

(1) Peace in...

He said terror could not be classified into good or bad and everyone must stand united both regionally- as he emphasised on SAARC- and globally to counter it.

Ghani said Afghanistan's quest was for democracy and they were inspired by the Indian tradition of democracy as he referred to the effect of India and Indian leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and others while growing up in the 1950s.

He also referred to Nobel laureate and Indian world poet Rabindranath Tagore who wrote the famous book *Kabuliwala*, a story of affection between an Afghani immigrant dried-fruit seller in Kolkata and a small girl called Mini who reminds him of his daughter, Amina, left behind in Kabul.

"Afghanistan and India are two countries that are bound by a thousand ties and millions of memories. We are the only countries that need no introduction," he said.

He said "the ties between Afghanistan and India are engraved in our landscapes, from the haunting, empty frames where the giant Buddhas of Bamyan once stood to the remnants of Hindu temples that stud the Afghan countryside, to Sufi shrines and minarets, forming the cultural heritage of India."

He said while other countries have to overcome their past to build a future, India and Afghanistan can build a future based on their past. Ghani addressing Indian media said he welcomed the emphasis in bilateral transport agreement which would allow Afghan trucks, goods to India. On a different note, Ghani expressed sympathies to the people of Nepal where an earthquake killed thousands of people. "I have had the pleasure of visiting Nepal many times, I have walked those mountains," he said.

Ghani also invited Modi to visit Afghanistan and inaugurate the new Parliament building in Kabul being built by India and also visit the Bamyan Valley.

"I look very much forward to receiving you in Kabul and I hope you will not only come to inaugurate the parliament [building] but also visit the Bamyan Valley and some of our other sites."

"Yesterday (Monday), I had the pleasure of meeting with people who after 200 years of living here still speak Pashto of absolute pure cadence. That is an indication of the ties that we have had, and the past here is guide to the future," Ghani said.

Ashraf Ghani, who arrived here on Monday night for a three-day visit, was given a ceremonial welcome on Tuesday morning in the forecourt of Presidential Palace in New Delhi.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Pranab Mukherjee were present at the ceremonial welcome at Rashtrapati Bhavan where the visiting President inspected a Guard of Honour. (Pajhwok)

(2) Corruption in ...

including delays in getting their stipends, long-term visas, corruption in the Ministry of Higher Education and lack of transparency in awarding scholarships to students.

Ghani called as dangerous corruption at higher education institutes and said Afghanistan would invest more on youth and would develop a system that maintained transparency in scholarships' distribution.

"We want to make an effective plan to promote the cultivation of advanced human resources and capacity building. We want to promote education which can improve the economy of Afghanistan," Ghani said.

The president encouraged Afghan students to spare no effort at getting standard education for a better future and peace and stability in Afghanistan. He was sure Afghanistan would emerge as a strong nation in near future.

"Our country is a major source of water for our neighbors, our water is better than fuel of neighboring countries and we will manage our water resources for better use inside Afghanistan," Ghani said.

He directed Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani, who was present in the meeting, to solve problems of the students in issuing visas and passports to them and delivering them stipends in-time.

A separate statement from the Presidential Palace said the president also met some Afghans living in India for the last two centuries.

The Indian-Afghans said they had not forgotten their culture and language despite living for 200 years in India. They asked President Ghani to pave the ground for their children in India to get education in their mother language.

They also said Afghanistan should ease visa issuance procedures and

return land of holy places of Hindus usurped by powerful individuals in Afghanistan.

Ghani appreciated the Afghans for preserving their traditions and language while living in India for the long period. The president assured them that their problems would be paid attention. (Pajhwok)

(3) India Ready...

with you and the Afghan people in a mission of global importance."

Modi said he had discussed with Ghani the historic efforts to rebuild Afghanistan. "We in India admire the courage and resolve of the Afghan people to seek a future of peace and prosperity. They are succeeding against huge challenges," he said.

"The relationship between India and Afghanistan is not just between two countries or governments. It is a timeless link of human hearts. We deeply value the friendship and the goodwill of the Afghan people. Every Indian, in turn, holds the Afghan people in the highest affection and esteem," said Modi.

