

(1) Terrorism ...

the statement said. "Afghanistan has sacrificed for the past many years; therefore, Afghan government hopes that other countries must also prove their honesty in fight against terrorism," the statement read. Meanwhile, the Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah condemned the attack and sent his condolences to the people of Pakistan. "Afghanistan condemns the attack in Lal Shahbaz Qalandar and offers sympathies to families of victims and people of Pakistan. Must fight terror," he wrote on his twitter. (Tolnews)

(2) ICC Formally ...

the ground for foreign investment and widening our relations with the private sector in every part of the world," he said. "The private sector has somehow improved, but we are not satisfied with our performance in this area and we should provide a better environment for it," the CEO said. He added the private sector continued its operations and invested in different areas even in difficult situations and suffering of losses. Atiqullah Nasrat, chief operating officer at the ACCI, talking at the ceremony, said opening of the ICC branch in Afghanistan would give a boost to the country's economy and help the chamber of commerce and the private sector. He said the ICC was also working on awareness among Afghan traders about global commerce issues. Maiel Aaqha Khairkhwa, chief operating officer for ICC in Afghanistan, said the aim of opening the office was to pave the way for cooperation and connecting the two chambers (ACCI and ICC).

He said the ICC with support of the private sector and the international community would help improve Afghanistan's economy.

Azrahsh Hafizi, international relations director at the ACCI, said that the opening of the ICC branch would help Afghan traders connect with their foreign counterparts.

He said the ICC would also resolve Afghan entrepreneurs' problems abroad. However, he was concerned about declining trade and closure of 25 factories last week due to absence of facilities including electricity.

"Afghan investors are running businesses in 51 countries and their exports are five times higher compared to Afghanistan exports," he added.

Hafizi put the value of Afghan traders' foreign investments at more than 150 billion US dollars and said there were various reasons behind doing business abroad. Hekmat Khilil Karzai, the deputy foreign minister, hoped the country's relations with other countries would strengthen with the opening of the ICC branch in Afghanistan. He said the ICC Afghanistan would help develop the private sector, attract investment and improve commerce relations with the organization's member countries.

Development of the private sector and cooperation with relevant institutes was high on the country's economic agenda, Karzai said.

The ICC has 92 member countries and around 6.5 million companies are registered with it. (Pajhwok)

(3) Moscow Huddle...

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) said this in his inaugural remarks at the six-nation meeting in Moscow.

He said the government of Afghanistan firmly believed in peace and had made every effort to reach reconciliation with the armed groups that demonstrated genuine willingness to renounce violence, cut ties with terrorist networks, and opt for peace through a results-driven dialogue.

A statement from MoFA quoted Haidari as saying: "In this regard, we recently reached a successful political settlement with the Hezb-e-Islami (HIA) through an intra-Afghan dialogue and negotiation process." He pointed out the existence of terrorist sanctuaries and policy of differentiating between good and bad terrorists hampered regional efforts in the form of Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG) meetings.

The official warned that terrorism was a common threat to the whole region. "If one of us doesn't stand firm against it, other counter-terrorism efforts will not bear the results we all seek." Afghanistan actively participated in the Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG) meetings, hoping indeed, Haidari continued, the success of the QCG process squarely hinged on a set of clearly defined and agreed-upon benchmarks, which were not met. "This increasingly showed the key challenge to the process remained policy selectivity by some to distinguish between good and bad terrorists..."

He praised India, China, Russia, Turkey and all Central Asian states for their continued support for joint peace efforts. He also referred to Afghanistan's constructive dialogue with Iran on common national security issues. No one should support Taliban in pursuit of a terrorist and murderous campaign; he stressed, suggesting a unified message to the rebel movement to re-

nounce violence, cut ties with global terrorist networks and embrace the opportunity for talks.

He thanked the Russian Federation for hosting the meeting. Pledging continued efforts by Kabul for peace and holding talks with those interested in reconciliation.

