

(1) Ghani Stresses ...

directed the foreign minister and Afghan ambassadors to work hard to promote ties with the country's immediate neighbors. In addition, the president directed foreign minister to work out a mechanism to finalize agreements inked with the neighboring countries. He directed the officials concerned to portray true image of Afghanistan. Afghanistan, he said was not and would not pose any threat to any neighboring country. He called for positive and tangible reforms in Afghanistan's embassies abroad and urged the officials to work hard to promote the country's interests. He mentioned his imminent visit to India and Iran and an invitation that would be extended to the president of Tajikistan to visit Kabul. He recalled he travelled to Pakistan and China and held result-oriented talks with the officials of both the countries. (Pajhwok)

(2) The Destiny ...

sized that the NUG's slow pace of work, introducing new governors and government officials, have caused a greater gap between the people and the government. "Unfortunately, the delay in completing the cabinet and introducing new governors is worrying." Executive Director of Afghan Civil Society Forum, Aziz Rafiee said. "Prolonging the finalization of the works of the government is what is causing the people to push away from them." Both NUG leaders promised to provide better security, improve the country's economic situation, bring reforms in the electoral and judicial organs and fight corruption in the country, but more than four months have passed and the cabinet has yet to be finalized. (Tolonews)

(3) Afghan, Pak ...

Hassankhel was part of the delegation. He said the trip was in compliance with orders from the president. "We met Pakistan's military officials. At the meeting, it was promised that simultaneous operations would be carried out." He said the operations would leave a positive impact on the region's security. "Each side will conduct operations in their own areas. We have our own leaders to follow their orders and launch operations in line with the government's policy."

He said the agreement on the same time operations was yet to be practically implemented, but military leaders of the two countries were working on the nature of the proposed operations.

"Rules of procedure will be written that will follow further talks," Hassankhel said, adding that at the meeting he attended both the sides had agreed not to allow insurgents move between the countries. "The Khyber Border Coordination Centre, which was closed some time ago, is being reactivated. We and the Pakistanis have been ordered by their respective leaders to do so. We will share intelligence after the centre is made functional. We will share problems in the border region and will inform each other about them." To a question, Hassankhel said both the countries claimed they faced a common enemy. "Let's see if this realisation is brought in practice."

He said Afghans stood firm on their stance not to allow anyone to use their country's soil against its neighbors. (Pajhwok)

(4) 685 Burning,...

Dr. Mohammad Fazel, head of the nursing department in the hospital, told Pajhwok Afghan News the figures were only of the patients from Kabul and a handful of other provinces submitted to the hospital. He said the countrywide figures were higher. Dr. Fazel said the causes for these burns were family disputes, financial challenges, and mental issues.

Malika 17 is a patient at Isteqlal Hospital with extreme burn injuries amid fading hope for life. Her wailing mother said she suffered burn injuries in a gas explosion at her house and now there is no hope for her life. "I went to the market and she was cooking in the kitchen when the explosion happened."

Shaista 18, another girl who was injured in a similar incident last month, was improving and could speak a bit. "The pressure cooker exploded when I was cooking. It burned me all over my body."

Aqila 45, said she was heating her room when the balloon gas exploded injuring five members of her family, including her three and five year-old daughters. The nursing head of Isteqlal Hospital said more than 50 percent of the incidents were due to balloon gas explosions. He asked families to take

utmost care when it came to using gas at home.

Dr. Fazel added currently there were 35 burning patients in his hospital that had been injured in various incidents of gas, oil, ghee, electricity, pressure cooker, coal and acids. Frost bites, he said, that was caused due to extreme cold in winters were also part of burning incidents and had no treatment except cutting of hands and foot fingers.

Meanwhile, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) told that this year 23 self-immolation incidents have been registered with the commission. Majority of them have led to deaths. Rafiullah Bedar, media in charge of the commission, said public awareness, Islamic education and literacy have been the strategies used by the department in order to bring down the level of such incidents.