Without naming Pakistan, Modi said: "Its success requires a positive and constructive approach from neighbours, including an end to support for violence." "We share Afghanistan's pain over persisting terrorism and extremist violence that destroy lives and derail progress," he said.

The Indian Prime Minister announced his country was ready to allow Afghan trucks to unload goods at the integrated check post in Attari, thus offering Afghanistan access to the Indian market.

"We are ready to welcome Afghan trucks at the ICP Attari. We are also prepared to join the successor agreement to Afghan-Pakistan Trade and Transit Agreement. This will re-establish one of the oldest trading routes of South Asia," said Modi.

"I also reaffirmed my commitment to take the Chahbahar Port project in Iran forward. We will also quickly conclude a bilateral Motor Vehicles Agreement," he said.

Ghani, addressing Indian media, said he welcomed the emphasis in bilateral transport agreement which would allow Afghan goods to India.

Modi said: "We will expand our development partnership, which includes infrastructure, agriculture, connectivity, human resource development, community projects and humanitarian assistance. We will explore new trade and investment opportunities."

The Indian prime minister said "Afghan children have a special focus in our efforts." "Today, I conveyed fresh support for Ihabibia School in Kabul, the Indira Gandhi Child Health Care Hospital and Red Crescent Society Fund for treatment of children with congenital heart disease," said Modi. (Pajhwok)

(4) Kunduz ...

equipment. He said a sufficient number of security forces from northern Balkh province had been called in to assist security forces in Kunduz province in destroying militant safe havens.

Massoud arrived in Kunduz when heavy fighting between security forces and Taliban insurgents killed a large number of combatants on the outskirts of Kunduz city.

Local officials said about 2000 militants, including foreigners, attacked security posts from various directions, leading President Ashraf Ghani to delay his departure on a state visit to India by several hours.

Officials said hundreds of Taliban insurgents had attacked police and army checkpoints, threatening to overrun parts of the provincial capital.

Massoud also visited northeastern Badakhshan province, saying militants had been completely eliminated in the Juram district.

He called people's support with security forces as crucial, saying the Taliban were not a big threat and could be defeated.

Ground forces commander Lt. Gen. Murad Ali Murad, who accompanied Massoud on the trip, said the Taliban militants had suffered heavy casualties in Juram during clashes with Afghan forces.

He said the operations targeted areas where foreign and Afghan militants were active.

About insecurity in Kunduz province, Murad said a clearing operation had been launched in the capital of Kunduz and more security forces would reach there to improve security. (Pajhwok)

(5) MPs Ask ...

Governance head. Naqibullah Faiy, a lawmaker from northwestern Faryab, said the security situation had worsened in most of the provinces and central capital Kabul. He linked the growing insecurity

to the absence of new governors in provinces.

He said the president and the chief executive officer (CEO) could not agree on appointment of some governors, leaving some areas to be controlled by Taliban. He said residents of areas under Taliban control would join the rebels if the government did not regain control.

Another Wolesi Jirga member Kamal Nasir held similar views. He said the existence of acting officials caused insecurity which needed to be controlled.

He said the majority of acting governors had been involved in corruption and dishonesty and promoting their own interests believing that they could be fired anytime.

Abdul Rahman Rahmani, a lawmaker from northern Balkh province, said he had evidence that showed some acting governors paid money to insurgents groups like Daesh and Taliban to spread insecurity. He said such officials deserved severe punishment.

Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahim said working beyond two months in acting capacity was against the rules. He said Afghans wanted improved security and urged the president to name responsible individuals to replace the acting governors.

He also said corruption and mismanagement had increased under acting governors and departmental heads. (Pajhwok)

(6) NATO Ambassadors...

Allied nations serve as "framework nations" for the Resolute Support.

During the visit, the ambassadors met with President Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah, and Afghan officials and allied troops in Kabul, Herat, and Mazar-e-Sharif.

At the NATO Summit in September 2014, the 28 allies and their troop contributing partners reaffirmed their commitment to the Afghan people. Resolute Support is a non-combat NATO-led mission to train, advise, and assist the Afghan forces and institutions.

