

### (1) Taliban's...

Ghani and Afghan security forces to preserve the gains they had made over the last 14 years.

NATO's Resolute Support Mission would continue to support and build up the Afghan forces' capacity to provide for the security of the country, the deputy spokesman promised.

Recognizing the ongoing security challenges, the decided to keep 5,500 American troops in Afghanistan beyond 2016 in order to continue to carry out that essential mission on the ground, Toner said.

Counterterrorism operations against remnants of Al-Qaida, Daesh and other terrorist groups would continue, he explained.

The Taliban announcement, the official maintained, underscored the need for the start of a peace process that was Afghan-led and Afghan-owned.

"That was a central message of Secretary (John Kerry) when he visited there this past week. It just underscores also that this conflict is not going to be resolved on the battlefield," Toner concluded. (Pajhwok)

### (2) Lawmaker Slaps ...

legislators on issues related to their portfolios.

Each MP was given three minutes to question the ministers. Mushwani spoke for three minutes before microphone was switched off. In a fit of rage, he first tried to pounce at 2nd Deputy Speaker Erfanullah Erfan and then went on to slap the minister. After Durrani was whacked, 1st Deputy Speaker Haji Zahir Qadir ordered security officials to take Mushwani out of the Wolesi Jirga hall.

A lawmaker, who disrupts house proceedings, including a physical clash with or insulting government officials, can be punished under the internal rules of business of the Wolesi Jirga. He/she can be advised, warned or sent out of the session for a day. (Pajhwok)

### (3) Iran, Afghanistan,...

and aviation, railway office and embassy.

Chabahar is a free port (Free Trade Zone) on the coast of the Gulf of Oman. It is situated on the Makran Coast of the Sistan-Baluchestan province and is officially designated as a Free Trade and Industrial Zone by Iranian government. Due to its free trade zone status, the city has increased in significance in international trade. (IRNA)

### (4) Gen. Saheem ...

Afghanistan till 2020.

Last month, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, who arrived in Kabul, said the summit would be an opportunity to review joint efforts, and to deepen the relationship between NATO and Afghanistan even more.

He added that the military alliance would continue to provide financial support to the Afghan forces and noted that the alliance intended to announce future support plans for Afghanistan during the summit.

The summit will follow another meeting of the alliance in early October in Brussels, where NATO is headquartered, where the international community is expected to announce future support for Afghanistan in diverse fields.

Gen. Saheem told reporters in Kabul that Afghanistan's security situation was improving. "Our enemies tried throughout the winter to capture some parts of Afghanistan, but they could not reach their nefarious designs."

In response to Taliban's unusual winter offensive, Gen. Saheem said they had launched "Operation Shafaq" which was currently underway in 15 provinces of the country.

The army chief said Taliban's spring offensive was "war propaganda" and the Afghan army was ready to counter every type of attack by the rebels.

The Taliban two days ago announced the launch of their summer fighting season named after the group's founder and long-time supreme leader Mullah Mohammad Omar, who reportedly died in 2013.

The United States, reacting to the Taliban's announcement, has said it is nothing surprising or new as the Afghan rebels each year make such announcements.

"For lasting stability in Afghanistan and complete trust of Afghanistan people and to attract international assistance, we have prepared a five-year security plan. We want to present a comprehensive plan while going to the Warsaw summit," Gen.

Shaheem said.

He said the five-year plan aimed at improving the country's security situation and bringing lasting peace had been carefully designed.

Meanwhile, deputy presidential spokesman Dawa Khan Minapal said the five-year plan was the first of its kind, in which all threats had been defined and ways to counter them explored.

"The plan defines enemy and the fight against him. All things including violence may increase or the country may come under enemy pressure are identified in the plan."

