

(1) Abdullah Terms

of Afghanistan. In response to these reactions, Abdullah said: "This outcry has two sides; the first is the uproar with the people who truly care for people of Afghanistan; they observe the situation and expect better steps to be taken.... The second is the uproar with the people who have the right to be upset and we understand them. The previous facilities are no more available for them and they avail every opportunity to lash out at the government." The CEO also ruled out the possibility of the establishment of an interim government.

"Two former ministers, who are no longer in their positions, have expressed their views.... One has said that early elections should be held and another has said that an interim government should be established. These are the viewpoints that have been expressed. It doesn't mean that work is underway to end this government and establish an interim government," Abdullah said. (Tolonews)

(2) DPG Urges

advocated for extended regional cooperation to Afghanistan. The DPG illustrates that the regional nations do not have an option except help Afghanistan to improve its security which also has an impact on regional and international stability.

A gathering of delegates from Afghanistan, regional countries and director general of the DPG was held at the Afghan center of strategic studies where the participants discussed the overall challenges facing the nation. They also tabled their recommendations they believe will help Afghanistan to address these issues and their settlements.

Dr. Radha Kumar, Director General, Delhi Policy Group said that in the report, they have studied Afghanistan's security, political, economic and regional cooperation for the country.

"One of the recommendations therefore that is made is that regional countries must improve their balance of trade with Afghanistan, in almost every case except that of India, the balance of trade is heavily against Afghanistan," Kumar said.

She called on regional and ultra regional countries to help Afghanistan's military, adding that regional cooperation to Afghan national unity government is a need. (Tolonews)

(3) Iran Calls

minister pointed to Iran's willingness to share the experience and facilities of the European countries in dealing with Afghan refugees, and said, "The EU has invited Iranian experts in different Afghan refugee aid sectors to travel to Brussels and become familiar with EU's new achievements and we have also agreed with the EU's request."

In a relevant development in October, Rahmani Fazli in a meeting with Afghan Refugees and Repatriation Minister Hossein Alami Balkhi in Geneva said that necessary measures have to be taken to pave the way for the voluntary return of illegal Afghan immigrants living in Iran.

"Afghan government has to make further efforts to prevent its nationals from illegally entering into Iran," Rahmani Fazli said on the sidelines of the 66th session of the Executive Committee (ExCom) of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

"The value of Iran's work in hosting millions of Afghan refugee's now is revealed that receiving a few thousands of refugees from war-stricken countries has created a lot of problems for European countries and even in some cases they have treated the refugees in inhumane ways," Rahmani Fazli added. (FNA)

(4) Illegal Mining

another jeweler Mohammad Akbar said.

Afghan lapis is reportedly sold for between \$2,000 and \$4,000 USD per kilogram.

According to experts, Afghan lapis mines are estimated to be worth trillions of dollars. However they say that illegal extractions are posing serious problems to the nation's economic development. (Tolonews)

(5) Govt. Asked

we stop pleading with the enemy, because peace cannot be begged. The more we plead, the more arrogant, ruder and more brutal they [the enemies] become," said Sayed Makhdoom Rahin, chairman of the council. Participants at the gathering said that war in Afghanistan has external rea-

sons.

"In Afghanistan, the hidden foreign hand is playing the main role," said Mohammad Amin Baligh, a member of the council.

"20 to 25 kilometers outside Kabul city a different mindset rules, which is in complete contrast with the one here [in Kabul]," said Abdul Ghafoor Lewal, the Deputy Minister of Border and Tribal Affairs.

Officials at the Ministry of Defense (MoD) meanwhile said that they have plans to suppress militants. (Tolonews)

(6) Nuristan to

of the province for the defence of the country, a statement from the Presidential Palace said.

"I will in person monitor the asphaltting process and I ask people to monitor roads' construction," President Ghani said of the roads the government would asphalt in Nuristan.