"Indeed, the United States is one of our most important partners, and has an essential role to play in all these and other processes that should end war and usher in sustainable peace in Afghanistan." (Pajhwok)

(4) Afghanistan ...

This comes after Afghanistan became a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2016.

At the top of the list are Hong Kong (89.8 points), Singapore (88.6), New Zealand (83.7), Switzerland (81.5) and Australia (81.0). Scoring 48.9 points, Afghanistan is among the repressed economies at the bottom of the South Asian countries list.

According to the Foundation, construction and agriculture have been the key contributors to economic expansion of Afghanistan.

It cited poor rule of law and endemic corruption as the main factors hampering the effectiveness of courts, the banking sector and other parts of the economy.

The Foundation further alleged that the presence of a large informal economy continues to diminish the development of a functioning labor market and added that the Afghan government has very limited influence on monetary policy due to the severe underdevelopment of financial systems. "Processes for establishing businesses and obtaining necessary licenses are relatively streamlined, but other structural barriers persist," it said.

Economic freedom is the fundamental right of every human to control his or her own labor and property. In economically free societies, governments allow labor, capital and goods to move freely and refrain from coercion or constraint of liberty beyond the extent necessary to protect and maintain liberty itself. Economic freedom brings prosperity to a country through healthier societies, cleaner environments, greater per capita, wealth, human development, democracy and poverty elimination.

Economic freedom is measured based on rule of law, government size, regulatory efficiency and open markets. (Wadsam)

(5) Jihadi Leaders' ...

which has prolonged the war against the people of Afghanistan, the participants said.

The participants meanwhile called for a quick announcement of parliamentary elections' date.

Meanwhile, Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah called for holding of the parliamentary elections and the Constitutional Loya Jirga - the Grand Assembly.

Abdullah said bringing changes in the electoral commissions is part of the reforms and that the process needs further efforts by relevant organizations. (Tolnews)

(6) G20 FM...

the options for peaceful crisis prevention and conflict resolution," he said.

"No country in the world can tackle the major international problems of our time alone," Gabriel noted. "Terrorism, water scarcity, forced migration and humanitarian emergencies cannot be resolved by isolation. Climate change cannot be tackled by barbed wire," he added.

According to the program circulated here, the participants are meeting on Thursday for the first working session focused on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was adopted in September of 2016 at the Hangzhou Summit.

The participants will meet for the second session on Friday to discuss issues about conflict prevention, post-conflict peacebuilding and how to strengthen cooperation with Africa. (Xinhua)

(7) Aziz Calls ...

Government of Afghanistan had not paid a heed to Pakistan's repeated calls on the Afghan government to take action against the group and its activities based in Afghanistan. In this regard, Pakistan has shared a list of suspected JuA terrorists with the Government of Afghanistan for action against them.

The Adviser to the Prime Minister underscored that terrorism was a common threat and its elimination required close cooperation. He said it was important that Afghan government should take strong action against such elements to reaffirm that its soil was not used for terrorism in Pakistan. Mr. Sartaj Aziz emphasized that cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan was vital for effectively combating the scourge of terrorism. In this regard, effective border management was required to prevent the movement of terrorist elements across the border. The Afghan National Security Adviser expressed his government's con-

lences over the loss of lives in the recent terrorist incidents in Pakistan. (PR)

(8) Survey Finds ...

despite that 22 out of 1,000 newborn babies die in the first month after birth, said Attallah Saedzai, the Public Health Ministry envoy, said at a session which highlighted findings of the survey.

The survey also shows that 15 percent of births in the country are assisted by patients' relatives.

On average, there are five children in every Afghan family, but in Nuristan province this figure is at nine children per family.

"This survey has also assessed other important characteristics which connected with the people's lives," Sher Mohammad Jamizada, head of the Central Statistics Organization said.

Moreover, the survey mentions that 58 percent of men and 24 percent of women in Afghanistan are aware of the HIV/Aids disease.

