

### (1) Afghanistan ...

and wounded eight people, including four senior judges, said Salim Saleh, spokesman for the Logar provincial governor. No one claimed the attack. (AP)

### (2) Thousands ...

support seven other people," said Ali Eftekhari, spokesman for the MoLSAMD.

The Director of the High Office of Anti-Corruption, Sayed Ghulam Hussain Fakhri, said that the existence of vacant positions will encourage unemployed youths to pay bribes or use their contacts to get jobs.

This comes at a time that a large number of educated youth are unemployed.

"I had a dream to serve my country, but unfortunately I am unemployed," said Najib Nurstani, an unemployed youth. He added that he graduated from a political science faculty as well as a military academy and can speak six foreign languages, but with all these qualifications he is still unemployed.

Figures provided by the MoLSAMD shows that 1.8 million people are unemployed in Afghanistan.

Experts believe that mounting insecurity and an economic crisis have led to this surge in unemployment. (Tolonews)

### (3) Gen. Campbell...

the Constitution, women's rights and lay down their weapons and join the peace process," he said.

Acting Defense Minister Masoom Stanikzai told the meeting that the presence of foreign forces in Afghanistan was a meaningless excuse the Taliban used to unleash violence on the people of Afghanistan.

Despite 85 percent withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan, the war was intensified in the country rather than reduced, he said.

"If we want to bring peace and stability to Afghanistan, we should divert the military support fund to education and development of our country because the BSA is flexible and changeable," he said. (Pajhwok)

### (4) MoE Engineers ...

deprived of his super skill allowance.

He said MoE engineers should receive 35,000 afghanis per month in super skill allowance based on a presidential decree of former president Hamid Karzai.

"We currently receive only 9,500 afghanis as our regular salary, we have not been paid the super skill salary for 14 months," Stanikzai said.

Saif Rahman Adil, a protestor and engineer at MoE possessing a copy of the presidential decree, told Pajhwok Afghan News that the current government should not ignore their day and night efforts.

He said they got morally affected when their rights were not paid. "The super skill allowance of the third grade job is 45,000 afghanis, for the fourth grade 35,000 afghanis and for the fifth grade 25,000 afghanis," Adil added.

Meanwhile, MoE spokesman Kabir Haqmal confirmed that 83 engineers of the ministry had not received their super skill allowance for the past one year.

He said the super skill allowance was withheld after the national unity government came into power.

MoE had shared the issue with the Presidential Palace last year, but the palace said the engineers were not eligible to receive the allowance because they were members of the civil service.

Based on the law of civil service, people working under the civil service can receive regular salaries only. Haqmal said the protestors should return to their job and accept the law. (Pajhwok)

### (5) Spike in Foreign...

Officials from the ACCI also warned that trafficking of foreign currency will have a negative impact on investment in Afghanistan and alleged that mostly strongmen are involved in trafficking of the currency out of Afghanistan.

They accused the government, particularly police, of negligence in preventing the trafficking of foreign currency.

"We have constantly said that trafficking of money should be prevented. Illegal trafficking of

money out of Afghanistan has decreased investment and led to instability in exchange markets," said Siamuddin Pasarly, spokesman for the ACCI.

Trafficking of money has always been a matter of concern in Afghanistan and recently Indian police arrested two Afghans in connection with trafficking of \$190,000 USD in Delhi airport.

Officials in the Central Bank and police at Hamid Karzai International Airport declined to comment in this regard. (Tolonews)

### (6) Landmines Slow...

troops in Baghlan, Waziri said that insurgents have joined local militants from Takhar, Maidan Wardak, and Badakhshan provinces in their fight against the security forces in Baghlan.

"We prefer to lessen our air and artillery assaults so that civilians are not hurt. The second issue is that Taliban has planted landmines in the area," he said.

Baghlan, strategically is an important province in the northern region and is the main gateway to northern and northeastern provinces. The security forces launched their military campaign against the Taliban in the area two weeks ago.

"At the moment, the war is going on in two areas including Dand-e-Ghori and Baghlan-e-Markazi. However the enemy struggled to disperse our forces, and failed to reach their objectives," head of Baghlan security department Ewaz Mohammad Naziri said.

As the operation against the militants continues, a number of residents have criticized the security institutions for failing to eliminate the Taliban.

"Several hundred government forces confront just a few Taliban, no one is there to defeat the Taliban," local resident Musa Khan said.

"Twelve days have passed since the war broke out, but there is no achievement," another resident Murtaza said.

