

### (1) Daesh Threatens ...

Al-Qaeda did not have territorial space, Daesh acquired territorial space very quickly. The control of funding it enjoys is unprecedented in terms of a terrorist movement, opposition movement but there is a pattern - four phases: its called observe, orient, decide and act. It's called OODA," Ghani said in reference to the OODA loop which was developed by a military strategist who applied the concept to the combat operations process, often at the strategic level in military operations. It is now also often applied to understand commercial operations and learning processes.

In terms of economic capacities, Ghani said that Afghanistan had great potential to leverage economic and commercial ties with the regional nations particularly with India.

He said that India was one of the five circles explained in Afghanistan's foreign policy. He said that during the visit, various issues particularly that pertaining to equipment of Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF) was raised with the Indian officials. (Tolonews)

### (2) Afghanistan Needs...

opt-strained relations between the two neighbours, but some analysts believe close ties with Islamabad could affect historic relations with India, the world largest democracy. The Wolesi Jirga or lower house of parliament on Wednesday discussed President Ghani's ongoing trip to India, where he met Indian leaders and discussed with them the war on terrorism, trade ties among other issues of mutual interest.

Mohammad Sarwar Usmani, a lawmaker from Farah province, welcomed President Ghani's trip to India and said Afghanistan needed to maintain good relations with a powerful friendly country like India in the region.

"The history shows India remained loyal to Afghanistan, giving us huge economic assistance and has betrayed the people of Afghanistan," the lawmaker noted.

On the other hand, he said, Pakistan had never maintained friendly relations with the Afghans and always adopted covert policies for achieving its targets in Afghanistan.

The lawmaker urged the government to concentrate more on bilateral relations with India, China and Russia and ignore Pakistan.

Haider Jan Naemzai, who represents Kuchi tribe in the lower house, said India had been economically assisting Afghanistan, but Afghan leaders should serve the national interest in relations with other countries.

Another lawmaker Mohammad Hassan Sharifi Balkhabi urged a balanced foreign policy. He said the president had once claimed remarkable progress in relations with Pakistan and then declared India a close friend of Afghanistan.

Balkhabi said it was important to maintain good ties with Pakistan and other countries that could play a key role in Afghanistan's reconciliation process.

He, however, said Pakistan was not positively responding to Afghanistan's demands including the establishment of durable peace.

Meanwhile, Ministry of Interior (MoI) spokesman Ghulam Siddique Siddiqui told a press conference here that Afghanistan valued its relationship with India and felt proud to have a friend like India in the region.

Also Dawlat Waziri, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) spokesman, said Afghanistan had historic friendly relations with India, adding that currently a number of Afghan forces were being trained in India. (Pajhwok)

### (3) Defense and...

spokesman for the MoD said in Kabul at a press conference that the Afghan security forces were more than capable of controlling the Kunduz situation and that they were strong enough to face the insurgents.

"No district or province will collapse and I assure you that security forces are capable enough to control the situation," Waziri said.

According to him, a total of 13 Afghan military operations are currently underway around the country - operations that have resulted in heavy casualty figures for the enemy.

Addressing the media at the press conference Waziri said that two large-scale operations, called Badar, are underway in Zabul and Ghazni provinces and another operation called Shaheen 22 continues in Badakhshan province.

"The Badar operation started on 22 April and so far about 77 insurgents have been killed in it and 62 wounded. Three others have been detained," Waziri said.

Referring to the recent Badakhshan attack in which a number of Afghan forces were killed and beheaded by insurgents, Waziri said: "I promised you in the past we would take revenge for the deaths of our forces in Badakhshan where they were brutally murdered by insurgents." He said Afghan forces have since killed the four commanders responsible for the killings, including Qari Hussain and Qari Barakatullah, along with other insurgents involved in the attack.

Waziri said that in the past 24 hours, at least 58 insurgents have been killed in other operations - 41 wounded and 10 detained.