Public Health Minister Ferozuddin Feroz, who also attended the session, said part of the findings is not accurate. "We learn two lessons from findings of the survey: First, it shows us how to manage and adjust our plans based on the findings of the survey and second and continue our efforts. It also shows the need to increase our efforts and work deeply on figures in the future," Feroz said.

The health demographic survey covered more than 24,000 families and 39,000 women and men in 34 provinces of Afghanistan. (Tolnews)

(9) Taliban Envoys ...

indicates that those countries want to review their relationships with Taliban and other terrorists networks," said Jawid Kohistani, a military analyst.

A number of sources and media also have reported that Mullah Abbas Akhund, head of Taliban office in Islamabad, wanted to attend the ceremony using a Pakistani passport, but he too was not allowed to enter the country.

"The Quetta Council was only responsible for sending out orders and internal affairs. Their (Taliban) international relations was designed by Pakistan and ISI. Only recently have they contacted Russia, China and some other countries," political analyst, Fada Mohammad Nazari said.

The Taliban have not yet commented on the refusal to allow their representatives entry into UAE.

Kabul earlier had announced that the blast in the Kandahar governor's guesthouse was masterminded by a Taliban commander in Pakistan. The claim was however rejected by the group. (Tolnews)

(10) Hekmatyar ...

Separately, the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) on Wednesday informed the Pakistan Stock Exchange the government had moved to unfreeze Hekmatyar's accounts.

Referring to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' letter, the SECP said the asset freeze, travel ban and arms embargo set out in paragraph 2 of the Security Council Resolution 2253(2015) no longer apply to him.

On February 3, the UN Security Council lifted sanctions on the HIA chief in response to a request from the government of President Ashraf Ghani. (Pajhwok)

(11) Pakistan Hands...

and list of 76 terrorists hiding in Afghanistan," the army said.

"The Afghan officials were asked to take immediate action and handover the terrorists to Pakistan," the army spokesman, Major General Abdul Ghafoor said.

Earlier Pakistan closed its border with Afghanistan hours after the suicide bombing in southern Sindh province late Thursday, the military has said.

Pakistan closed the border at Torkham, the busiest crossing, after a series of terrorist attacks in the country as security officials believed the bombers enter the country from Afghanistan.

Pakistan Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa said in a statement late Friday that recent terror attacks are being executed on directions of hostile powers and from sanctuaries in Afghanistan.

Pakistan and Afghanistan share a border of about 2,600 km, mostly porous, and the military seeks cooperation of the Afghan government to closely monitor the illegal cross-border movement. (Xinhua)

(12) US Undecided ...

condition of anonymity.

"We welcome President Ashraf Ghani's efforts to end the Afghan conflict through dialogue and peace negotiations," the official said. (Pajhwok)

(13) Ghani Leaves ...

Hakimi and Federica Mogherini, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

The National Security Adviser Mohammad Hanif Atmar, Finance Min-

ister Ekil Hakimi, President Ghani's senior advisors Ahmad Nader Naderi and Mohammad Humayun Qayumi are accompanying the president in this trip, the press release added. (Tolnews)

(14) Afghan Refugees ...

unregistered Afghan refugees live in Pakistan.

"According to the trilateral agreement, it was agreed that both countries will start the registration process for those refugees who have not been yet registered," Jawid Faisal, CEO Deputy Spokesman said.

UNHCR earlier had announced that the process of returning Afghan refugees from Pakistan will start from the 1st of March. (Tolnews)

(15) Karzai, Abdullah ...

regional countries to eliminate terrorism.

Javed Faisal, Abdullah's spokesman, said the meeting talked about ending the Afghanistan conflict, finding the way to peace and creating unity in the region. "The conference also discussed that neighbor countries should support the Afghan people instead of supporting terrorist organizations," he added.

The central point was to support the Afghan government and people, he said, adding such meetings were not a replacement of the peace process, but aimed at striking regional unity in the war against terror.

About one month and a half month back, Moscow hosted a three-nation meeting involving China and Pakistan without inviting Afghanistan. The move sparked serious reaction from the Afghan government. (Pajhwok)

(16) Ghani Regrets ...

attack on would not sour the two countries relations, he believed.

