

### (1) Peace Doesn't ...

the peace talks will begin in two to three weeks," he said. "The result of these talks will be cleared afterwards.

Meanwhile, this is a good opportunity for Afghanistan, Pakistan, the United States, and others who are determined to bring peace. If this opportunity is not used properly, then Afghanistan will never be given this chance again."

Former Taliban Commander in Nangarhar, Abdul Salam Rocketi, said that the Taliban will come to the negotiation table with their demands to be met.

"The Taliban ruled Afghanistan for years and without a doubt they want a share in the government," Rocketi explained. "They will be asking for changes and adjustments in the constitution."

According to a number of Pakistani newspapers, Pakistani officials have stated that the first round of peace talks will be held in Qatar. No one from the Afghan government and the Taliban has confirmed or denied the statements made in Pakistan.

On Saturday at a joint press conference with the U.S. Defense Secretary Ashton Carter, President Ashraf Ghani expressed unprecedented hope in the prospects of a negotiated peace talk with the Taliban, calling the conditions for peace talks better than they ever have been, and asserting confidently, "we are on the right track." As talks of peace surface, residents of Afghanistan have demanded that the past years achievements in the country be respected and maintained, especially the rights of women, human rights and freedom of speech. (Tolonews)

### (2) Stringent Measures...

A three-day workshop has been conducted in Kabul by MoI in collaboration with IOM to train border police on how to prevent human trafficking.

Violence and poverty have forced thousands of people to cross borders illegally in search of better lives. Problems at borders and lack of complete control have also made border crossing easy.

IOM Director Recharad Dansziger said human trafficking was on the rise and since 2002 more than 1,300 persons including women and children have been trafficked from Afghanistan.

"In today's workshop we teach Afghan border police on how to prevent human trafficking," Recharad Dansziger added.

A recent study shows that financial pressure, insecurity, and lack of hope for future are major reasons for Afghan children who leave homeland and take on dangerous trips.

The study conducted by Afghan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) showed that around 3,600 teenagers majority of them boys have taken asylum in Europe in 2013. The figures were 5,700 in 2012.

MoI spokesperson Sediq Sediqi said police had arrested many human traffickers in recent years and such workshops would boost their ability. (Pajhwok)

### (3) New Pentagon...

elements of which are involved in a major offensive against the Taliban in neighboring Helmand province. U.S. special operations forces also use the airfield at Kandahar to launch counterterrorism operations.

Under the Obama administration's exit plan for Afghanistan, the U.S. military presence at Kandahar will close down this year. President Barack Obama, however, is considering changes to the plan, including the possibility of keeping Kandahar open longer while keeping more U.S. troops in Afghanistan this year and next than presently planned.

An Obama decision may come as early as next month when he hosts Afghan President Ashraf Ghani at the White House.

Kandahar is one of several "hubs" around Afghanistan where U.S. troops are training and advising Afghan security forces.

The U.S. combat mission ended two months ago, and the focus this year for the 10,000 troops who remain is on consolidating gains in the development of the Afghan forces while also carrying out U.S. counterterrorism raids on remnants of al-Qaida and associated extremist groups. (NEWS MAX)

### (4) Afghan People...

group some other extremist groups joined them, Velayati said. Grounds for emergence of new ex-

tremist groups in Afghanistan are prepared, he said.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has always sought restoration of stability to Afghanistan and backed its legitimate government, he said. Nicholas Haysom, for his part, said countries such as Iran and Afghanistan are considered close allies in terms of political, social and economic issues.

He also lauded Iran's significant role in holding elections in Afghanistan, fighting drug trafficking and hosting Afghan refugees, he said.

The country's problems should be resolved through dialogue and with reliance on Afghan forces and the new Afghan government has created suitable grounds to attain this goal, Haysom said. (FNA)

### (5) Interpol's Help...

the raid. The looters then themselves moved to Pakistan, he said. The looters had removed CCTV cameras installed at the bank, but investigators were able to find a footage showing the senior official looting the money with the help of two others, the director said.

Fazal Ahmad said the central bank's main office had informed the international police and had sought their help to arrest the individuals.

Kandahar police spokesman Zia Durrani said police had opened their own investigation into the bank robbery and were trying to capture the robbers.

He told Pajhwok Afghan News a delegation of intelligence officials had been tasked with tracing the suspects.

Governor's spokesman Samim Khalwak said investigation into the matter was ongoing and once the probe was completed, the media would be given information. (Pajhwok)

### (6) Senior Taliban...

newspaper "Express Tribune" the Mohammad's Pakistan visit.

In November 2014, a Taliban delegation, headed by Din Mohammad, visited Chinese capital Beijing at invitation to discuss China's possible role in the Afghan peace process.

Din Mohammad, who has been involved in talks with several countries including China, was scheduled to hold 'follow-up discussions' with Chinese officials, the Taliban official said. When approached, an official at the Chinese Embassy in Islamabad refused to comment.

Chinese Foreign Minister during a visit to Islamabad last week said his country was ready to facilitate talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government.

