

## (1) Afghan Migrants...

become millionaires in foreign countries.

Karzai added that the current situation will not last for long and that the situation will improve.

"Those who leave the country will become a daily worker which is a glory work but will never be a millionaire," said Karzai.

Speaking at the event, Karzai said that recent remarks by Pakistan's Defense Minister Khawaja Asif showed that in the areas where Taliban are active Pakistan has dominance. Karzai once again called Taliban brothers and urged them to come out from under Pakistan's dominance.

Karzai said that Pakistan defense minister's comments that they would call for the Taliban's cooperation was in fact an insult to Afghanistan.

"Yesterday one of Pakistan's ministers said during the inauguration of TAPI project that they will get Taliban to cooperate over the TAPI project. In fact such remarks are an insult to Afghanistan people and an insult to the Taliban," Karzai said.

"And this shows that where Taliban are based Pakistan has dominance. Once again I called upon Taliban - dear brothers - please have your own authority and come to your homeland and build your homeland," Karzai said.

In addition, the CEO's second deputy Haji Mohammad Mohaqiq said at the event that reasons given by asylum seekers for their move should be identified.

"It is not clear how the situation will be, but it is clear when you destroy a bird's nest, birds will leave the nest, but if a bee hive is destroyed, bees will not leave," said Mohaqiq.

According to official statistics, the first six months of this year saw about 60,000 Afghans return to the country but in the second half of the year 150,000 Afghans sought asylum abroad - many of them losing their lives along the way. (Tolonews)

## (2) Ghani Reports ...

that TAPI was just a pipe dream. "Critics initially said that TAPI was just a dream, but the foundation of the project was laid on Sunday with Allah's help," he said.

Touching on the hardships faced by Turkmen people during their recent history, Ghani said that today Turkmenistan has changed into an energy producing hub and Afghanistan can learn from its experiences.

"Turkmenistan has changed into a hub of energy production under the wise leadership of the president of Turkmenistan [Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov]. Turkmenistan is a good neighbor and TAPI will revive Afghanistan's importance in the region. TAPI is like a new silk route," he said.

On the importance of energy in the modern world, Ghani said natural gas forms the basis of life today. He said the transfer of gas from Turkmenistan to other countries promotes regional integration and harmony in addition to its economic and commercial benefits.

"Gas forms the basis of life today. It is not only the issue of gas transfer. It also enhances economic integration," he added.

He said that the implementation of the TAPI project reaffirms Afghanistan's inter-connectivity in the region. According to him, a fiber optic network project will coincide with TAPI. He said that an electricity project transferring power from Turkmenistan to Pakistan via Farah, Herat and Helmand province is also under discussion and an estimated amount of \$8 billion USD will be spent on it of which most of the money will be invested in Afghanistan.

In addition, Ghani said Afghanistan wants projects such as TAPI. "730km of pipeline that passes through Afghanistan will create many jobs."

Ghani states the Turkmenistan technical institute will provide training to eligible Afghans living in four provinces along the pipeline.

"Afghanistan will receive \$400 million USD annually from the project. On behalf of the Afghan nation I would like to say that the TAPI [project] is the base of Afghanistan's economic reform" he said.

While rumors over the security of TAPI pipeline continue to do their rounds, Ghani said special forces will be trained to safeguard the pipeline. He called on the Afghan people to help maintain security for the project. "Special forces will be trained for security of TAPI. I want to call upon Afghan youths for their support for this project," he said. "This is a national and regional project to defend Afghanistan's future generations. TAPI's inauguration generated a positive response in Afghanistan on social media which is encouraging," he added.

congratulations to the Afghan people in the wake of the TAPI inauguration. "My aim is to change Afghanistan into an economic corridor in the region," he said.

In answer to a question regarding the proxy war Ghani said: "We aren't a palace for a proxy war, it is a wrong perception, millions live here, we focus on cooperation and understanding in the region."

Responding to a question regarding Iran's negativity over TAPI Ghani said: "TAPI is not a threat to others, Iran needs billions of dollars investment in its energy sector and will become a positive player after international sanctions are lifted."

In conclusion, Ghani said that he had no authority to determine the fate of the Durand Line with Pakistan and that the authority lies with the Afghan people.