On the issue of Kunduz, he said that Afghan forces have the ability to control the situation in the province, adding that they were also able to stabilize Badakhshan.

"So far we have no need for Resolute Support Mission help," Waziri said.

This was echoed by General Wilson Schoffner, deputy chief of staff of communications for the Afghan Resolute Support Mission, who said at the same press briefing that Afghan security forces have brought the Kunduz situation under control and that the Afghan government was in charge of Kunduz.

He said that local security forces have sufficient troops to deal with the situation. "They have strong and capable leadership in place and have a very good plan to deal with the situation," he said.

He said however that the RSM was extremely concerned about the new trend by Taliban to use civilians as human shields. In addition, he said that although coalition forces have not stepped in to help local forces, they continue to standby and support Afghan troops.

Waziri meanwhile denied claims that fighting was now concentrated in the northern areas of the country. He rejected such claims and said there were also ongoing operations in southern provinces.

"I completely reject rumors that the war is only going on in the northern parts of the country, we are at war with the insurgents in different parts of the country," he said.

The Afghan Ministry of Interior (MoI) said that in the past three days enough troops have been deployed to the Kunduz province to tackle the insurgents.

Speaking at Wednesday's press conference, MoI spokesman Sediq Sediqi, said that the Interior Minister Nourulhaq Olomi is closely monitoring the Kunduz situation himself and that the Deputy Interior Minister Gen. Ayoub Salangi is currently in Kunduz province and monitoring the operation closely.

According to Sidiqi: "The main core of the insurgents in Imam Sahib district has been destroyed and the situation in Kunduz has completely changed."

Sediqi said that foreign insurgents are also involved in the current war in Afghanistan but he did not give any numbers or details except to say: "Foreign insurgents are involved in the Afghanistan war and we are trying to eliminate them. We are trying to control our borders to prevent them from entering," Sediqi said.

Supporting Ministry of Defence claims regarding recent insecurities in the northern parts of the country, MoI spokesman Sediqi said that: "Efforts by enemies to destabilize the northern parts of the country have been ongoing for a number of years."

- At A Glance -

As the fight ends its first week, insurgents are pushed back on two main fronts in Imam Sahib and Ali Abad districts - with Afghan army helicopters having made 20 tours to Imam Sahib district alone in the past 24 hours.

Qala-e Zal, Gor Tepa and Char Dara remains secure and Afghan forces are expected to extend the operations to all five fronts in the coming days.

So far about 100 insurgents have been killed in Kunduz in the past 24 hours. At least 10 ANSF personnel have also been killed and more than a dozen wounded in the province.

Sources say that of the 20 policemen who were captured by insurgents earlier in the week, seven have been freed.

In addition 450 ANSF personnel who were under siege in Imam Sahib are secured and the insurgents have been pushed away from the district centre.

Afghan Army's commander of ground forces Gen Murad and

Deputy Interior Minister for Security Gen Salangi are leading operations in Kunduz. (Tolonews)

### (4) TJCG Calls ...

the first president of Afghanistan. He was killed in the PDPA-led coup along with his family members. But a majority of Afghans did not accept the PDPA's rule and soon uprisings began against the communist party.

Apart from heavy financial losses to the country, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan also claimed the lives of more than two million people and forced millions others to flee homes and migrate to foreign countries.

On 28 April, 1992, Mujahideen entered Kabul and toppled Dr. Najib's government. But Mujahideen groups later entered a power struggle and killed more than 60,000 people in Kabul alone during infightings.

Abdul Basir Faizi, TJCG member, told journalists in Kabul that both the days brought nothing, but destruction and loss of innocent lives.

"The Mujahideen government was followed by infighting for power. This resulted in bloodshed and the rise of Pakistan-backed Taliban group," he said, adding the impunity of those involved in war crimes continued to take a toll on ordinary people.

Abdullah Ahmadi, TJCG founder, said people wanted human right violators to be prosecuted, but instead they enjoyed top government positions.