The mission was launched on January 1, 2015, at the invitation of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, immediately following the completion of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission. Today, more than 40 nations are participating in the mission. (Pajhwok)

(7) Corruption Feeds ...

has made Afghanistan a consistent resident on the "World's Most Corrupt" list. The country ranks at the bottom of Transparency International's corruption Perception Index, along with Sudan, North Korea and Somalia.

"The extreme level of corruption threatens international support to the Afghan nation and is an increasing concern to the European Union. We are a long-term friend of Afghanistan and the Afghan people. We are here for the long haul and we have pledged to continue our exceptional level of financial assistance until at least 2020. But we - as well as many other donors - have expectations. One is that the Afghan Government, together with the European Union and other international partners immediately begin to cure the endemic corruption. We stand ready to work with President Ghani, who recently referred to corruption as a national shame. It is important for us to know that the money we invest goes into the right pockets", said Ambassador Mellbin. (PR)

(8) Undeclared Kabul...

Pakistan and Afghanistan because there has been an undeclared state of hostilities. That must end." Ghani, who reached India about seven months after assuming power on a delayed visit by few hours owing to a terror attack in northern Kunduz province, said Afghanistan matched words with deeds in fighting terrorism. "When we say we act against terror, we act. We do not just confine ourselves to rhetoric," he told the channel.

Asked why his visit came seven months after taking over and if New Delhi is less on priority list now, he said: "Der ayad, durust ayad", an Afghan proverb means 'late arrival gives better result.' Ghani, who is meeting Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday, said: "I had the pleasure of meeting Prime Minister Modi at SAARC. We've really hit it off. We can talk to each other. We've had telephonic conversations and high ranking delegations repeatedly. Afghanistan is going to be a platform for regional and global cooperation, not a battlefield for proxy wars."

He said: "India, because of its democratic values, is interested in partnership and we are interested in forging

partnerships that allow us all to benefit. A country that fits in four of five of our foreign policy circles is of enormous significance to us." (Pajhwok)

(9) Jobless Youth...

He was able to work only for one year as a reporter. "Our families supported us for 16 years from school to university, but we are still a burden on them for not having a job."

Jalil Ahmad added it was unemployment that added to insecurity in the country.

Nimatullah Nazari, holding a degree in literature, said he had applied for many government jobs, but failed to be hired because he had no connections with top government officials.

The protesters also issued a statement asking the government to create jobs and take practical steps toward overcoming unemployment that had turned into a major challenge in the country.

"We want the president to create employment opportunities for the educated youth. We also want the newly-appointed ministers to hire people on merit and according to their qualification," the statement read. (Pajhwok)

(10) US Did Not ...

And we consider them as a foreign power. I'm hopeful that Afghanistan will soon become a safe country. Our government is legitimate. I thank Azerbaijan for its support," said Karzai. (APA)

(11) Blast on Mol ...

eyewitness Javid said that the blast took place near Habibia High School and Katib Higher Education Institute.

No group has claimed responsibility of the attack so far. (Pajhwok)

(12) New Governors ...

province.

The new appointments, which were recommended by the IDLG and then approved by President Ashraf Ghani, come at a crucial time. Around the country, worsening security and economic conditions have given way to heavy criticisms of the National Unity Government (NUG), which many blame for the deteriorating situation on account of its failure to replace acting officials with new appointments more promptly.

Asif Rahimi will take over leadership of Herat at a time when the province is seeing high rates of militant activity as well as administrative corruption.

He was educated in civil engineering at Kabul University and in public administration and management at Nebraska University in the United States.

Rahimi also previously served as the Deputy Minister of Rural Rehabilitation and Urban Development and then as Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock.

The newly appointed governor of Kandahar province received his education in medicine while in France. He previously served as head of the Provincial Council and State Minister for Parliamentary Affairs.