This comes two days after leaders from Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Turkmenistan broke ground to inaugurate the TAPI project, worth \$10 billion USD.

The pipeline, which is due to be finished by 2019, will carry gas from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan to Pakistan and India. (Tolonews)

## (3) Withdrawal ...

International Conference on Turkmenistan's neutrality policy.

"The whole architecture of the international and global security is being changed. It is necessary to pay attention to the situation in Afghanistan. Withdrawal of ISAF from Afghanistan and reduction of financial assistance worsened the situation," he said.

Karimov also said Turkmenistan's neutrality has a positive impact on the situation in the region. He stressed the role of President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and noted his speech in the UN in 2007 as "starting point of the new foreign policy of Turkmenistan".

Conducting global policy, not engaging in military-political alliances, having no military bases in its territory and not participating in international peacekeeping operations are common positions for Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, added the Uzbek President. (AKIpress)

## (4) Afghanistan Crisis...

world, including Russia," Gerasimov said at a meeting with Russia's military diplomats.

Unifying global efforts to counter common threats and challenges is imperative in light of such conditions, the army general said.

Gerasimov added that the spread of terrorism was the chief motive for Russia's involvement in the counter-terrorist operation in Syria.

Mobile launcher 'Yars' missile system on the territory of Teykovo air defence missile formation in Ivanovo region.

Russia has been conducting airstrikes against the Islamic State (IS, or Daesh in Arabic) terrorist group in Syria since September 30. Speaking at the 70th session of the UN General Assembly in New York City in September, Russian President Vladimir Putin urged the international community to create a broad international coalition to tackle terrorism. (Sputnik)

## (5) Ghani Supervised ...

at least eleven of the debtors paid their debts," he said.

On the basis of the president's order, two members of Kabul Bank collections department met Frozi at the prison and asked him to recommend a plan to government, Mohammad said.

He claims that the president asked for his resignation under pressure, but when he refused to step down, he was suspended.

"Following the termination of the contract, one of the closest people to the president contacted me and asked me to resign in the wake of media speculation. When I said why I must step down, he said we have not enough power to suspend others and you must resign. But I refused and said that the president has appointed me and insisted that I am not affiliated to any group or party, that the president himself must fire me," Mohammadi added.

Meanwhile, the minister of urban development and housing told the lawmakers that the ministry accomplished the duties on the contract as per the provision of the law and it does not accept any responsibility regarding Frozi's status and identity. "The ministry of urban development and housing doesn't have any sort of responsibility toward Frozi's identity and action," Naderi said.

In conclusion parliament speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahim said: "On the basis of the remarks of former legal advisor to the president, Muhammadi, the process of Smart City contract moved in a transparent way and in line with the procedure to recuperate Kabul

Bank debts and that he performed his duty in line with the same procedure."

"The reply of the minister of urban development and housing also indicates that the entire process moved according to the law and that no violation was committed by the ministry of urban development and housing according to the law," Ibrahim added. (Tolonews)

## (6) Govt. Promises...

the four countries on Sunday, is also aimed at addressing Pakistan and India's energy problems.

But Afghan officials on Monday assured member nations of solid security measures to safeguard the pipeline from possible threats.

TAPI will transfer billions of cubic meters of natural gas from Turkmenistan gas fields to Pakistan and onward to India via Afghanistan territory. However, concerns remain in place about security of the project in Afghanistan as it passes through volatile regions of the country, an issue that some believe will likely delay the implementation of the project.

President Ashraf Ghani along with Turkmenistan President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Indian Vice President Muhammad Hamid Ansari on Sunday attended the ground breaking ceremony in Mary in the southeastern part of the central Asian country, close to the giant Galkynshy gas field which will provide gas for the 1,814-kilometre link. Some 200 kilometers will pass through the territory of Turkmenistan, 735 kilometers through Afghanistan, 800 kilometers through Pakistan up to Fazilka settlement on the border with India.

According to officials from the ministry of mines and petroleum, the pipeline will run through the Herat-Kandahar highway.

"With the start of work on the project in Torghundi and Spin Boldak district, two gas meters will be installed on the pipeline," Muhaidudin Noori, spokesman to ministry of mines and petroleum said.