Minapal said everything the Afghan army needed for the next five years had been assessed in the plan. "It is a comprehensive plan and its implementation will bring under security cover all areas of Afghanistan and naturalize potential threats." (Pajhwok)

### (5) Wolesi Jirga ...

Qadir said Afghanistan seemed to be heading to a new crisis and the Afghans were longing for peace. He said it was unfortunate that some people created problems whenever voice for peace was raised

On April 9, John Kerry said the Afghan unity government would complete its five-year term and the political deal he helped reach between the coalition partners in September 2014 had no specific expiry date.

Under the terms of the deal, a loya jirga was expected to be held within two years to amend the Constitution, but there was no fixed deadline, Kerry had said, dismissing assumptions that the government will end in September.

The loya jirga could decide to change the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) post into a prime ministerial one.

Qadir said anyone damaging national interests and derailing the peace process would face a serious reaction from the Afghans. (Pajhwok)

### (6) Corruption...

did not write about their sex and age. Big Challenge

Ninety-two percent of the respondents termed corruption as a big challenge, 76 percent called it bigger and 17 percent a biggest challenge for the government to deal with. (Pajhwok)

### (7) Ghani Aide

Afghans were ready to render any sacrifice in defence of their country and Islamic values. The security forces would continue fighting against Afghanistan's enemies, he added.

It was the responsibility of the security forces to crush those who were directed by outsiders to kill the Afghans and disrupt peace and stability in the country, he said.

But he hastened to add: "The government welcomes the stance of the HIA, led by Gulbadin Hekmatyar, on the peace process. Now he seems to prefer a political solution to the conflict in the country."

A two-member HIA delegation is busy holding negotiations with representatives of the Afghan government for the past one month.

However, the Taliban have ruled out direct talks with the government. A day earlier, the militant group announced the launch of its spring offensive, codenamed Omari. (Pajhwok)

### (8) 183 Rebels ...

a result of the military action. If the offensive continued, he warned, more families would be displaced.

The Taliban have not yet commented on security officials' claims, but the group earlier denied suffering fatalities and claimed to have inflicted heavy losses on the security personnel.

Separately, the Taliban attacked a security check-post in the Baharak district of northeastern Badakhshan province, police chief Brig. Gen. Abdul Wadud Rasekh said.

He said the insurgents stormed the check-post at around 5:00am and the fight was still ongoing. Five assailants, including a foreigner, were killed and three others arrested during the gun battle, he concluded. (Pajhwok)

### (9) Govt. Blasted...

fight corruption. People expressed their concerns over widespread corruption in state departments.

"Criminals enter prison through one door and are released through another door. Corruption is increasing day-by-day and unemployment and poverty are on the rise and the government has not delivered on any of its promises," said Abdullah, a vendor in Kabul city.

"We want government to fight cor-

ruption, otherwise it will lose its credibility," said Delawar, a resident of Kabul city.

Although the Attorney General's Office (AGO) has not divulged details regarding the exact number of corrupt officials introduced to the body, President Ashraf Ghani's Special Representative on Reform and Good Governance, Ahmad Ziad Massoud, recently said that there are at least 1,500 cases of corruption that the AGO still has to investigate.

The Protection and Stability Council of Afghanistan also lashed out at the government for not fulfilling its promises.

"We want the government to fulfill its promises, otherwise we will take our decision, because people are unhappy with the current situation," said Massoud Treshwal, spokesman for the council.

The Deputy Spokesman for Ghani, Dawa Khan Menapal, said that the government had recorded achievements in its fight against corruption. "The investigation of Kabul Bank's problems, [corruption] the Ministry of Urban Development Affairs (MUDA), and other activities including the dismissal of 120 judges and the appointment of new people and the establishment of the high council to fight against corruption speak of our serious steps against corruption," Menapal added.

To attract more international support during NATO and Warsaw summits, counter-corruption organizations said the government needs to have tangible achievements to show in its fight against corruption.

Afghanistan is currently ranked one of the most corrupt countries in the world. (Tolonews)

### (10) 'Rebels Make ...

neutralize their attacks.

