

### (1) Government Names...

Mohammad Khan and Mohammad Mohaqqeq, two aides of the National Unity Government's Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, are also members of the delegation. President Ghani's spokesman Haroon Chakhansuri has told a news briefing that the list introduced a delegation with members of all segments of the Afghan society. The intra-Afghan dialogue has been slated for April 21-19 in Doha to find a negotiated settlement to Afghanistan's protracted war and civil strife. (Xinhua)

### (2) Germany Pledges...

bilateral cooperation is to be invested in the energy sector are conditional on concluding operation and maintenance guidelines for existing and planned infrastructure projects to ensure their sustainability.

Germany remains committed to contributing to sustainable development, peace, and stability in Afghanistan.

"Germany remains committed as a reliable long term partner for the development of Afghanistan and its people - as we always have in the past. Germany will continue to support development in Afghanistan with funding up to EUR 430 million a year until 2020," said Head of the Afghanistan/Pakistan division of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Dr Henning Plate.

The Afghan-German Cooperation aims at improving living conditions and future prospects of Afghan citizens - so they may enjoy lives not overshadowed by poverty, displacement, violence or extremism. Today, Germany committed to continue its support in fighting corruption, promoting girls and women, strengthening Afghan civil society, reforming public administration and fostering the enabling environment for private sector engagement. The Afghan Ministry of Finance's Deputy Minister for Policy, Dr Naheed Sarabi: 'The Afghan Government aims to achieve higher economic growth, develop friendly relations with neighboring countries, increase our revenues, create employment, reduce poverty, and end violent conflict, as outlined in the Growth Strategy and Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF). Reaching these goals will enable us to achieve self-reliance as a nation. To get there, we are planning and investing in priority projects and programs as defined in the National Priority Programs (NPPs) that are long term, sustainable and that connect Afghanistan to the region and beyond.

"I also would like to express my gratitude on behalf of Afghanistan to your government and your people for the continuous support that development orientation we have received since the beginning of our partnership. Germany has played a key role in the reconstruction of Afghanistan and our cooperation has contributed to substantial achievements in the implementation of our joint development agenda," said Dr. Sarabi.

To ensure that development benefits all Afghan citizens, priorities include creating lasting income-generating opportunities and supporting economic growth as well as improving electricity and water supplies. These objectives are fully aligned with priority policies, such as the ANPDF and NPPs. The Afghan-German Cooperation will also expand cooperation with

reform partners on the Afghan side and increasingly make use of incentives to promote transparency, Afghan ownership and development orientation.

Since 2001, the German government has invested about AFN 345 billion (EUR 4.06 billion) in Afghanistan. (Wadsam)

### (3) US Special...

However, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid rejected the reports as wrong, saying that no decision had been made yet in this regard.

Both Taliban and Khalilzad have not yet commented on when the next round of talks will happen. (Pajhwok)

### (4) Construction...

Khulami said there was also the potential of producing 67,000 megawatts of electricity in the western region of the country and the construction sector could also do its part in this regard.

"In today's conference, we will share information about projects we have with the construction sector," he said.

He added that the Ministry of Energy and Water had recently signed an agreement with Aga Khan Foundation under which the foundation would produce electricity in Badakhshan province and the government would purchase it.

Sibghatullah Karimi, a member of the Construction Companies Association, who attended the conference, said some companies were capable and eligible for construction projects, but most of such projects were given to people who had political support. However, did not provide further details.

"We are aware some contracts were awarded to companies which have no capacity for implementing them, reforms have somehow been made, but they are not enough because the private sector is worried about corruption in the projects awarding area," he said.

According to Pajhwok Afghan News findings, a contract of the Khost Airport terminal was awarded to a company which did not meet the bidding conditions.

Eng. Yousuf Pashton, president's advisor on technical and construction affairs, talking to the conference, also criticized the government's noncooperation with the private sector and said, "Attention to this sector leads to stability, improvement of economy and job creation in the country."

He termed the role of construction companies in the development of the country as important and said the sector had significant activities in Afghanistan since 2003.

Sharif Azimi, executive director of Afghanistan Construction Companies Association, also demanded a share for the association in projects and said projects should be awarded to companies based on their capacities and abilities.