The ministry of interior has also said solid security management strategies had been forged to thwart threats against the key economic pipeline.

"We will take and use all necessary measures to determine security and implementation of the project," Mol spokesman Sediq Sediqqi said.

The implementation of TAPI will earn Afghanistan up to \$500 million USD a year as part of transit duty. The project will also help Afghanistan to purchase 1.5 billion cubic meters of gas for thirty years at a reasonable price. The gas will be utilized in Hajigak iron mine and Mes Aynak copper project.

Economic analysts say the implementation of TAPI can leverage extended economic, political and commercial ties within member states. (Tolonews)

## (7) WJ Slams ...

minister should summon Pakistan ambassador regarding the issue," said Abdul Rauf Ibrahim, chairman of Parliament.

Pakistani Defense Minister, Khwaja Mohammad Asif has recently said that Pakistan would use its influence on Afghan Taliban for the security of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline.

In an interview, the Pakistani minister said that TAPI project is very important for all stakeholders especially in reducing the energy crisis in Pakistan. "Therefore, we would try our best to have this project completed on time," Pakistani defense minister said.

While responding the question as if Pakistan would use its influence on Afghan militant groups, especially the Taliban, for the security of TAPI pipeline project, he said: "Of course, we would use it for our interests, we would take any positive step."

The presidential Palace has also slammed the Pakistani defense minister for delivering irresponsible remarks regarding the safety of trans-Afghan gas pipeline, calling it in contrast to non-interference commitments by the country's leaders.

This comes as Afghan leaders expected this time that Pakistani officials honestly act on their commitments. (ATN)

## (8) 20 Afghan ...

business operation on the ground. Part of this event, both KCCI and PH-DCCI signed a long term partnership agreement to increase the frequency of such expo/interaction in future between the business communities of two countries.

Ambassador of India, H.E Amar Sinha welcomed such initiative that brings Afghan and Indian businesses together. He remarked about the significance of the expo which took place in Amritsar, close to the Wagah/Attari border. He further added, "we hope this border crossing is fully availed of

by the Afghan exporters and traders. We commend the PHDCCI for facilitating Afghan business men's participation in Punjab international Expo". Abdul Hassib Rahimi, Executive Director of KCCI in his remarks said, "The purpose for Afghan delegation participation to this event was to explore business opportunity between Afghanistan and India in current global emerging market," and further added that "with this participation we aggregated businesses from varieties of sectors with a sole intension of increasing business interaction and transactions between Afghan and Indian business communities". (PR)

## (9) Ulomi Praises...

A 10-hour gunfight ensued, leaving eight people dead. Among the dead were two foreigners, five Afghan security force members and one Afghan civilian.

Olomi said on Monday that the response by special forces to the embassy attack was encouraging and represents the units' capabilities.

Olomi said: "Our special units have demonstrated professionalism in carrying out their duties in Faryab, Kunduz and many other provinces."

He went on to say he hopes the special forces continue their hard work, adding that "we understand the need for weapons but we are proud of their determination."

The minister said the role of special forces has been critical in thwarting threats and rescuing hostages especially in Helmand.

"Special forces are equipped with the latest weapons and technology which enables them to accomplish tasks effectively - both day and night"

In conclusion, Olomi said that at no time did the special forces inflict harm against any military person or civilian during the embassy siege - but that they did eliminate the insurgents.

Olomi's comments come after the United Nations Security Council on Sunday condemned "in the strongest terms" the terrorist attack for which the Taliban claimed responsibility.

The Council reiterated its concerns at the threats posed by the Taliban, Al-Qaeda, Daesh and illegal armed groups to the local population, national security forces, and international presence in Afghanistan.

Kabul police confirmed on Saturday a ten-hour gunfight took place but ended when all three insurgents were killed.

This attack came just days after Kabul and Islamabad agreed to resume peace talks with the Taliban. However the US has said that such attacks will not stop the resumption of peace talks. (Tolonews)

## (10) UN Envoy...

in the western half of Afghanistan and also it is required to play a role in supporting peace and reconciliation which also means supporting Afghanistan deal with its security challenges," Haysom added.