Because majority of such incidents are covered up by families of the victims, "we don't have the exact figures of self-immolation incidents," he added. (Pajhwok)

(5) Ulumi Pledges...

asked the international community to provide them with advanced training to improve their performance.

Police losses could be avoided if they received professional training and equipped with advanced weapons, Ulumi said.

He assured to build capacity and bring reforms to police and intelligence forces which would help decline their casualties. (Pajhwok)

(6) Ghazni Adviser ...

any governmental post. He said "The man arrested did not have any relations with DAESH, Arabic name for IS, we have proof that this person had hand in occupying land."

He further said "If he had relations with DAESH then NDS would have already announced this."

However, Wahidi has claimed to NDS that he was DAESH spokesman for Afghanistan and was monitoring projects in Ghazni Province. Wahidi has also said that he and governor Ghani would receive 20 percent benefit from each project.

Wahidi has further said that during Taliban government he was working with the intelligence agency of Taliban. (KP)

(7) Feb. 15 a...

history of Afghanistan, which is full of sacrifices by Afghans.

On May 15, 1988, the invaded former USSR troops started withdrawal from Afghanistan while the pulling out of their forces completed on February 15, 1989.

The invasion of the then red army of Afghanistan lasted nine years, inflicting heavy casualties and damages on Afghan nation and country. Record shows that 1.5 million Afghans refugees were martyred and thousands of others disabled. In addition, over 10 million Afghan refugees migrated to other countries specifically to Pakistan and Iran.

"The day is memorable in the contemporary history of Afghanistan and I congratulate the brave Mujahideen masses of Afghanistan," Ghani added.

On this day, Soviet forces invaded Afghanistan, triggering years of violent armed struggle between mujahideen and the occupation forces.

In the years between 1979 and 1988, hundreds of thousands of people were killed, as Soviet forces used their military might to crush the voices of dissent. Millions of people were displaced and forced to flee from the country.

The ruins of war in the form of destroyed residential and commercial buildings in Kabul bear painful testimony to the hegemony and oppression unleashed by Soviet forces on Afghans.

The president called upon people to come forward and contribute to the nation and country's building and to forge cordial ties with international, regional and neighboring countries. (Pajhwok)

(8) No one can ...

tended by former jihadi leaders, parliamentarians and hundreds of admirers to commemorate the Soviet withdrawal in the 1980s.

Rabbani said it was due to the jihad in Afghanistan that the Berlin Wall was demolished and a united Germany brought into being and rendered Marxism and Leninism a history.

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Rabbani said that the day recalled all Afghans to safeguard their country. He said: "The today's youth should learn that our bright future is in national solidarity and unity. Everyone should come forward and work for the progress and prosperity of the country."

Some anti-state elements wanted to use the country's youth for fomenting prejudice for their vested interests, he said adding that Afghans should focus to learn from their experiences and get advanced education.

The unity government would leave no stone unturned to protect the motherland, he vowed, reassuring that the government had great regard for the contribution of Mujahideen. "Being a member from a Mujahideen family, I reassure you that no one will be allowed to utilize the Mujahideen contribution in a negative way. Mujahideen are the genuine heir of Jihad," he added. (Pajhwok)

(9) Sayyaf Criticizes...

the country." Speaking at a ceremony on Sunday marking the 26th anniversary of the Soviet Union's withdrawal from Afghanistan, Sayyaf urged the achievements were as a result of sacrifices of the people of Afghanistan.

"The mujahideen have been separate from politics, which is not in favor of the country," the ex-presidential candidate said, raising his voice for the first time against separation of mujahideen from NUG after the former minister of Water and Energy, Mohammad Ismail Khan, criticized the exclusion of mujahideen from the cabinet.

"Mujahideen are not war criminals, but communist leaders were who killed thousands of people committing crimes," Sayyaf noted, turning down reports of accusations of war crimes against former Jihadists.

He added that the mujahideen have not disappeared or are dead, admiring the fact that most of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) are ex-jihadists.