He said 350 domestic and foreign companies were members of their association and they had great capacities. (Pajhwok)

### (5) Taliban's Spring...

after announcing the start of the spring offensive.

Zalmay Khalilzad, the US special envoy who is spearheading Washington's push for a peace settlement, called the Taliban announcement "reckless."

The Taliban has long refused to speak officially with Kabul, calling the government a "puppet" of the West.

But the Taliban is expected to meet an Afghan delegation that will

consist of government officials, opposition politicians, and civil society in the Qatari capital, Doha from April 21-19. (Pajhwok)

### (6) IEC Yet to Decide...

for the two electoral bodies - the Independent Election Commission and the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission.

This comes as former election commissioners have been accused of corruption and their cases have been handed to the Attorney General's Office and have been banned from traveling outside the country. So far, it is not clear whether judicial organizations have started investigation into the allegations against the election commissioners. (Tolo news)

### (7) Afghan Government...

in Balkh, Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, and Nangarhar.

The Kandahar Provincial Governor's Office, the Directorate of Women's Affairs, and the Civil Service Commission support the internship program through on-the-job training and commitment to employ interns after graduation.

Kandahar Governor, Hayatullah Hayat, said "Much appreciation to USAID for training our women in Kandahar. They are our sisters, they deserve our respect and our support so that they can work in government offices. We currently have 1,500 available positions in Kandahar and we are looking for qualified women to fill 200 vacancies. I encourage our graduated interns to apply."

In 2014, the Afghan government committed to increase the number of women in the civil service from 22 percent to 30 percent by 2020. By hiring qualified and trained women, Afghanistan will cultivate a civil service that is more responsive to the needs of its citizens.

Since 2001, the U.S. placed a top priority on supporting women's empowerment as the most effective investment for accelerating economic growth, and achieving sustainable peace. (PR)

### (8) Suspects Sentenced...

This comes as Afghanistan has ranked among deadliest countries for journalists.

The Afghan government has said it is committed to supporting journalists and freedom of the press. However, reports show that journalists are still facing different kinds of threats.

Government's statistics show that there are 96 TV channels, 65 radio stations and 911 print media in Kabul, as well as 107 TV channels, 284 radio stations, and 416 print media in other provinces. He says there are 1,879 active media outlets in Afghanistan which are called as one of the main achievements of the country in the past 18 years. (Tolo news)

### (9) Floods Damage...

threatened over hundred more homes.

Shamsul Haq Shekhani, a member of the provincial council, said floods damaged hundreds of homes in Dawlat Shahi, Qala Malak, Bahadur Khel and Alikhel villages of Bagram district.

There were no reports about casualties. (Pajhwok)

### (10) Nations Express...

that Notre Dame is "an important symbol of our common European culture" and posted a picture of the French flag and the European Union flag flying in Vienna.

Japan's government said it would consider sending support. "Its damage is a loss to the world and our hearts ache," said Yoshihide Suga, the chief Cabinet secretary.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in called for the world to come together to rebuild the Paris landmark. "Our love for humanity will be illustrated in a more mature way in the process of reconstruction," he said.

Russian President Putin said in a message published on the Kremlin's website that the tragedy "struck a chord in the hearts of Russians." He called Notre Dame a "priceless treasure of Christian and world culture" and said Russia is ready to send the "best specialists" to help rebuild it. (Fox News)

### (11) US Unseals Assange...

United States," but fails to even ascertain whether the "illegal agreement that Assange and Manning reached" was what ultimately unleashed the trove of documents. Brown can only speculate as to how the computer was eventually breached.

In an effort to present the leaks in as damaging a light as possible, Brown reproduces one almost cartoonish exchange, claiming "after the release of the Afghanistan War Reports, a member of the Taliban contacted the New York Times" and stated: "We are studying the report... If they are US spies, then we will know how to punish them." Osama bin Laden is also said to be a WikiLeaks fan, with letters found during the raid on his Abbottabad compound instructing an al-Qaeda member to "gather" the material leaked by Manning.