The UN official also appreciated Iran for hosting many Afghan refugees in over three decades and offering different services to them.

Regarding process of peace talks between Afghan government and Taliban, Ban ki-Moon's representative for Afghanistan said, "It's my hope and I am optimistic by nature that Afghanistan peace talks could resume soon. A peace process is possible and the peace talks will resume."

"I should mention the deceleration which came out of the fifth 'Heart of Asia' conference hosted by Islamabad, calls upon all parties including Taliban and other groups to participate in Afghanistan peace talks."

To a question on Daesh presence and activities in Afghanistan, Nicholas Haysom said, "It is hard to say what is the real attraction of Daesh in Afghanistan. What we have seen so far is that Daesh ideology is not welcomed by Afghan people, so we don't think it has significant number of followers in Afghanistan "at the moment". "But this is not to say that Daesh may not attract disaffected armed groups (as a result of conflicts among Afghan Taliban) in future." (IRNA)

## (11) Large Volumes...

on Turkey at UNSC Over Daesh Oil Ivanov said that drugs from Afghanistan generate profits estimated at \$150 billion annually for the people involved in the operations with them, adding that Turkey was being used to transit Afghan heroin, as well as for smuggled oil.

Earlier in December, Moscow pointed to Turkey's complicity in the trade of oil from fields seized by the Islamic State (IS, or Daesh in Arabic) militant group, which is outlawed in Russia, which it claims in being smuggled across the porous Turkey-Syria border. (Sputnik)

## (12) Kabul's Air...

safety of citizens, to date, the president has still not appointed a head,"

said Dr Ibrahim Jafari a member of the monitoring of natural resources and environment network.

Heating appliance sellers in the country have meanwhile said that buyers are specifically purchasing coal burners, as they are cheaper to run.

"The heaters we import use electricity, fuel, wood or coal but more people are buying coal and wood burners because they are more economical," said one merchant. (Tolonews)

## (13) Recent Attacks...

in the past week.

"Hypocritical approaches, suicide attacks and explosions can be termed as slaps in the face of the peace process. But this time the environment which was created during the Heart of Asia Conference, Pakistan realized all regional countries want Pakistan to support the government of Afghanistan in the peace process," HPC member Mohammad Ismail Qasimyar said.

Joint ventures for peace between Afghanistan and Pakistan suddenly collapsed six months back. But new hopes emerged last week after Pakistan renewed its commitment to support the Afghan government in talks with Taliban which are now expected to be started within weeks.

"With Daesh's increasing threats in Asia, the region and the world, Pakistan has come to the conclusion that it must contribute to the peace process.

The key for peace in Afghanistan and war lies with Pakistan," MP Fawzia Kofi said. (Tolonews)

## (14) EU Celebrates ...

that EU Special Representative to Afghanistan, Ambassador Franz Michael Mellbin, presented.

"In a country like Afghanistan where life is very demanding to many people, it is important to also focus on the good things happening. And the good stories are here - just like the good people. I see so many people in Afghanistan making a big difference every single day. This calendar is a tribute to all of them - not just to the 12 people have selected, but to all brave Afghans," says Ambassador Mellbin.

"Looking at the 12 Afghan Heroes people choose, they are all advocates of key issues that EU is passionate about. I'm therefore especially happy that people selected so many women as their Afghan Heroes for our calendar. It underlines how much Women bring to Afghanistan every day, and why their rights are important for all Afghans to have a better life. There are also several Hero's representing children and education, something very close to our heart."

The EU will continue to follow up on the Afghan Heroes campaign throughout the year, putting focus to the heroes on the social media accounts of EU in Afghanistan. (PR)

## (15) Gunmen Kill...

provincial governor's spokesman, said: "The police have visited the scene but so far no one has been arrested but police are looking for the murderers."

However, the survivors have called on government to ensure justice is carried out. (Tolonews)

## (16) 31 Militants ...

official asserted. Taliban militants who are active in parts of Kunduz province have not made any comment.

A similar crackdown against militants in the eastern Ghazni province, according to police, left 19 Taliban fighters dead on Monday.

"Security forces launched cleanup operations in Spinband area of Aband district, Ghazni province in the wee hours of Monday and so far 19 rebels including Taliban group commander Mullah Nasratullah have been killed," provincial police spokesman Mohammad Ibrahim Amiri told Xinhua.