The President added that killing of Afghan and Emirati citizens would embolden the determination of the two governments and peoples in the fight against terrorism.

The President offered his condolences and sympathies to Al-Kab's family, Government and Brotherly nation of UAE.

President Ghani visited United Arab Emirates very recently and separately met the families of those Diplomats who were martyred in Kandahar terrorist attack. He presented condolences to the families on behalf of the Government and people of Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(17) Kabul Rejects ...

allegations Murtazawi said Pakistan should, instead of making accusations, eliminate the safe havens of insurgents on its own soil.

Meanwhile, Amrullah Saleh, the former head of the National Directorate of Security said attacks such as that on the shrine, was a result of supporting terrorists by Pakistan. He added that that Pakistan has itself turned into a safe haven for terrorists.

"We are not the behind the attack and we do not need to explain anything. Pakistan people know that all the problems are rooted in one point and the point is using terrorists and extremist groups in the region. In the past 40 years, these groups have been trained in Pakistan," Saleh said.

Although Daesh claimed responsibility for the attack, Sartaj Aziz, foreign affairs advisor to the Pakistan's prime minister, alleged in a phone discussion with Mohammad Hanif Atmar, the National Security Advisor that the attack is carried out by Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, a branch of Taliban.

Pakistan foreign ministry has reported that Aziz told Atmar that Kabul did not act on Pakistan's repeated requests on eliminating anti-Pakistan terrorists. (Tolnews)

(18) Closure of ...

from the Sahwan, a place where Lal Shahbaz Qalandar Shrine was located and hit by a suicide attack overnight leaving over 80 people dead and hundreds hurt.

Did the Afghans stop the implementation of NAP? Asked Khattak.

Pakistan on Friday closed Torkham crossing in the aftermath of recent blast at the shrine of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar in Sindh province

The government has decided to seal Torkham border crossing with Afghanistan for an indefinite period, Dawn News reported. (Pajhwok)

(19) Pakistan Closes ...

the Pakistani military's spokesperson also confirmed the development through a tweet.

"Pakistan-Afghanistan border closed with immediate effects till further orders due to security reasons," said Maj. Gen. Asif Ghafoor. (Pajhwok)

(20) Afghan Aviation...

It was unfortunate to note one was in charge of that programme over there, with the Afghan air force behind the army in development over the last 15 years, Hoffman said.

While stressing the need for an Afghan aviation solution, the expert slammed the programme a mess for 10 years.

Hoffman urged lawmakers to prioritize the issue.

"What we really need to do in Afghanistan is make sure that we have enough capability there to find and kill those terrorists that threaten our homeland. To do that is going to require a long-term commitment in Afghanistan to stabilize that country," he said.

But in terms of pacifying the whole country, he was not sure that was worth the lives of more of American men and women dying and being maimed over there.

Michael Sheehan from the Combating Terrorism Center, West Point, told lawmakers the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan were home to Al-Qaida.

"They're the ones that blew up our embassies in Africa, at least an African arm of that, blew up the Cole in - in Yemen, an arm of the al-Qaida central and are the people that are responsible for 9/11. They reside in Pakistan.

"Some of them are floating back in Afghanistan but it's difficult for them to operate in Afghanistan because we own the terrain around Afghanistan," Sheehan said. In western Pakistan, the US continued to degrade the capability of Al Qaeda despite having no presence in the tribal badlands, where occasional action by the local troops was not really that effective. "What's interesting is we need Afghanistan almost as much as a base to attack the FATA than we need Afghanistan itself. Afghanistan has no strategic importance to the United States. However, the importance is that Al Qaeda is there and blew up the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. We can't allow that to come back again," Sheehan said. "So sometimes you have to come up with solutions with no troops on the ground. Other times if you have the ability to send 100,000 there it doesn't mean you should. So it's a matter of finding the right solution commensurate with the threat," Sheehan said. (Pajhwok)

"What's interesting is we need Afghanistan almost as much as a base to attack the FATA than we need Afghanistan itself. Afghanistan has no strategic importance to the United States. However, the importance is that Al Qaeda is there and blew up the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. We can't allow that to come back again," Sheehan said. "So sometimes you have to come up with solutions with no troops on the ground. Other times if you have the ability to send 100,000 there it doesn't mean you should. So it's a matter of finding the right solution commensurate with the threat," Sheehan said. (Pajhwok)

(21) 5 Dead, 25 ...

and was on its way to Herat province. The accident happened due the recklessness driving, he added.