Ghani said the past year was difficult especially from security point of view, but this year the Afghan air force had been prepared against enemies. Ghani also asked the people of Nuristan to help security forces maintain better security there.

In response to Nuristan people's demand regarding establishment of hostels for high schools, the president said his government would establish hostels for schools in restive provinces including Nuristan. (Pajhwok)

(7) Taliban

in Kunduz neighboring Baghlan province over the past 24 hours.

In talks with Xinhua, Jamshidi said that the security forces from the ground and air targeted Taliban positions in Dand-e-Shahabuddin and Dand-e-Ghori districts, Baghlan province over the past two days, killing 13 militants and wounding 10 others.

Kunduz provincial police chief Mohammad Qasim Jangalbagh also confirmed Taliban multipronged attacks on Kunduz and in talks with local media contended that more than 150 Taliban militants had been killed and injured since Friday and Taliban's attempt to overrun the provincial capital Kunduz city had been foiled.

The hardliner Taliban group launched its so-called spring offensive on April 12 and since then the militants have conducted series of attacks against government interests in several provinces including Kunduz. (Xinhua)

(8) Govt. Seeks

Repatriation.

"Afghanistan has conditions and demands, including assistance with the returnees, assistance with the Afghan government in the provision of security, and employment opportunities in Afghanistan through establishing vocational institutes in some provinces to train those deported," Miakhil said. Thousands of Afghan refugees are currently in Greece, where they had hoped to continue traveling into Europe. But under an agreement between Turkey and the EU, all migrants who recently arrived in Greece will be returned to Turkey. For every returnee, Turkey will send one vetted Syrian refugee to be settled in Europe.

But the fate of the Afghan refugees is not clear. European governments reclassified Afghans as economic migrants in February, reducing their chances of being able to stay in Europe legally. And Turkey has not said whether it will deport them to their home countries.

The disparity has led to clashes between Afghan and Syrian migrants in Greece.

The Afghan government had earlier stressed that the country would not accept the "forced deportation" of Afghans from Europe.

But Afghan Minister for Foreign Affairs Salahuddin Rabbani told the Afghan parliament recently that efforts were under way to reach an understanding with Europe to slow down the pace and work out a reasonable way for Afghans to return to their country.

Europe's financial agreement with Turkey might have prompted the Afghan government to seek financial assistance in handling the Afghan refugee problem. Europe has reportedly granted more than \$3 billion in aid for Turkey as part of the refugee agreement.

Fleeing insecurity Afghans have cited insecurity and Taliban threats as their reasons for leaving the country.

"I went to school and university in Afghanistan and had several jobs in the country," Aryan Arya, an Afghan settled in Sweden, told VOA. "The main reason why I left Afghanistan was insecurity. Taliban literally controls 50

percent of Afghanistan, and I know this from my work in the security sector in Afghanistan."

Arya added that he is very happy now, and his brother has recently joined him — coming through the same route he took to reach Europe.

Sayed Zafar Shah Hashemi, a former employee of the Afghan Independent Election Commission, told VOA that growing insecurity in Afghanistan has made Europe an attractive destination for many Afghan people. However, he warns against the dangerous route and its potential risks — including death.

"I have been to the refugee centers and seen Afghans in a very desperate situation," Hashemi told VOA from Austria, where he claimed asylum. "Initially things were good, but now most centers accepting refugees and providing them with welfare have closed."

After Syrians, Afghans make up the majority of refugees in Europe, followed by Iraqis. Miakhil, the Afghan refugee ministry spokesperson, told VOA that in 2015 around 250,000 Afghans reached Europe via the Mediterranean Sea.

"Afghans, along with citizens of countries like Syria and Iraq, make up the bulk of refugees in Europe, and they embarked on dangerous journeys, embracing real risk to their lives," Miakhil said. "Of the 3,400 people that have died on the Mediterranean route in 2015, 12 percent were Afghans." No sympathy (VoA)

(9) 2nd Polio

campaigns each time faced problems in eight districts, depriving some 8,500 children from polio drops.