Referring to the growing rumors about the emergence of Daesh fighters in the country, Sayyaf declared that the mujahideen were ready to fight the group and defend the country.

"We've stood up against all groups threatening the nation and we will stand up against Daesh too," the former Jihadist said. "Daesh is misusing Islam and it's against humanity."

Believing that Daesh are the same militants but with a different brand, Sayyaf said, "It's the same doctor just changing the prescription."

He warned at the conclusion that there would once again be a need for the mujahideen exclaiming "if Daesh arrives to our doors, you'll be knocking on the doors of the mujahideen once again."

Former Jihadist Ismail Khan who was also present at the event praised the sacrifices of the mujahideen, calling on their unity against threats.

"Today's freedom is because of the sacrifice of the people," Khan said, demanding the NUG to learn from the past experiences of the mujahideen.

He warned that the mujahideen would not let anyone to create problems for the country. (Tolonews)

(10) Ghani Holds...

Ashraf Ghani on Saturday held a video conference with governors of four eastern provinces and talked with them in details on issues concerning security, good governance and development.

Ahmad Zia Abdulzai, the spokesman for the Nangarhar governor, told Pajhwok Afghan News that governors, police chiefs, and army officers from Nangarhar, Laghman, Nuristan and Kunar took part in the conference held in Shahi Palace.

The officials presented their reports and grievances on several issues to the president.

Maulvi Attaullah Ludin, Nangarhar acting governor, acknowledged corruption was rampant in Torkham port's weight scale department and requested President Ghani to shut it down.

He alleged 143 million afs corruption took place there on a monthly basis.

He also asked the creation of an organ in Nangarhar for coordinating the operations of the security forces. Ghani promised to look into their problems and directed the governors and some cabinet members on issues related to reforms in the east-

ern provinces. (Pajhwok)

(11) New Governor...

about Farah and found that former governors only wasted their time. My predecessors did not work to usher an era of progress and prosperity in Farah, which shocked me," Nang said without naming of the former governors.

"Installing wind power turbines and solar panels and importing electricity from neighboring Iran will help resolve shortage of electricity in Farah, which are my main targets," he pledged. (Pajhwok)

(12) PC Members...

assured the PC members that the problems they mentioned would be shared with the authorities concerned.

The IDLG official said giving attention to Zabul was the central government's priority and urged the provincial council to cooperate with local departments. (Pajhwok)

(13) Struggle Against...

hands of Afghans. Congratulating the nation on the victory day, the statement said: "Afghanistan still has the power to respond to its enemy in a befitting way. And it was imminent to throw the today's America into a quagmire the way we threw former USSR into a ditch."

Apparently, foreign forces have acknowledged their defeat but Afghans will fight against foreign occupation until the presence of a single foreign soldier on Afghanistan soil," the statement added. (Pajhwok)

(14) Fair Polls Not...

adding without electronic identity cards, transparent elections were not possible.

Without naming anyone, Barekzai accused some observer organizations of accepting huge sums of money in bribes against neutrality, saying those purposefully delaying the issuance of the cards were committing treason.

The issuance of electronic ID cards is a joint project of the ministries of interior and communications and IT. The Interior Ministry promised in 2011 to issue electronic ID cards to six million people ahead of the 2014 elections, but failed to do it. (Pajhwok)

(15) TAPI Launch ...

standard manner and preventing the smuggling of precious stones.

Saba said the meeting in Islamabad had decided that a consortium leader would be finalised soon to immediately start the TAPI project. He said the steering committee's next meeting would be held in Kabul.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) is the transaction advisor to facilitate the proposed TAPI pipeline which would start from Turkmenistan's Daulatabad gas field and end at Fazilka, Punjab in India after passing through Herat and Kandahar (Afghanistan) and Quetta and Multan (Pakistan). (Pajhwok)

(16) Comprehensive ...

nation of rebels and then check posts would be established to maintain the gains of the sweeping operation.

