in the country are expected to suffer from acute malnutrition by the end of this year.

More than one million of them could suffer from the most severe form of malnutrition and risk dying.

Harris said the WHO did not have specific numbers for how many children have already died from malnutrition in the country.

But she said the agency staff was hearing anecdotally of a number of cases and seeing devastating scenes in health centers treating severally malnourished children.

"It is happening and it is happening now," she said.

WHO