Kandahar governor spokesman Samim Khapalwak confirmed the accident and said health teams had been dispatched to the area to shift serious injured for treatment to Mirwais Hospital in Kandahar. (Pajhwok)

(22) Belarus, ...

in Minsk on 17 February. Members of the delegation invited Belarus to establish joint food processing ventures in the territory of Afghanistan and develop joint brands. It was suggested that Belarus could supply to Afghanistan flour, beef, poultry meat, and dairy products, the press service said.

Besides, Leonid Zayats invited the Afghan side to work together to organize training of students from Afghanistan at Belarusian agricultural universities and also advances training courses for specialists in all fields of agricultural production. The parties signed a memorandum of understanding in matters related to cooperation in agriculture.

The Afghan delegation confirmed their participation in the international expo Belagro 2017.

Apart from that, the delegation showed interest in implementing joint mechanical engineering projects. In 2016, the trade between Belarus and Afghanistan totaled \$26.4 million, up by 60% from 2015. Belarus exported \$15.5 million worth of products and imported goods to the tune of \$10.9 million. The country had a trade surplus of \$4.6 million. Belarusian agricultural organizations sold \$6.4 million worth of products to Afghanistan in 2016, up by 40% from 2015, and imported \$10.9 million worth of products (a 25 times increase). Belarus' major exports were oil products (\$8.1 million), tractors and tractor units (\$6.2 million), pharmaceutical products packed for retail sale (\$262,000), and car and tractor parts and accessories (\$202,400). Belarus mainly imported fruit (apricots, cherry, sweet cherry, peaches), tomatoes, cabbage and other vegetables. (BeITA)

Belarus' major exports were oil products (\$8.1 million), tractors and tractor units (\$6.2 million), pharmaceutical products packed for retail sale (\$262,000), and car and tractor parts and accessories (\$202,400). Belarus mainly imported fruit (apricots, cherry, sweet cherry, peaches), tomatoes, cabbage and other vegetables. (BeITA)

Belarus' major exports were oil products (\$8.1 million), tractors and tractor units (\$6.2 million), pharmaceutical products packed for retail sale (\$262,000), and car and tractor parts and accessories (\$202,400). Belarus mainly imported fruit (apricots, cherry, sweet cherry, peaches), tomatoes, cabbage and other vegetables. (BeITA)

Belarus' major exports were oil products (\$8.1 million), tractors and tractor units (\$6.2 million), pharmaceutical products packed for retail sale (\$262,000), and car and tractor parts and accessories (\$202,400). Belarus mainly imported fruit (apricots, cherry, sweet cherry, peaches), tomatoes, cabbage and other vegetables. (BeITA)

Belarus' major exports were oil products (\$8.1 million), tractors and tractor units (\$6.2 million), pharmaceutical products packed for retail sale (\$262,000), and car and tractor parts and accessories (\$202,400). Belarus mainly imported fruit (apricots, cherry, sweet cherry, peaches), tomatoes, cabbage and other vegetables. (BeITA)

Belarus' major exports were oil products (\$8.1 million), tractors and tractor units (\$6.2 million), pharmaceutical products packed for retail sale (\$262,000), and car and tractor parts and accessories (\$202,400). Belarus mainly imported fruit (apricots, cherry, sweet cherry, peaches), tomatoes, cabbage and other vegetables. (BeITA)

(23) IS Kills 17...

were apparently coordinated but police, aided by other security officials, managed to repel the attackers and drove the insurgents from the area.