Fazli said 20 polio cases were registered nationwide last year, when two cases surfaced in Kunar. (Pajhwok)

(10) Girls' University

percent of female students were trying to get migrated despite signing undertaking during the Kankor exam to carefully select university and faculties of their choice.

She said her ministry's leadership committee had decided to add extra marks to female students to enable them to reach their desired universities.

If female students were allowed to be transferred from one university to another, it would create imbalance in classrooms as there would be empty classes in some universities and others overloaded, she explained.

In such a scenario, the ministry would loss assistance from the international community because universities having half of its classrooms empty did not receive international aid. (Pajhwok)

(11) Critics Slam

for necessary considerations. However, the ministry of justice later said that the decree is still at the ministry of parliamentary affairs.

"The presidential legislative decree on the formation of election commissions and their functions has been referred to the ministry of parliamentary affairs by the ministry of justice," Minister of Justice Abdul Basir Anwar said.

Despite government assurances, the lawmakers said that the delays over sending the reform decree to parliament for discussions will prevent the elections from being held within the timeline announced by the government.

"The decree should have been referred to parliament during the recess and it would have been referred to the commissions so that the final decision was taken on it by now," MP Zakia Sangeen said.

Amid speculations over the government's unwillingness for reforms, government officials have reiterated that they are still firm on the implementation of reforms in the election system.

Abdullah Abdullah, the Chief Executive Officer of National Unity Government (NUG) has said that in the past, similar delays have been witnessed which are unfortunate, but vowed that government will be completing the reform process.

"Unfortunately in the past we have had similar delays even in the presidential elections. These are the issues which we want to address on time in line with the situation in Afghanistan and strive to have these tasks completed on time," Abdullah said. (Tolonews)

(12) Mashwani Banned

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 Mashwani out of the Wolesi Jirga hall. Qadir has said Mashwani could not enter the parlia-

ment until the house decides so.

However, lawmakers, invoking Article 72nd of the internal rules of business, decided that Mashwani could not attend any sessions for the next ten days due to his action against the minister.

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.

Based on the rules, the violator also could be banned for several days from attending the house with suggestion from the administrative board and approval of other lawmakers. (Pajhwok)

(13) Governor

Barez told Pajhwok Afghan News the militants launched attacks on security posts in Dand-i-Shahabuddin on Friday, but met a strong resistance from Afghan forces. He confirmed heavy clashes were still underway and many areas had been recaptured from militants.

He said 15 militants were killed and 10 others including a Taliban commander Mullah Abdur Rassoul were wounded during the clashes. But he said more security personnel were needed to deal with the ongoing organized conflict in Baghlan. (Pajhwok)

(14) 6 Police,

in Kansak area of Bala Buluk district and the ensuing clash continued throughout the night.

Security officials refused to comment on the clash, but the provincial council chief, Farid Bakhtawar, said six policemen had been killed and another two wounded in the attack. He also said the rebels had overrun two police posts in the area.

The public representative had no information about Taliban casualties in the Kansak battle, but said the firefight came to an end on Saturday morning. Abdul Jabbar Shaeq, a doctor at the civil hospital in Farah City, said they had been delivered three dead bodies of policemen and one injured policeman to the hospital. (Pajhwok)

(15) ANSF Engaged

Afghan Air Force (AAF) flew 83 missions in the past 24 hours to provide close-air support to Afghan forces who are suppressing the militant activities across the country. said at least 34 militants were killed and 7 others were wounded in the airstrikes carried out in the areas falling under the control of 209th Shaheen Corps of the Afghan National Army. (KP)

(16) Governor Dubs

wounded and a large amount of weapons seized during recent clashes. He also assured that security had improved and there was no major threat from the Taliban. (Pajhwok)

(17) First Commercial

processes 600 MT of soybeans annually and produces 60 MT of crude soy oil.