Gen. Hamid said currently five military operations were underway in various parts of the western zone, during which militants had been caused heavy casualties. (Pajhwok)

### (11) Helmand Clerics,...

asked the government to resolve its own problems and prevent corruption in order to further people's and religious scholars' trust in the regime. Speaking on behalf of other elders, Shamsullah Sehrai also said tribal elders strongly supported the security forces. He said the people of Helmand had been cooperating with the government over the past many years in various sectors in order security could be improved in the province.

Sehrai believed direct fighting alone could not bring peace to the country and the government had to strengthen intelligence organs and also to intensify the peace process.

But tribal elder Haji Abdul Samad said such rhetoric was a waste of time because the country's situation needed practical efforts.

"Only saying we support (the Afghan forces) will not work. All religious scholars and tribal elders should send their children to join the national armed forces in order we can easily defend our region."

The elders announced their support for security forces at a time when clashes have been ongoing between security forces and insurgents over the past few months in various parts of Helmand, including the provincial capital, Lashkargah.

Over the past four months, the Taliban have been in full control of Musa Qala, Nawzad, Deshu and Baghran districts. (Pajhwok)

### (12) Militants,...

capital, from Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif, the capital of northern Balkh provinces, when they were taken hostage by suspected militants in Mirza Qam area of Qara Qul district.

There were some 55 to 60 passengers onboard the vehicles and the gunmen took them to an unknown location, he said.

However, a government source said the passengers had been released by their captors after searching them. However, he did not know if the hostages included government officials.

Faryab provincial council head Mohammad Tahir Rahmani confirmed the incident but said it was not clear as to who were involved – militants or robbers.

Abdur Razaq, who owns a medicine store in Maimana, was one among the hostages. One of his family members said they did not know Razaq's fate as yet. (Pajhwok)

### (13) Zazai, Turi Tribes ...

The Zazai tribe, which has driven militants from the Estia area of Paktia, has agreed on joint efforts with Turis not allow outsiders to use their terri-

ories for subversive activities.

On the Pakistani side of the border, volunteers in Bughday, Borki, Akherlachi, Kunj Alizai, Malikhel, Anzeri and Bilyameen tribesmen are keeping vigil during night. They take positions on hilltops and other key locations along the border. (Pajhwok)

### (14) Taliban ...

However, the official confirmed that two policemen and one civilian sustained injuries during the firefight in the said districts.

Meantime, hospital sources in Asadabad told Xinhua that eight injured persons including three civilians and five policemen had been taken to hospital for medical treatment.

Taliban outfit, which launched its annual offensive on April 12, in an online statement, confirmed fighting in Kunar province, claiming several security checkpoints have been targeted. (Xinhua)

### (15) MoFA Employees...

UNAMA, ground engagements between parties to the conflict caused the highest number of total civilian casualties (fatalities and injuries), followed by improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and suicide and complex attacks. Ground engagements caused the most fatalities amongst civilians, followed by targeted and deliberate killings.

This comes as a major campaign was launched late in November 2014 to donate blood for the victims of war in the country, mainly to the Afghan security forces members who are regularly targeted amid rampant insurgency in the country.

The campaign was widely welcomed and hundreds of people including high level government officials including President Ghani and CEO Abdullah participated to donate blood to war victims. (KP)

### (16) Work Launched ...

provinces and the Kabul-Jalalabad highway through Tagab and Sarobi districts.

Provincial Rural Development and Rehabilitation director Hayatullah Farhang told Pajhwok Afghan News the projects would cost 180 million afghanis being given by the Rural Development Ministry. He said the projects would take six months to complete.

A resident of Kohistan district, Ziaur Rahman, said the projects would not only resolve people's transportation problem but also help them find jobs. (Pajhwok)

### (17) NDS Foil...

plot by the Afghan security forces.