Kalimzai said another police officer is missing after the attack. He said Taliban fighters used heavy machine guns and explosive devices in the assault. Kalimzai added that the Afghan police killed several Taliban fighters.

Afghanistan's eastern Kunar province borders Pakistan. Insurgency groups have a strong presence in the area. (AP)

(24) Trump to ...

said in a document to the court of appeals.

"In so doing, the president will clear the way for immediately protecting the country rather than pursuing further, potentially time-consuming litigation," it said. (Xinhua)

(25) Turkey 'Confirms' ...

launched long-range cruise missiles

Friday at the IS facilities near the group's main stronghold of Raqqa. (AP)

(26) France, Germany...

participated agreed that only a political solution could bring lasting peace to Syria, which has been shaken by war for almost six years.

Russia, which has provided military backing to the government of Syrian President Bashar Assad in its fight against a range of opposition forces, didn't take part in the talks on the sidelines of a two-day meeting of foreign ministers from the Group of 20 leading industrialized and emerging economies. (AP)

(27) China, Europe...

accordance with Article 15, WTO members should cease the surrogate country approach in anti-dumping investigations on China after Dec. 11, 2016, which expires exactly 15 years after China's admission.

Mogherini responded that the EU will make continuous efforts to deal with the fulfillment of its obligations under the WTO.

The top EU diplomat spoke highly of the keynote speech delivered by Chinese President Xi Jinping at the World Economic Forum in Davos earlier this year, saying that this provides new opportunities for Europe-China cooperation. (Xinhua)

(28) Germany will ...

2 percent goal would do so over a decade.

Merkel said Germany had increased defense spending by 8 percent in this year's budget over last year. "We must do more here, no question, but the matters of development aid and crisis prevention are also important," she said. She said that that NATO was also important for the United States and served to strengthen U.S. influence in world affairs.

Trump set off alarm bells last month by calling NATO "obsolete," though he has subsequently told European leaders he agrees on the "fundamental importance" of the military alliance. He has emphasized the need for all members to pay a fair share for defense, an issue that NATO leaders themselves have pushed for years. (AP)

(29) UN Mission ...

briefing here.

"Missions can resume again on Sunday," he said. "Despite the temporary suspension of UN missions, aid operations were not suspended, and many partners continued to deliver humanitarian programs and assistance in eastern Mosul."

Meanwhile, humanitarian partners in health are responding to an acute shortage of medical supplies in the newly accessible areas of Mosul by delivering medicines and other medical supplies to 16 primary health centres, one hospital and the Directorate of Health of Ninewa Governorate, he noted. "These supplies will support treatment of patients with infectious diseases, chronic conditions, diarrheal diseases and trauma cases."

In early January, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported that nearly 140,000 people have been internally displaced as a result of the fighting in Mosul where fierce clashes continued to drive out the Islamic State (IS) militants. (Xinhua)

(30) Iran, Russia ...

meeting in Astana. Measures to strengthen mutual trust was discussed at the meeting, he said, adding the absence of such trust significantly hinders the peace process. (Xinhua)

(31) China, India...

Geng said, while stressing that China's stance is based on the rights and wrongs of the case itself. (Xinhua)

(32) Army Kills...

Navaz Sharif said in a statement: "It is time for us to unite and fight the radicals, wherever they may be ... I direct and authorise my armed forces and law enforcement agencies to eliminate the enemy."

Following the attack, Pakistan closed two border crossings with Afghanistan. Pakistan has repeatedly blamed Afghanistan for giving safe haven to fighters on its side of the border. (Al Jazeera)

(33) No External ...

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Yukiya Amano on February 14 once again confirmed that Iran is implementing the nuclear agreement. (PressTV)

(34) Turkmenistan...

showed the solidarity of the people and confirmed the will of the people, that our people are committed to democracy, unity and cohesion," said Myradov at the ceremony. (AFP)

(35) Uzbekistan's ...

President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin in Samarkand on 6 September 2016. (Monitoring Desk)