Last year proved to be a record-breaking year for the production of soybean in Afghanistan. Nutrition and Education International (NEI), in partnership with Afghan farmers produced 4,000 MT of soybean.

This is a one hundred percent increase of soybean production of 2,000 MT of last year. That figure is increasing dramatically to over 4,000 MT in 2015 due to the hard work of over 12,000 farmers throughout the country.

NEI has a plan to support Afghan farmers by providing high quality seeds, fertilizers, post-harvest equipment, and buying back the grown soybeans for processing. NEI plans to train 18,000 farmers with input distribution and produce around 6,000 MT of soybean in Afghanistan in 2016. (PR)

(18) Kandahar's

The plant worth \$15 million was supposed to be built with the help of USAID and completed by 2016 summer, but little work has been done so far. Eng. Syed Rassoul Baqi, Breshna Shirkat director in Kandahar, told Pajhwok Afghan News that USAID had pledged to launch work on the power project in February, 2016. But the work has not yet begun.

He said the USAID had demanded that the land, on which the project would be executed, should be owned by the Breshna Shirkat. He said the USAID had also asked for the electricity wires to be extended to the defined location. Both the demands had been met and only the launch of work on the project remained, Baqi said. According to Baqi, 80 acres of land has been acquired for the project and 135

pylons have been installed. (Pajhwok)

to reopen the road was just "exhibitionist."

Talban's spokesman Qari Yousuf Ahmadi said fighting between Afghan security forces and the Taliban for control over the highway was still underway. He claimed the rebels hit four surveillance aircrafts of security forces. (Pajhwok)

(20) 3 Female

militant groups have not commented regarding the report so far.

Logar is among the relatively volatile provinces in central Afghanistan where anti-government armed militants are actively operating in a number of its districts.

Foreign insurgents fighting the Afghan forces is not new as scores of militants from Chechnya and other countries are routinely reported killed during the fight with the Afghan forces.

At least five Russian speaking suspects were arrested in eastern Nangarhar province of Afghanistan last month which followed months after four people were killed following a suicide attack carried out by a foreigner woman in this province. (KP)

(21) EU to Open

financial and banking system about Europe's interest in developing economic ties with the Islamic republic," she said.

On Friday, Iran's central bank chief Valiollah Seif said in Washington that Iran must benefit from the nuclear deal reached last year, and the disinclination of world's major financial institutions to work with Iran might eventually endanger the agreement.

Iran blames the United States for imposing fresh unilateral sanctions against Tehran over its missile program, which have slackened global major banks' businesses in Iran.

Mogherini arrived in Tehran on Saturday heading a high-ranking EU commissioners in the fields of energy, maritime affairs and fisheries, transport, market and industry.

Mogherini is scheduled to meet Iran's Majlis Parliament (Majlis) Speaker Ali Larjani and Security Council head Ali Shamkhani. (Xinhua)

(22) Spanish Minister

involving regional politicians this year, as voters tire of left-wing parties' failure to put aside differences to form a coalition government.

Leaks from the Panama-based law firm Mossack Fonseca have embarrassed several world leaders and shone a spotlight on the shadowy world of offshore companies by revealing the financial arrangements of prominent figures.

Icelandic Prime Minister Sigmundur David Gunnlaugsson stepped down earlier this month after documents linked him to an offshore company. (Reuters)

(23) Europe

stated von der Leyen. She said that the real problem isn't the migration crisis itself, but the primary causes of it — civil war and terrorism.

"If we'd be able to strike an agreement in terms of protection of EU's external borders, admission of refugees and cooperation to restore peace in the Middle East, it would've been the hardest blow to the face of IS," asserted von der Leyen, who was one of the keynote speakers at GLOBSEC conference.

The list of GLOBSEC guests features several presidents, prime ministers, defence and foreign affairs ministers, as well as foreign policy and security experts. (Xinhua)

(24) Turkish, Iranian

together in order to end bloodshed in our region. It's true that Turkey and Iran have some difference on regional issues, but we are in agreement to end blood in the region," Erdogan stated.