Criticism has also been lodged over the nonparticipation of the US forces in the Baghlan operation. Dand-e-Ghori and Dand-e-Shahabuddin areas of Baghlan are two strategic locations in the province.

There are serious concerns that the Taliban will strengthen in summer if the government does not take serious action against the Taliban now and a capable Taliban means serious threats for the highway connecting Kabul to northern regions, say analysts. (Tolonews)

### (7) Consultative Panel ...

executive body, but would have an advisory role in municipality affairs.

The panel will also play an important role in the increasing revenue, encouraging people to pay taxes and conscientise people on the urban culture and the need for city cleanliness.

A member of the newly-established body, Mohammad Naeem, hailed the council's formation as a positive step toward improving activities of the municipality. Besides advising the municipality on properly delivering necessary services, the council members would mount pressure on municipality officials to better serve citizens, he said.

Muqem hoped the council would help his department resolve many issues, as many government department and people were currently not paying taxes to the municipality.

In 2015, the municipality collected nearly 600 million afghanis in revenue, but he was optimistic of raising the income to 700 million afghanis this year. (Pajhwok)

### (8) Kunduz ...

said Hamdullah Danishi. The protestors voiced their concerns that militants have once again started sporadic fighting in Kunduz city and if the government does not take action, they will be compelled to leave their houses to escape oppression and harassment of the Taliban militants. (Tolonews)

### (9) Landmines...

Abdul Wase is one civilian who lost a leg as a result of a mine explosion.

"When I visited the construction site of a building, an explosion occurred and I lost my leg," he said. (Tolonews)

### (10) Russia to ...

in Russia in the near future, the statement said.

The Russian federation has significantly increased the number of combat specialties; the statement said adding Afghan cadets would be provided with everything necessary to become skilled officers.

"The military training is among Moscow's top priorities in providing aid to Afghanistan," the statement said.

The programme was effective for assisting Kabul in creating Afghan armed force to bring stability to Afghanistan, the statement added. (Pajhwok)

### (11) Illegal Digging...

"There are some people who have been always busy destroying heritage sites and stealing monuments."

Asked if the looters had found something precious so far, Sarwar said: "Possibly they have found monuments, but I have no information. We want the government to protect the historical sites."

He said people in the past had found statues, clay jars and other monuments by illegal digging on the historical sites.

Some people in Ab Kamari district said illegal digging of historical sites was ongoing in their district as well.

Ghulam Yahya, a resident of Dehistan area, said illegal digging of historical sites was underway in Sina-i-Ardo, Chilanak, Dehistan and Qala Nariman areas from the past one month.

"The diggers may have found precious monuments. I cannot name those who are involved in the digging," he said.

He said illegal digging of historical sites was common in winter but no one had intervened so far to stop the destruction of the sites.

According to reports, Dehistan was one of the most influential cities of Badghis province in the past and Chilanak area had a history spanning more than 1,000 years before Islam.

Yahya said people in the past too had been digging at Sina-i-Ardo area where jars of clay and some other monuments were found.

Badghis information and culture director Abdul Khalil Protan confirmed the illegal digging and said Abpoda, a historical site in Jawand district, faced the same problem.

He said most of the historical sites being dug were in areas controlled by Taliban militants.

"There is so far no information if precious monuments have been found in these areas," he added. Badghis deputy police chief Abdul Aziz Amani said they had directed all district police headquarters and detective organs to prevent illegal digging of historical sites. He asked Badghis people to support security forces in protecting the heritage sites. (Pajhwok)

### (12) Waziristani ...

the Barmal and Orgun districts of Paktika, Director of Refugees and Repatriation Ihsanullah Ihsan said.

Each family was given \$100, he said, adding nearly 150,000 refugee households living in the districts were in urgent need of relief.

Meanwhile, one migrant from Waziristan in Barmal, Allah Jan Wazir, said the assistance was not sufficient to meet his family needs.

A tribal elder from the district, Mirza Khan, was happy over the delivery of aid. He asked the government to survey the refugees' situation before distributing aid. (Pajhwok)

### (13) Taliban Free ...

passengers to nearby forests, but released them after four hours," he said. The captors asked them for ransom, but freed the passengers after seeing their identity cards.

The Taliban were searching for a man named Farooq, but did not harm anyone, he said, adding seven people without ID cards were yet to be released.

"After we were released, the security personnel reached the area and clashed with the Taliban. No one was injured in the fire exchange," the source continued.

Of the 110 passengers, six suspected people were still in their captivity and a decision on their fate will be taken on completion of investigations, said Mullah Ihsanullah, who introduced himself as a Taliban commander.