The sphere of the offensive would be extended to Sangin, Kajaki, Musa Kala, Nawzad and Washir districts, he informed. The 215th Maiwand Military Corps also mentioned the launch of anti-insurgents offensive in the area. (Pajhwok)

(17) Many Afghans...

commission's formation to work on electoral reforms.

Mohammad Rafiq Shahir, head of the Herat council of professionals, said the electoral system had major flaws which needed to be addressed. He said the employees of election commissions should be professional and qualified people who could work in the larger interest of the people, not a particular group. (Pajhwok)

(18) Azure worth ...

Lajawardin Company and stopping the extraction of azure.

The azure in Badakhshan is known globally for its high quality. Lapis lazuli takes an excellent polish and can be made into jewelry, carvings, boxes, mosaics, ornaments, and vases.

Hidayatullah Hakimi, the head of a stone processing company in Badakhshan, said the 65 trucks loaded with azure stones were stopped in compliance with orders from the president. He had purchased one the truckloads.

He claimed if the government cut this source, they would be unable to find another income source and as a result, fighting in the area would escalate. (Pajhwok)

(19) Work on Six...

sufficient water to irrigate their fields.

A tribal elder in the area, Sharifullah, told Pajhwok Afghan News said the projects once completed would help farmers timely water their crops and increase agriculture output.

"Previously, Matoon area residents would collectively build small dams, but floods would wash them away." Last week, construction work on a dam was launched in the Ismail Khel district. The 11 million afs project is funded by the World Bank. (Pajhwok)

(20) Eastern Provinces...

officers from Nangarhar, Laghman, Nuristan and Kunar took part in the conference held in Shahi Palace.

Zabihullah Ghazi, a journalist and social activist from Kunar, Sahib Dad, another social society activist from Nuristan, and Zahidullah, the resident from Laghman province also expressed their concerns over insecurity and corruption in the eastern provinces. (Pajhwok)

(21) New Township ...

routes they would use to enter the city. Now they travel a long distance through mountains and remote parts to reach the interior city.

Afghanistan Investment Support Agency (AISA) and the Urban Development Ministry did not provide clear information about the construction of the proposed industrial park in the area. (Pajhwok)

(22) Many Ex-Ministers,

officials who are still keeping their vehicles.

They are former governor of eastern Kunar province, Syed Mohammad Yusuf Shajan, former Independent Election Commission (IEC) chief Fazl Ahmad Manawi, former counter-narcotics minister Din Mohammad Mubariz, and former parliamentary affairs minister Humayun Azizi.

Similarly, former social affairs minister Anma Afzali is still keeping her government vehicle. Former Farah governor Mohammad Omar Sherzad has been using three government registration plates.

Shajan was removed as the governor of Kunar about a decade ago, but he is still keeping his official vehicle. (Pajhwok)

(23) Relief in Ukraine ...

ceasefire that started at 2200 GMT Saturday. (AFP)

(24) US Wants to ...

visited Central Asia because the interest of the United States has dwindled in that regard, and whether in future the Central Asian countries can expect the visit of the President of the United States. (Agencies)

(25) Takfiri Terrosists...

it completely move in line with the goals of the arrogant powers, meaning the US, the hegemonic European governments and the Zionist regime, and are practically at their service under an Islamic disguise," he added. (FNA)

Nigerien Parliament Approves Troops Deployment

KABUL - At least 24 insurgents, including Afghan National Army (ANA) soldier, have been killed in showdowns with ANA in central Uruzgan and southern Helmand provinces, security officials said Sunday.

Officials of the 205 Atal Military Corps in Kandahar said in a statement that 20 rebels had been perished in Maiwand and Ghurak districts' offensives.

It said that six militants were detained with huge arms and ammunition recovered from their hideouts. In Dehrawud district of Uruzgan, one ANA soldier died and six others wounded in a face-off with militants that left four rebels dead.