He expressed concerns that releasing Taliban prisoners added fuel to the ongoing insecurity in the country.

Ahmadi regretted the National Stability and Reconciliation Law's enactment gave war criminals accused a safe passage to escape prosecution.

In a statement, TJCG called for the law to be repealed and those involved in major crimes removed from government posts.

The National Stability and Reconciliation Law that grants a blanket pardon for perpetrators of war crimes and rights abuses before the ouster of Taliban regime was passed by parliament in 2007.

The amnesty law states that all those who had been engaged in armed conflict before the formation of the Interim Administration in Afghanistan in 2001 shall "enjoy all their legal rights and shall not be prosecuted."

Rights groups say some confusion over when the bill became law still persists because former president Hamid Karzai had promised not to sign it. (Pajhwok)

### (5) Afghan Official...

Economic Belt" as an initiative for bolstering connectivity among the regional countries and boosting economic activities in the region, the acting governor said, "Afghanistan, especially Herat province would largely benefit from revitalizing the Silk Route and Afghanistan could even export its products to European countries if the ancient road is revived."

During Afghan president Mohammad Ashraf Ghani's visit to China last year, Herat and Tianjin had been announced as sister cities, the governor Jami said, adding a Chinese delegation would visit Herat in near future to evaluate the ways and means to increase trade transaction between the two cities.

He also called for the Chinese help and investment in completing the railway project connecting Iran to Herat. He added that the two-third of the railway has already been completed by Iran and the remaining one-third part of the project inside Afghan soil has yet to be completed due to fund shortage.

Enjoying relatively peaceful environment and having more than 100 small and medium plants and factories, Herat has been regarded as a developed and prosperous province in Afghanistan. (Xinhua)

### (6) Balance of ...

opportunities, but it will also result in a decrease in imports. This will also prevent millions of dollars from leaving the country every year."

The Afghan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) has warned that political infighting among National Unity Government leaders has distracted from much needed economic reform and initiative.

"A 95 percent deficit in the trade balance of a country is concerning, but government leaders are still busy with distribution of power and have not paid any attention in this regard," ACCI Financial Deputy Tawfiq Dawari said. "We

warn that if the government does not work toward increasing domestic products, the country will go toward an economic crisis. If that happens, these leaders will not be able to do anything."

According to Central Statistics Office data, in the year 1393, most of Afghanistan's exported goods were dry and fresh fruits, carpets and gems. Food, oil and fuel products were among its major imports. (Tolonews)

### (7) Taliban Defeated...

Sahib district is completely in under our control," said provincial governor Omar Safi.

According to provincial governor Safi, Afghan security operations will continue to clear all parts of the province from armed insurgents.

The provincial governor also said many foreign insurgents from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Chechnya were killed - including women militants.

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)

### (8) Project Educating...

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Population, Refugees, and Migration Bureau at the State Department, Simon Henshaw, and UNHCR's Representative in Pakistan, Indrika Ratwatte, participated in the inauguration ceremony at a government girls' high school in Rawalpindi. They also had an informal discussion with a group of Afghan and Pakistani students who talked about what education meant to them.

Under the RAHA funding, the high school in Rawalpindi would receive additional furnished classrooms and new latrines, and the Government Elementary School in Taxila would have three additional furnished classrooms, a new veranda, and extra latrines.

In September 2014, the United States contributed nearly \$9 million to the RAHA programme in Pakistan, supporting 40 projects throughout the country, which will benefit nearly 300,000 people. This includes 19 education projects helping around 12,000 Afghan and 53,000 Pakistani students gain better schooling.

However, the inauguration ceremony remained focused on crossing barriers and facilitating education for Afghan girls who make up the most vulnerable entity of the refugee community due to cultural and economic constraints.

The project also aims at conducting capacity building workshop for teachers and initiating an enrollment drive. Ratwatte said the initiative aims at incorporating and enabling refugees to be a productive part of their adopted society.