However, Andarabi explained

that four of the six captives had also been released by the Taliban. (Pajhwok)

### (14)7 Police ...

"I was there when the heavy explosion smashed windowpanes in nearby houses and buildings," said one eyewitness, Javed. He also saw thick black smoke rising from the site.

Police officer Lt. Col. Khan Aqa Durrani confirmed the explosion, saying four judges and as many civilians were injured and a policeman killed in the blast.

As usual, the Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack. The group's spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said judges were among six people killed in the explosion. (Pajhwok)

### (15) 6 Insurgents...

denied the fighters had suffered casualties. But he confirmed the loss of three motorcycles.

The militants had kidnapped several government officers, including the hajj and religious affairs director for Suzma Kala district, two judges and three workers of the National Solidarity Program (NSP) since March 22.

The rebels killed the director but released the NSP workers. The fate of two judges is yet to be known. (Pajhwok)

### (16) Nangarhar...

attorneys and it would become clear what motivated the murder."

Speaking at the same press conference, police spokesman Col. Hazrat Hussain Mashriqwal said initial investigation showed the murder had resulted from a family dispute, but he could not confirm it, pending the investigation.

Khaksar's in-laws have so far said nothing in this regard and brother and son of the journalist during his funeral prayers had said they had no enmity with anyone.

The crime branch police chief also said three suspects had been arrested in connection with the murder of provincial council Javed Zaman's driver.

Col. Zahir said the driver was gunned down few weeks ago and investigation from the detainees was underway.

About increasing incidents of kidnapping, the official said there had been two cases of kidnapping during the past two weeks and police had arrested the kidnappers and rescued the captives. (Pajhwok)

### (17) 2-Years-Old ...

said his children were crying after his son was kidnapped and police were informed about the incident. "Police fired in the air and arrested the kidnapper." But Ahmad Zia, the accused, said he had only stolen an MP3 from the car. He denied kidnapping the child, acknowledging steal things to.

On the other hand, the Faryab police chief said the issue would be resolved after interrogation of the accused. (Pajhwok)

### (18) 2 Taliban ....

adding police and civilians escaped unhurt.

However, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said they had killed two security personnel as a result of a bomb attack on the vehicle in the district. (Pajhwok)

### (19) North Korean...

said the launch of the satellite Kwangmyongsong-4, named after late leader Kim Jong Il, was a "complete success" and it was making a polar orbit of Earth every 94 minutes. The launch order was given by his son, leader Kim Jong Un, who is believed to be 33 years old.

The launch prompted South Korea and the United States to announce that they would explore the feasibility of deploying an advanced missile defense system in South Korea, which China and Russia both oppose, "at the earliest possible date."

North Korea's state news agency carried a still picture of a white rocket that closely resembled a previously launched rocket, lifting off. Another showed Kim surrounded by cheering military officials at what appeared to be a command center. (Reuters)

### (20) Britain Strongly...

regional and international security," Hammond said in a statement.

Earlier on Sunday, the DPRK

launched an Earth-observation satellite, which is widely seen as a test of ballistic missile technology.

The British foreign secretary said that the DPRK is aware that the UN Security Council has unanimously agreed to take significant measures against any further launches or nuclear tests and that countries are meeting in New York to agree on a collective response. (Xinhua)

### (21)Russia Condemns ...

disregard" for international law, the Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

The ministry said the course that Pyongyang has chosen would only arouse strong protests, adding that it strongly recommended that the DPRK's leadership consider whether its policy of acting in opposition to the international community meets the country's best interest. (Xinhua)

### (22) Syrian Army ...

from its city to further isolate the rebels, as a step to retake Aleppo, Syria's largest city.

The military forces' campaign in Aleppo is taking place with the backing of the Lebanese Shiite Hezbollah group and heavy Russian air cover, both key elements behind the sweeping advance of the Syrian army against the Turkey-backed militants in Aleppo. (Xinhua)

### (23)S. Korea Begins....

made after USFK commander Curtis Scaparrotti requested it, Yoo said, noting that the official negotiation is aimed at jointly seeking the THAAD deployment and its possible operational capability at an earliest possible date.

The announcement came after the DPRK said Sunday that it had successfully launched a Kwangmyongsong-4 Earth observation satellite into orbit less than 10 minutes after liftoff at 9:30 a. m. (0030 GMT).