While the two appointments, which are for two of Afghanistan's largest provinces, come at an important time, still the majority of provinces remain under the leadership of officials originally appointed by former president Hamid Karzai. Many of these officials, both acting governors and district chiefs, have been accused of corruption and collusion with militant groups in recent months. (Tolonews)

(13) Ghani Inaugurates...

Daoud Khan, a communiqué from President Palace (PP) in Kabul stated on Tuesday.

The reconstruction of the embassy was started during then former President Hamid Karzai while President Ghani officially inaugurated the embassy in his recent visit to Delhi in 2015.

President also met Afghan ambassador and other staff members. According to press statement from PP, Ghani directed the embassy staff and ambassador to use all their efforts to solve all possible issues of Afghan students and Afghans living in India. (Pajhwok)

(14) Over 50 People ...

help the people," he said.

Three days ago another landslide occurred in the area which resulted in over 120 families being displaced, said officials.

The village is in a remote area and access to this village has been closed. So far no rescue team has been sent to the area, the officials said, adding that poor weather conditions were also hampering rescue operations.

They said that the villagers who have lost their homes are in a bad way, especially due to cold weather. This comes almost a year after over 2,000 people were killed in a land-

slide in Argo district of the province. Hundreds of homes were destroyed. (Tolonews)

(15) Top Kandahar ...

cordoned off the area and were trying to arrest the attackers.

The governor's spokesman, Samim Khepalwak, also said the public health director had escaped unhurt in the attack.

But a source close to Dr. Pukhla told Pajhwok Afghan News the director had sustained bullet injuries in his one hand and one leg. However, he said his injuries were not grave and he was currently under treatment.

There was no word of responsibility for the attack. (Pajhwok)

(16) Daesh Asked ...

marking the Mujahideen Victory Day in Jalalabad, the provincial capital.

Nazir said the Taliban reserved the right to wage a war because they had been ousted from government, but their fitwas for jihad in Afghanistan were un-Islamic.

"Now a new group Daesh has emerged, which claims to be the leader of Muslims. The group says let's go to Afghanistan for jihad. If you want to do jihad, do it in the Europe where infidels live."

The gathering was attended by a number of religious scholars and former jihadi leaders. They called for the peace process to be intensified and changes brought to the HPC's composition.

Religious scholar and former jihadi leader Maulvi Arshad Ahmad said: "Changes should be made to the HPC's composition because the current composition only spends money and cannot win peace due to their past."

Ahmad talked about mujahideen's sacrifices against the former Soviet Union forces and hoped efforts for peace would be intensified in Afghanistan.

Another former jihadi commander, Haji Ajab Khan, said the Afghans should jointly work for peace and stability of their country.

"Foreign intelligence networks have besieged Afghanistan to divide Afghans: O' Afghans wake up and rescue your motherland from the atrocities of these networks."

At the end of the gathering, senior security officials presented flowers to some individuals who lost limbs during the jihad against the Soviet forces and called them as Afghanistan's heroes. (Pajhwok)

(17) HIA Faction ...

on the people of Afghanistan during their decade long occupation.

He said following suppression and persecution of invaders and allied communist regime, the people of Afghanistan secured a historic victory on April 28, 1992.

Halim said after huge scarifies, the mujahidin had been able to defeat the mighty Soviet forces in Afghanistan. Gatherings marking April 28 are expected to take place in various parts of the country tomorrow. (Pajhwok)

(18) ANA Troops ...

that fighting has stopped in Gor Tapa - the scene of the flare up. In addition, security forces are winning the battle, said officials.

Over 2,000 additional troops were deployed to the area on Monday and after a day-long delay launched an offensive operation to help troops.

Ground forces were also assisted by a number of helicopters in Tuesday's offensive.

President Ashraf Ghani on Monday delayed his trip to India for nearly three hours and met with top security officials and the Resolute Support Mission US Gen. John Campbell over the issue of Kunduz amid rising concern that the province could fall into the hands of the Taliban if decisive action was not taken. (Tolonews)

(19) Kabul Iron ...

year, only 10 factories out of 25 are still open. Fifteen have closed their doors.