School principal Nighat Yasmeen said initially they managed to get only 15 students enrolled from the Afghan community in 2012, but now they had 75 enrolled in the school. (Pajhwok)

### (9) President Ghani ...

and then went into talks for over two hours with Indian politicians and officials.

In a joint press conference with Modi after the talks, Ghani said that Afghanistan has opened a new page of relations with India and is optimistic about India's efforts with Afghanistan's security.

Modi said that Afghanistan will never be forgotten and that security would only help the country. Military aid, efforts of bringing peace and stability in Afghanistan and the creation of a trade route through to Chabahar port were among the topics mentioned by Modi.

Ghani's trip to India comes at a time when India's concerns mount over its role in the region. Analysts have said that India is ready to equip Afghanistan Security Forces if asked and to help train members in India if needed. (Tolonews)

### (10) US Troops ...

on Security & Terrorism (CPOST), Iraq and Afghanistan accounted for over 60 percent of the world's suicide bombings in 2014.

"That's particularly worrisome from a U.S. policy perspective, be-

cause the United States wants to withdraw militarily from Afghanistan, but there are no signs that the campaign by the Afghan Taliban is letting up," CPOST research director and author of the report Keven Ruby said, as quoted by the University of Chicago news portal.

The 9/11 attacks on the United States in 2001 prompted the US-led military operation in Afghanistan. The aim of which was to destroy the Taliban forces linked to al-Qaeda. In 2011, at the height of US involvement in the anti-Taliban confrontation, there were 101,000 US troops in the country.

Under the timetable outlined by US President Barack Obama, the number of US troops is expected to be cut to about 5,000 by the end of 2015, and by the end of 2016 there will be only a vestigial force to protect the US embassy in Kabul.

According to the Suicide Index report, a total of 492 suicide attacks that killed over 4,300 civilians were registered in 2014. Iraq, partly occupied by the Islamic State militant group, along with swathes of neighboring Syria, saw a surge in suicide attacks last year due to the extremists' activity. (Sputnik)

### (11) Hope for Kunduz...

Taliban hands," said one local.

This comes after Afghan National Forces launched a massive ground assault Tuesday against the Taliban in the area. By Wednesday these troops were being backed up by airstrikes and were then able to embark on a house-to-house search for insurgents - who are believed to be hiding out in the homes of locals.

Officials say however that Daesh involvement is confirmed and Mullah Abdul Salam, from Quetta in Pakistan, is leading the insurgent attack. Salam is believed to be a senior member of Taliban's Quetta council.

On Tuesday security force officials launched the operation in Imam Sahib and expanded it to include Gor Tepa and other districts on Wednesday.

According to officials, fighting in Ali Abad continues although sporadically. (Tolonews)

### (12) FICCI, Afghan ...

President, FICCI and Khan Jan Alokzai, Senior Vice-Chairman, ACCI.

On the last day of his three-day India visit, Ashraf Ghani on Wednesday held business meetings with India's top business bodies like Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and Associated Chambers of Commerce of India (ASSO-CHAM).

"I assure you that anyone who invests over US\$ 50 million will have a personal interaction with me," Ghani told Indian businessmen at the meeting.

He urged Indian corporate groups to use Afghanistan as a launch pad to central Asian economies. "Multiple-entry visas would be issued to investors," he said.

Officials of FICCI said the objectives of the newly constituted AICCI are to further the development of bilateral economic relations by providing a regular forum for businessmen of both countries to meet, discuss and explore business opportunities in trade, investment, transfer of technology and furtherance of all other economic activities. It will also be the platform for business-government interaction in the respective countries.

The AICCI will facilitate exchange of information pertaining to Government policies and rules and regulations concerning trade, investment and other related areas between the two countries. They will share economic data of relevance to each other.

FICCI said AICCI will identify bottlenecks in the expansion of bilateral economic cooperation and recommend ways and means for removal of irritants to the respective Governments.