However, Qari Yousuf, the Taliban's spokesman, claimed killing five ANA soldiers in Maroof district of Kandahar and one in Chori district of Uruzgan.

He acknowledged two militants killed and another wounded in a clash in Maroof district. Security officials claimed thwarting two suicide attacks in Kandahar. (Pajhwok)

Mom Dies of Heart Attack after Kids Injured in Blast

MAIMANA/SHIBIRGHAN - A man has committed suicide due to poverty and a woman died of a heart attack after her two children were wounded in a bomb blast in northern Faryab province, officials said on Saturday.

The man, who hanged himself this

morning in the Baloch area of Sherin Tagab district, was identified as Mohammad Hassan.

The district chief, Syed Sharfuddin, told Pajhwok Afghan News the 40-year-old took the extreme step after his wife divorced him.

But a community council head in the district, Samiullah, said Hassan was suffering from poverty which possibly forced him into killing self.

A 60-year-old woman died of cardiac arrest after her two children were wounded by a roadside bombing in front of their house in Gorzaiwan district.

Gorzaiwan district chief Abdul Razaq Kakar said the children aged 12 and 13 years old were wounded when a bomb planted by militants exploded in front of their house, which belonged to an Afghan Local Police (ALP) commander.

A doctor at the Afghan-Turk hospital in Maimana, the provincial capital, confirmed receiving the wounded children at the hospital and that one of them was in critical condition.

A relative of the victims, Noor Mohammad, said the Taliban had so far killed six family members of the ALP commander over the past few months.

However, the insurgents have said nothing about the blast.

Elsewhere in the province, a man was killed as a result of a dispute over land in Qaisar district.

Local officials said the killer was brother of an illegal local commander and had escaped after the incident.

In northern Jawzjan province, a young man was stabbed to death in Shiberghan, the provincial capital.

Police chief (operations) Col. Abdul Manan Raufi said two suspects had been arrested in connection with the murder, the motive behind which was unclear so far. (Pajhwok)

10-Year-Old Girl Victim of "Baad" in Balkh

MAZAR-E-SHARIF - A 10-year-old girl from northern Balkh province has been forced to marry a boy whose sister eloped with the girl's uncle, a decision by tribal elders as part of an old tradition called "Baad" aimed at settling disputes between the parties in conflict.

Shaima, the victim of her uncle's elopement, who is a fourth grade school student, has refused the decision, requesting the elders to let her continue her education.

After spending five days in her husband's family in Sholgara district, Shaima was able to return back to her father's home in Mazar-e-Sharif, calling on the government for justice. The little girl, who does not know a thing about the married life, has been refusing to go back to her husband's home, which may refer the dispute between the two families.

"I want to grow up, go to school and marry when I am grown," Shaima said.

Her mother stated that her daughter has been the victim of enmity between the two families. She pleaded with the elders to let her daughter grow first, and then speak of her marriage.

Despite significant women gains over the past 13 years, a large number of women in Afghanistan are still the victims of forced marriages, domestic violence, Baad and other customs.

Strongly denouncing the decision made by the tribal elders, Balkh civil society activists and provincial council members called the decision unacceptable. (Tolonews)

Taliban Insurgents Attack Police Outpost in Sar-E-Pul

SAR-E-PUL - Dozens of Taliban insurgents attacked a police outpost in northern Sar-E-Pul province on Saturday night and started clashing with the security forces, local officials said.

The attack took place after a number of Taliban insurgents attacked a police outpost in Balghli area, 20 kilometers outside of the capital of the province, and clashed for more than two hours, Provincial Police Chief Abdul Habib Gulbahari said.

"There were no police and civilian casualties during the clash," Gulbahari said. "One police outpost was torched during the attack, but no one was hurt. A military operation has been launched in the area to clear the insurgents." He added that there is not an exact number of insurgent casualties. However, residents of the area claimed that a number of houses have been burned as a result of the clash, but Gulbahari rejects the claims.

The Taliban have not yet commented about the attack so far. (Tolonews)