Pyongyang claimed on Jan. 6 that it had tested its first H-bomb in violation of UN Security Council resolutions. It was the fourth of nuclear detonations following tests in 2006, 2009 and 2013. (Xinhua)

### (24) UAE Says ...

and I think our position remains the same and we will have to see how this progresses," he said. Gargash added "U.S. leadership on this" would be a prerequisite for the UAE.

Saudi Arabia said last week it was ready to participate in any ground operations in Syria if the U.S.-led coalition fighting Islamic State militants in Syria and Iraq decided to start such operations.

Syria would resist any ground incursion into its territory and send the aggressors home "in coffins", its foreign minister said on Saturday, in comments clearly aimed at Sunni Arab countries that have said they were ready to join such an operation. (Reuters)

### (25)Turkey Redefines ...

predominantly Kurdish region without a bargaining process with the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK).

The revision on Kurdish politics came after the government-initiated talks with the PKK since 2012 collapsed in 2015, paving the way for resumption of violence and spread of conflict to urban areas.

Speaking in Mardin, a border province in the country's predominantly Kurdish Southeast, Davutoglu said the government would not negotiate with the PKK again unless it lays down its arms. (Xinhua)

### (26)China "Deeply ...

pursuing its own security, one country should not impair other's security interests," said the spokesperson.

Hua said moves to advance the deployment will escalate tensions on the peninsula, which will do harm to regional peace and stability, and set back efforts to address the current situation. "We demand the countries concerned be prudent when handling the issue," Hua added. (Xinhua)

### (27)Turkmenistan...

the full potential and maintain stable growth trends in all spheres, as well as the need for regular analysis and forecasting of the macroeconomic situation. (Agencies)

## Dutch to Probe 'Civilian Deaths' in Iraq Air Strikes

THE HAGUE - The Netherlands is probing two incidents in which civilians may have been killed or injured in air strikes against the Islamic State group in Iraq, the government has said.

"Two incidents in which there may have been possible civilian casualties are being investigated in around 1,300 missions carried out by the Netherlands," The Hague-based government said in a letter to parliament late on Saturday.

Citing "operational reasons", the Defence Ministry said neither details of the incidents nor the probe are being made public.

The probe was prompted by a raft of questions raised by lawmakers in parliament on the Netherlands' role in the fight against IS after The Hague announced last month it would expand air operations into Syria.

Dutch F-16 fighters have been part of the US-led bombing campaign against IS in Iraq and The Hague said the expansion into Syria came following requests by the United States and France.

"The incidents are being investigated by the Defence Ministry and details will be passed to the Public Prosecutor's Office," said the letter, posted on the Defence Ministry's website.

"Because of several reasons it's impossible to determine the regrettable number civilian deaths as a result of coalition operations," it added. (AFP)

## Turkey Delivers Aid Across Border as Syrian Forces Step up Aleppo Assault

ONCUPINAR - Aid trucks and ambulances entered Syria from Turkey on Sunday to deliver food and supplies to tens of thousands of people fleeing an escalating government assault on Aleppo, as air strikes targeted villages on the road north to the Turkish border.

Russian and Syrian forces intensified their campaign on rebel-held areas around Aleppo that are still home to around 350,000 people and aid workers have said the city - Syria's largest before the war - could soon fall.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which monitors the war, said air strikes, thought to be from Russian planes, hit around the villages of Bashkoy, Haritan and Kfr Hamra north of Aleppo on Sunday, the latter two lying near the road to Turkey.

Russia's intervention has tipped the balance of the war in favor of President Bashar al-Assad, reversing gains the rebels made last year. Advances by the Syrian army and allied militias, including Iranian fighters, are threatening to cut off rebel-held zones of Aleppo.

"In some parts of Aleppo the Assad regime has cut the north-south corridor ... Turkey is under threat," Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan was quoted by the Hurriyet newspaper as telling reporters on his plane back from a visit to Latin America. (Reuters)

## Former Top Thatcher Adviser Says She would Back Deal with EU

LONDON - A former top adviser says the late Margaret Thatcher would have supported the proposed deal outlined this week to keep Britain inside the 28-nation European Union.

Longtime Thatcher aide Charles Powell said in a Sunday column that Thatcher did not have much enthusiasm for the EU but wanted to reform it rather than leave.

The fight for Conservative Party icon Thatcher's mantle may be important as British Prime Minister David Cameron struggles to convince reluctant Conservative legislators that Britain is better off inside the EU. Cameron has promised British voters an "in-or-out" referendum on whether to stay in the EU by the end of 2017. Many are expecting a vote much sooner.

EU leaders will meet Feb. 18 to consider proposed changes to Britain's relations with the EU. (AP)