A number of arms and ammunition including four pieces of AK-47 assault rifles were also seized during the operations, the official said.

There were no casualties on the side of security personnel, the police spokesman said.

Ghazni province with Ghazni city as its capital 125 km south of Kabul has been the scene of Taliban activities over the past few years. (Xinhua)

## (17) US Special...

especially by Special Operations forces on the ground.

The report states that the Pentagon is concerned that the involvement may suggest that the American combat role, which was supposed to have ended in December 2014, is still far beyond the official "train, advise and assist" mission.

The elite ground units in Helmand include both Special Operations troops and the United States Air Force's Special Tactics Squadron, according to the Western diplomat, who spoke

on condition of anonymity.

The American intervention in Helmand comes amid reports of Taliban capturing more districts and Afghan security forces being trapped and becoming more demoralized, read the report adding that if insurgents are able to sweep away the tenuous government presence in district centers and the capital, LashkarGah, it would be a dire setback for the Afghan government, and would give the Taliban a strong foothold in southern Afghanistan. (Tolonews)

## (18) Bodies of ...

be back in the Spanish capital around 9 a.m. on Tuesday.

According to Fernandez Diaz, the remaining seven police officers who had been protecting the Embassy in Kabul were "in good condition."

Speaking at an election meeting in Barcelona, the minister rejected claims that security measures at the embassy were not enough for a place like Kabul.

He said police had been "specially trained" for the job and they had "avoided a worse massacre and saved the lives of the embassy staff" in their "heroic actions".

Meanwhile, the family of Jorge Tudela have asked in a statement the major political parties not to use his name in the ongoing general election campaign. (Xinhua)

## (19) Turkey...

tanks had left the Bashiqa camp and was heading toward northern Iraq.

It wasn't immediately known if the Turkish troops would return to Turkey or would be stationed in Iraq's Kurdish-controlled region.

But an Associated Press journalist saw Turkish trucks loaded with tanks inside a Turkish base in the Kurdish-controlled Barmane region. Witness Newroz Mikael, 32, said the trucks passed his shop Monday morning. Kurdish Peshmerga forces escorted the trucks loaded with tanks and vans with soldiers in them, Mikael said.

He said that "an estimated eight vehicles loaded with eight tanks and some buses passed us here. (AP)

## (20) Obama Says ...

deal is that I get to talk to everybody," Obama said. "I've made very clear in my conversations directly with President [Raul] Castro that we would continue to reach out to those who want to broaden the scope for, you know, free expression inside of Cuba."

In the interview, which coincided with the anniversary of the announcement that Havana and Washington would restore relations, Obama also defended his aim to close the U.S. military prison in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, but acknowledged that it was unlikely to be handed back to Havana any time soon. (Reuters)

## (21) Japan Taps ...

France, Russia and the United States as nuclear powers," political analyst Teruhisa Muramatsu told Xinhua.

"But it would be seen that after around 10-years of going back and forth on the idea, economic factors became the priority and Abe was seemingly convinced by Modi's pledge to use any nuclear technology exported from Japan purely for civilian-based, rather than military-related projects." (Xinhua)

## (22) EU Increases...

Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos Stylianides.

The extra funds announced on Monday come in addition to the 37 million euros of humanitarian aid already made available by the European Commission earlier in 2015 to respond to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Yemen. (Xinhua)

## (23) Merkel Draws ...

rubble of the war to create the economic miracle, and to go from division to a reunified country" would get Germany through the refugee crisis.

Even in the face of demands from the right wing of the party for an upper limit on newcomers, Merkel insisted Germany would never seal its border.

"We want to tangibly reduce the number of refugees arriving," Merkel said. (AFP)

## (24) Iran to take...

Union Foreign Policy Chief Federica Mogherini on the issue.

"The recent bill has different legal aspects. We are reviewing it. We will take action if it proves to be against the JCPOA," Araçchi said, in reference to the nuclear agreement, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) Iran and the P5+1 - the US, Russia, China, France, Britain, and Germany - clinched in the Austrian capital, Vienna, on July 14. (PressTV)