Rouhani, for his part, said his visit comes as sanctions on Iran are lifted, adding they laid ground to enhancing ties between two countries.

Banks of Turkey and Iran would boost ties as the Turkish banks can now open branches in Iran, he said, adding that Turkish and Iranian stock markets should also better cooperate. Rouhani said they would encourage private investments for transportation, which he said would boost exports to third counties. (Xinhua)

(25) Premier Li Stresses

development momentum became weak, the country must promote the development of the new economy to stimulate employment and realize high-speed economic growth.

At the School of Mathematical Sciences, Li said that China's shortcomings were in basic research, and in this regard he urged the university to give priority to basic math research and give long-term support to researchers, including reasonable and steady incomes and social insurance. (Xinhua)

(26) Merkel Criticized,

prosecutors can consider whether to press charges against someone for the crime of insulting a foreign head of state. "It's not clear what reasons weigh so heavily that she had to take this legally, politically and morally unnecessary as well as disastrous step," wrote Torsten Krauel, chief opinion writer of the center-right German daily Die Welt.

Krauel described Merkel's decision as bow to Erdogan, whose help the chancellor depends on for her plan to reduce the influx of migrants to Europe. Any conviction of comedian Jan Boehmermann would now "carry her political signature," he said, noting that previously Merkel had been known as a strong defender of free speech and for shrugging off public attacks against her in foreign media. (AP)

(27) Battle Over

(DACA) — effectively went under the Republican-led Congress.

Opponents, including 26 states and GOP members of Congress, say the plan exceeds constitutional power.

A federal appeals court earlier had struck down DAPA, which has yet to go fully into effect. The Justice Department then asked the high court for a final review, in what could be a key test of Obama's executive powers his last year in office. The decision to review the case was welcome on both sides of the aisle. "The Constitution vests legislative authority in Congress, not the president," said Hatch, urging the justices to rule against the administration. But the White House voiced confidence the policies would be upheld. "Like millions of families across this country — immigrants who want to be held accountable, to work on the books, to pay taxes, and to contribute to our society openly and honestly — we are pleased that the Supreme Court has decided to review the immigration case," spokeswoman Brandi Hoffine said. (Fox News)

(28) Battle Goes

the cabinet added. Opponents argue it would just undermine the Italian democracy, by giving the cabinet too much power at the expense of a weakened parliament, and too much space to the strongest party.

Critics also fear it would deprive Italy's system of crucial democratic checks and balances among institutions. The referendum is likely to be held in October, and critics of the reform have vowed to transform it into a crucial "test" of Renzi and his government's popularity. Center-right Forza Italia (FI) party of former premier Silvio Berlusconi, anti-establishment Five Star Movement (M5S), and the Northern League all committed themselves to join battle in the next months. (Xinhua)

(29) EU Might

skimmed milk powder and butter. A new support in particular for growers of fruit and vegetables once an existing aid package expires at the end of June might be introduced.

Since Russia banned Western food imports nearly two years ago in response to EU sanctions on Russia over the Ukraine crisis, the EU has mobilized more than 1 billion euros (about 1.13 billion U.S. dollars) to support them. Russia's ban has led to oversupply on EU markets and caused prices to plunge. The food products covered by the Russian ban represented a value of 5.1 billion euros in 2013 exports. (Xinhua)

(30) Most Americans

between Republicans and Democrats, reflecting the starkly different positions of the two parties' presidential candidates on this issue, Gallup found. Democratic presidential candidate Senator Bernie Sanders has made income inequality a centerpiece of his campaign, saying the issue of wealth and income inequality is the "great moral issue of our time, it is the great economic issue of our time, and it is the great political issue of our time." Sanders has called for "higher income tax rates for the richest Americans," while Democratic front-runner Hillary Clinton also has called for the need to "reform our tax code so the wealthiest pay their fair share." (Xinhua)