Having been assigned to the case in 2017 - less than a year before filing the affidavit - Brown admits her understanding of the seven-year-old "criminal conspiracy" is based on "testimony of a forensic examiner in Manning's court martial, my conversations with FBI forensic examiners, and research on the internet." The internet was quick to pick apart her timing - and the rest of the document. (RT)

### (12) 'How Dare You!'...

who retweeted it with a response in Russian: "How dare you! Shame." She also tagged the Ukrainian foreign minister and the ministry's official Twitter account. The minister, Pavlo Klimkin, did find time to express his condolences to the French people over the damage done to the historic church, but is yet to respond to Dumont. (RT)

### (13) 'Pompeo Lost His...

He pointed out that Chile's trade with Beijing exceeded US\$42.8 billion, which is nearly twice the size of the trade it has with Washington (US\$24 billion).

"Mr. Pompeo is a hypocrite," he said, adding that it is the US that "has not made substantial contributions" to the economy of South American states. The US and China have been locked in a trade war since President Donald Trump slapped import tariffs on Chinese goods. In retaliation, Beijing did the same with a number of US-made products. Relations between the two nations were further strained as senior US officials accused Beijing of potentially using telecom giant Huawei to spy on Western states and ordinary citizens. Mike Pompeo has attempted to discourage American allies in Europe from using Huawei equipment, warning that reliance on Chinese technology will hamper their cooperation with Washington.

The company denied the allegations. Meanwhile, Belgium's Center for Cybersecurity investigated Huawei and found no evidence that its equipment presents "a spying threat." (RT)

### (14) Netanyahu Passes...

"Any room I had for maneuver has effectively been removed at this

moment," the president said.

Netanyahu's nomination had been a foregone conclusion after his right-wing Likud party captured the largest number of seats in the Knesset in last week's ballot and his closest rival, centrist Benny Gantz, conceded defeat.

Netanyahu has said he intends to build a coalition with five far-right, right-wing and ultra-Orthodox Jewish parties that would give the Likud-led government 65 seats, four more than the outgoing administration he heads.

Representatives of all of those parties told Rivlin at the meetings, broadcast live on the Internet, that they recommended Netanyahu get the nod.

Gantz, a former military chief of staff whose Blue and White party won 35 parliamentary seats, would likely be next in line to try to assemble a government if Netanyahu fails to do so within 42 days of being chosen by Rivlin.

Netanyahu is under no legal obligation to resign if indicted. He can still argue, at a pre-trial hearing with Mandelblit whose date has not been set, against the formal filing of bribery and fraud charges against him. (Reuters)

### (15) Comedian Zelenskiy...

incumbent Petro Poroshenko 24 percent. Poroshenko and Zelenskiy will meet in the second round of Ukraine's presidential election, which will take place on April 21. Zelenskiy won nearly twice as many votes as Poroshenko in the first round, on March 31. (Reuters)

### (16) Halal Ink, Giant...

Election officials are providing more than 1.6 million bottles of halal-certified indelible ink for voters to dip a finger in after casting ballots at some 810,000 polling stations. The Election Commission estimates more than 17 million people are involved in ensuring the elections run smoothly, including volunteers, guards and registered witnesses for every polling station. But posterized ballots have drawn criticism as a challenge for elderly voters.

### DEMOCRATIC OUTPOST

After three decades of military rule ended in 1998, Indonesia has become the most robust democracy in Southeast Asia, a region where authoritarian governments and stage-managed elections are the norm. But despite being the world's most populous Muslim nation, the third-largest democracy and a member of the Group of 20 major economies, Indonesia has a low profile on the world stage. That is slowly changing, with the country recently becoming a non-permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, announcing a bid to host the 2032 Olympics and analysts forecasting its economy to be among the world's five largest by 2030. (AP)

### (17) Germany Reopens...

In practice, the 2015 law means that a husband who helps his terminally ill wife to die would not be prosecuted.

But an association or a business that repeatedly offers to help people die would face prosecution.

The situation is also not so clear-cut for doctors who prescribe deadly cocktails to patients.

In their case before the constitutional court, the patients argue that their general personal right extends to their right to a self-determined death.

The medical practitioners are meanwhile seeking legal certainty in cases when they are required to prescribe palliative medication. (AFP)