This comes as the Afghan intelligence operatives foiled a major attack plot by the terror network on Hamid Karzai International Airport. (KP)

### (18) Taliban...

were wounded. According to security officials, training and mobilization is the main reason for Afghan forces' success on the battlefield.

"Our combat strength reached to 90 percent compared to the past. We have air forces, ground forces. In the past foreign advisers trained us but now the whole process is handled by Afghans," said Assadullah a security official from Shahin 209th Corps.

Hamid said that forces are equipped both in ground and air capabilities in the north and at the moment they have A29 fighter jets.

The Taliban on Tuesday announced the launch of their spring offensive, but government forces have said this is part of their psychological war tactic and that the Taliban does not have the ability to defeat Afghan forces. (Tolonews)

### (19) Bulgarian...

used to tie the migrants, camouflage clothes and small amount of drug substances.

Petar Nizamov refused to announce any details around the case.

The Afghan nationals will be questioned today. (FOCUS News Agency)

### (20) Battle...

treatment that saved his life. Luamanu received the Insignia of the New Zealand Gallantry Medal for his display of gallantry in twice carrying a wounded colleague over open ground and under enemy fire to ensure his safety. (Pajhwok)

### (21) 2 Afghans ...

the transportation of different items including fruits and vegetables. The five-hour restrictions, however, were eased when security officials inter-

vened. More than 5,000 Afghan nationals

were stopped at the border, according to The News International, which said the woman from the eastern city of Jalalabad died waiting in a car awaiting clearance at a Pakistani checkpoint.

The girl breathed her last on the Afghan side of the border due to hot weather, Torkham administrator Shakeel Umarzai confirmed to the newspaper. He said the child was waiting along with his parents to enter Pakistan. (Pajhwok)

### (22) Taliban Leader ...

governor's claim regarding the killing of their key member, but the group claimed capturing some check-posts in Baghlan. (Pajhwok)

### (23) Civil Society...

lent their support to Adel and said that girls in other provinces are also victims of the old custom of Baad.

"The important demand of Adel is to prevent the giving of 10 girls in Baad. It is about 10 human beings and 10 lives," said Humaira Saqeb, a civil society activist.

"Not only in Paktia, but in southern Afghanistan and other parts of the country, Baad is a common practice," Sharif Sarafat, another activist, said.

Adel and the civil society activists want Baad to be eliminated. They warned that they will continue their protests if government does not take serious action against the practice.

Baad is the custom of taking girls as payment for misdeeds committed by elders or their families in a bid to settle disputes. (Tolonews)

### (24) Earthquake ...

earthquakes or fire. They should build safe rooms in order to take students for their protection," said Khadija's father.

"We have programs to raise awareness by our students about different issues on a weekly basis, whether they are natural disasters or other issues," said Nasrin Noorzai, principle of the school.

Sunday's earthquake struck Afghanistan on Sunday afternoon and measured 6.6 magnitude.

Lack of awareness is considered as one of the main reasons behind casualties during natural disasters. (Tolonews)

### (25) Takhar PC ...

also lost their lives during the gun battle, the officials said, adding that security forces were deployed to bring the situation under the control. The main reason behind the bloody clash among the two ex-jihadi commanders has not been ascertained so far. (KP)

### (26) Syrians Pin ...

sense of belonging to their country, despite the fact that their cities have for long been out of government control.

"We came from hotspots and are here today to participate in the elections to choose the candidate who can fulfill our demands, such as improving university education, regulating food prices, and most importantly secure us job opportunities," she said. (Xinhua)

### (27) Low Commodity...

in emerging market economies.

The adverse impact of lower commodity prices was compounded by domestic conditions such as electricity shortages, policy uncertainty, drought, and security threats, which hindered growth.

Despite this murky picture, there were some bright spots where growth continued to be robust such as in Cote d'Ivoire, which saw a favorable policy environment and rising investment, as well as oil importers such as Kenya, Rwanda, and Tanzania. (Xinhua)

### (28) Ceasefire...

try to resolve problems and record complaints of violations and send them to a higher committee working under United Nations supervision.