It will facilitate cooperation to increase trade, investment, technology transfer, infrastructure development and other such areas which are jointly identified from time to time to enhance economic cooperation.

It will also support and encourage participation by the business community in exhibitions and trade fairs to be held in Afghanistan and India. The cost of participation will be borne by individual exhibitors. (Pajhwok)

### (13) 8 Rebels Killed ...

chase them and they staged a comeback after the airstrikes had ended.

The Taliban said nothing about

their casualties, but claimed killing 10 security men and capturing four check-posts in Qaisar. (Pajhwok)

### (14) 38-Km Roads...

Khogyani said construction of roads in rural areas would benefit residents of far-flung areas. (Pajhwok)

### (15) 3 Police Killed, ...

killed by Taliban insurgents on Tuesday in the Dilaram district, a police official told Pajhwok Afghan News on the condition of anonymity.

Elsewhere, four ANA soldiers were injured in a bomb blast in the Khashrud district, the town's administrative head, Mohammad Hashim, said.

There has been no word from the Taliban about the two incidents. (Pajhwok)

### (16) Syrian Rebels...

Fighters from the al-Qaida-affiliated Nusra Front and Ahrar al-Sham, a hard-line Islamic rebel group, have also joined in the fight against the Jihad Units, al-Rayess said, although there is no coordination. (AP)

### (17) Nepal Quake...

is scarce. Communication is a challenge. And modern medical care is a luxury many have never received.

Gumda is one of a handful of villages identified as the worst hit by Saturday's 7.8-magnitude earthquake, from which it will almost certainly take years to recover.

As in many villages, though, the death toll in Gumda was far lower than feared, since many villagers were working outdoors when the quake struck at midday. Of Gumda's 1,300 people, five were killed in the quake and 20 more were injured.

As the helicopter landed Wednesday with 40-kilogram (90-pound) sacks of rice, wind and rain whipped across the crest of the mountain. Seeing the conditions, the U.N. World Food Program's Geoff Pinnock shouted over the roar of the propellers, "the next shipment has to be plastic sheets. These people need shelter more than they need food."

About 200 villagers huddled under a few umbrellas and plastic tarps as they waited to receive the aid, some with runny noses and chattering teeth. With the erratic Himalayan weather, aid workers are worried about keeping people warm, fed and safe. (AP)

### (18) Forest Fire near...

Reactor 4 nearly thirty years ago sent radiation across Europe. The stricken reactor is now covered by a concrete casement that the Ukrainian authorities plan to reinforce by 2016. (Reuters)

### (19) N.Korea's ...

along with a group of officials close to him.

Kim has also reshuffled close aides and senior officials repeatedly since taking office.

South Korea's spy agency also expected Kim to travel to Moscow this month to attend an event marking the end of World War Two in Europe, although there was no independent confirmation of the plan, Shin said after the spy agency briefing.

North Korea has not booked a hotel in Moscow for Kim's stay, but the country's embassy was equipped to accommodate its leader, Shin said, quoting the spy agency official.

The visit would be Kim's first overseas trip since he took power in 2011 after the death of his father. Russia has said Kim would attend the May 9 event marking the 70th anniversary of the war's end in Europe, although officials in Seoul have cautioned that there was no official confirmation from the North. (Reuters)

### (20) Japan Considering...

, would risk antagonizing Beijing.

But defense officials in Tokyo worry that doing nothing would allow China to eventually impose its authority over a region through which \$5 trillion of sea-borne trade passes every year - much of it heading to and from Japan. "We have to show China that it doesn't own the sea," said the Japanese source. A U.S. military source said a decision to begin flights in the South China Sea could prompt Tokyo to ask the Philippines for access to air bases under disaster relief training and other joint training exercises. This would give Japanese aircraft added range to stay out on patrol longer, he said, also speaking on condition of anonymity. (Reuters)