"The fundamental issue is that these factories are now on the verge of financial ruin while others have closed down. Although raw materials are available in the country, the reason is that these materials are cheaply smuggled via our southern borders to neighboring countries," head of Afghanistan Industrialists Union Abdul Karim Arifi said.

"Factories are on the verge of collapse. Between \$1 million USD and \$5 million USD has been invested in iron melting factories. These are public assets which now face losing everything," a factory owner Khan Wazir said.

According to factory owners, Pakistan and Iran - with their dumping policies - have monopolized the iron industry in Afghanistan and local industries do not have the capacity to compete with them. Afghanistan

requires nearly three million tones of processed iron a year but only 100,000 tons of iron is processed domestically. (Tolonews)

(20) Farkhunda Murder...

referred to the court for legal processing." Attorney General spokesman Basir Azizi announced on Monday.

According to Safiullah Mujadidi, the head of the Kabul Primary Court, the trial is expected to begin early next week. He was open about the charges filed by the Attorney General's office, which he said conspicuously omitted names of top police officials who have come under fire for their handling of Farkhunda's murder.

"The attorney has considered some comprises regarding the case in so far as the names of those serving in top police posts have not been included," Mujadidi told TOLONews.

According court documents, 49 individuals, including 19 police officers, have been arrested in relation to the case. The three main culprits identified by cell phone footage of the murder have yet to be arrested.

Meanwhile, calls for the dismissal of Kabul Police Chief Abdul Rahman Rahimi for what many see as a failure of leadership in dealing with the murder continue to be made by MPs and women's rights activists. "The police chief who was enjoying a sauna on the day of the incident should be dismissed, we don't want him," Farkhunda Justice Committee member Diana Saqib said on Monday.

The Kabul Police have been heavily criticized for failing to take any action to stop the brutal mob attack on Farkhunda that occurred over 40 days ago. After being falsely accused of burning the Quran, Farkhunda was savagely beaten to death, set on fire and then thrown in the Kabul River, all in broad daylight and in a central part of the capital. In addition, police officials have been accused of trying to cover up the truth of the attack, after it was exposed that police claims that Farkhunda suffered from psychological issues were falsified.

"We wont remain silent unless the perpetrators are brought to justice," women's right activist Munira Yousafi said while attending a demonstration event in Kabul demanding justice for Farkhunda. (Tolonews)

(21) Batikot District...

the wounded persons were in stable condition and being treated in hospital. (Pajhwok)

(22) Iran General...

and Shiite powers, Saudi Arabia and Iran are increasingly seen as vying for supremacy in the region, which remains beset by conflict and political turmoil.

Jafari urged Iranian officials to put aside past considerations and speak out against the Sunni kingdom, following its air strikes in Yemen.

"Today, treacherous Saudi Arabia is stepping in the footsteps of Israel and the Zionists. This wasn't the case in the past and right now the Islamic revolution's opponents are becoming clearer." (AFP)

(23) Houthis and...

heavy clashes overnight in Marib province east of Sanaa, in the city of Taiz in central Yemen, and in the southern port city of Aden.

At least 15 people were killed in the district of Sirwah and around Marib city, the sources said, as tribesmen allied with Hadi tried to stop Houthis and troops loyal to former president Ali Abdullah Saleh from advancing on the provincial capital. (Reuters)

(24) Saudi Arabia...

the ministry said. It said that cell was led by a bomb-making "specialist" and was testing car bombs, planning to attack security headquarters, soldiers and residential areas.

Authorities said they have also arrested two Syrians and a Saudi who had threatened to launch a suicide car attack against the American embassy in Riyadh last month.

US consular services in Saudi Arabia were suspended for a week in March over "heightened security concerns". (AFP)

(25) Tajik President...

of Pakistan have greatly applauded the goodwill gesture of the Tajik president and hoped other countries would also come forward to share grief of the students.

"Various Pakistani organizations too lauded the step and thanked the Tajik president for his initiative. The step, they hoped, would further cement brotherly ties between Pakistan and Tajikistan besides strengthening people to people relations," the News International reported.

Established in 1992, Army Public School and College is an English Medium school in the Pakistani city of Peshawar. (Asia-Plus)