The deployment comes amid fresh reports of violations by both sides of the truce that began at midnight on Sunday.

Houthi spokesman Mohammed Abdel-Salam had said local committees would be deployed in six provinces where fighting had been taking place. Apart from Marib, Hajjah and Taiz, monitors would also be deployed in Shabwa, al-Bayda and Dalea provinces in southern and central Yemen.

Abdel-Salam, in remarks to the Saudi-owned Asharq al-Awsat newspaper published on Wednesday, said the Houthis regard the truce "as a step towards a complete halt to the

war" in Yemen. (Reuters)

### (29) EU Concerned ...

stranded refugees and other migrants trying to scale a fence on Greece's border with the country.

Greek authorities say Macedonian police fired tear gas and stun grenades to deter a group of about 30 people from trying to get over the razor-wire fence using blankets.

No injuries were reported from Wednesday's clashes at the closed Idomeni border crossing in northern Greece. On Sunday, severe clashes between stone-throwing migrants and Macedonian police using tear gas, stun grenades, rubber bullets and a water cannon left scores injured

About 11,000 people have been living in an informal tent city on the Greek side of the border for weeks, hoping Macedonia will let them continue their trek towards Europe's prosperous heartland. (AP)

### (30) UN Employee ...

is was aware that "the staff is well treated" but provided no details about the person's nationality or when and under what circumstances the capture occurred.

Nearly 9,200 people have died and more than 1.5 million driven from their homes since a pro-Moscow revolt broke out in the former Soviet republic's industrial heartland in April 2014.

A series of periodic truce deals in 2015 have abated some of the violence, which Kiev and its Western allies accuse Moscow of stirring and backing, a charge that Russia denies.

On Sunday, the European Union criticised the "unprecedented level of violence" in eastern Ukraine after international peace monitors came under fire. (AFP)

### (31) Russia has ...

in a format called the G7+1.

The seven countries – Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States – boycotted the Sochi G8 meeting in 2014 to protest what they saw Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea from Ukraine.

On Sunday, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier raised the idea that Russia should return to the group as its role in solving major international conflicts cannot be overlooked.

"We will see in a year if Russia maintains this constructive role and then there will certainly be a debate within the G7 (on Russia's return)," Steinmeier was quoted as saying by the German Zeit newspaper ahead of a G7 foreign ministers' meeting in Japan's Hiroshima. (Xinhua)

### (32) Sisi Defends ...

severed live broadcast quickly afterwards.

Egyptian media has been in uproar since the government announced on Saturday the signing of a maritime demarcation accord that puts two islands at the southern entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba in Saudi waters.

Saudi and Egyptian officials say Tiran and Sanafir belong to the kingdom and were only under Egyptian control because Saudi Arabia's founder asked Egypt in 1950 to protect them.

The islands are uninhabited but strategically located and the move caused consternation among Egyptians who say they have been taught at school that the islands are theirs.

Calls for protest against the move have gathered thousands of supporters on Facebook. A group of 11 people protested against the transfer of the islands earlier this week and five of them were briefly detained. (Reuters)

### (33) Ukraine Eyes...

Oleksiy Goncharenko told reporters. Ukraine has been gripped by a months-long political crisis that forced Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk to resign Sunday over his seeming failure to fight graft and implement economic restructuring measures prescribed by the IMF under a \$17.5-billion (15.4-billion-euro) rescue loan.

The release of new tranches of that money and billions of dollars of other aid have been suspended until the former Soviet republic can unite behind a new government and fulfill the pledges made during its historic February 2014 pro-EU revolt. The leaders who succeeded the ousted Moscow-backed president Viktor Yanukovich have seen their approval ratings plunge due to public disillusionment about their ability to break a handful of tycoons' grip on politics and eliminate corruption. (AFP)