But a Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid denied any contacts with the US or the Afghan government in Qatar.

"There are no talks either with the US or the Kabul administration. However, we are in contact with countries, independent sides and organisations with whom we need to maintain relations," he said on Saturday.

President Ashraf Ghani, meanwhile, continued consultations in Kabul to win backing for possible talks with the Taliban and said his government would not hold secret talks but would keep the Afghan people in the loop.

"Peace cannot be established in the dark and away from the people's sight, but it needs a transparent process with involvement of the entire nation," a presidential palace statement quoted Ghani as telling a series of separate meetings with representatives of political parties, tribal elders, prominent figures, and civil society activists. (Pajhwok)

### (7) Kidnapped Indian

Minister," the ministry said in a statement.

The kidnapping last year came soon after an attack on the Indian consulate in Herat in May by four heavily armed gunmen, who were repelled by security forces.

The consulate assault was the latest in a series of attacks on Indian targets in Afghanistan.

Nine civilians, including seven children, were killed in August 2013 when suicide bombers targeted the Indian consulate in the main eastern Afghan city of Jalalabad, detonating an explosives-packed car.

India was one of the chief enemies of the hardline Taliban regime which ruled Afghanistan before its ousting in the wake of the September 11 attacks on New York and Washington.

Pakistan was the Taliban's main ally, and there have been accusa-

tions in India that Pakistani security forces were complicit in previous attacks on its missions in Afghanistan. (AFP)

### (8) Breshna Warns...

was intended to start in Kunduz, then pass through Baghlan, Punnisher, Kapisa, Parwan, Kabul and Nangarhar provinces on its way to Pakistan.

However, recently, the Breshna Company has been approached by donor countries about changing the path of the electrical lines expected to be constructed. Reportedly, officials from the Asian Development Bank have suggested the lines pass through Baghlan to Bamyan, Parwan, Kabul and then Nangarhar.

"Studies by the Asian Development Bank show that the Salang mountains are a better option compared to Bamyan and that way it will cost less as well," said Ahmad Shekib Nesar, the Operations Director for the Breshna Company.

Meanwhile, Bamyan MPs have welcomed the suggestion and begun to push for the change, likely expecting major development opportunities to accompany it. "Our suggestion to the government is that the KASA 1000 project must pass through Bamyan, because there are two coal mines in Bamyan as well that will help this project and Bamyan is smoother," MP Abdul Rahman Shahedani said.

Economic analysts have warned that making any decisions on the project because of personal interests could be dangerous, and cause disagreements between people that could derail implementation. "If the direction of the project changes due to personal interests, this will harm the people and the government must pay serious attention in this regard," analyst Aziz Asefi

The KASA 1000 project is currently in the procurement stage, but implementation is expected to begin soon. If the direction of the lines were to dramatically change, however, it is likely further studies and time will be needed prior to construction. (Tolonews)

### (9) 'Operation Zulfika...

reporters the six Pakistanis were detained last night with some documents.

He said the "Operation Zulfikar" was going well in southern districts as compared to past operations and so far no civilian had been harmed.

Air force commandos were also assisting ground forces during the operation, which was launched in Sangin district about a week ago, Bakhtiyar said.

As a result of the operation, provincial capital Lashkargah, Nad Ali, Marja and Nawa districts have been cleared of militants. Bakhtiyar claimed insurgents had been inflicted heavy casualties so far.

He said dozens of landmines were defused in Sangin, where 159 militants had been killed and 93 others wounded. So far two civilians and a dozen policemen have been injured.

The police official said two policemen and 22 insurgents, most of them commanders, had been killed during the operation in Sangin's Tarkha Nawa area. The clashes also left four policemen injured, he said.

The area would be soon cleared and security posts would be established, Bakhtiyar said. A member of the Sangin's social council, Ali Shah Khan, told Pajhwok Afghan News that area residents were happy with the latest operation.

He said residents had so far suffered no casualties during the ongoing offensive and security forces had established their posts in most of the areas.

The Taliban have so far said nothing about the week's old operation, which security officials say is advancing slowly to avoid civilian casualties. (Pajhwok)

### (10) Funds for ...

he said, was \$2500 and total embezzled money was around \$52,000.

Without naming anybody, Mokremzada said five workers of Afghan Aid NGO and 21 other local council and governmental employees have been accused of anomalies. The case had been sent to Attorney General's Office for investigations, he said.

Rajab Ali Yosufi, head of emergency response committee, acknowledged embezzlement had taken place and that they were investigating the issue. (Pajhwok)

### (11) LUMS, Afghan ...

our human resources in all fields constitutes a key pillar of President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani's vision for a peaceful, prosperous and self-reliant Afghanistan." "The Arrival of Afghan students under the ASP in Punjab Province will also create a new people-to-people link between the two countries, thus strengthening the existing solid bonds of brotherhood and friendship between Afghanistan and Pakistan."

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Naqvi stated: "This is a grand opening, expanding upon centuries' old connections and trade routes. It is a showcase moment for the whole world to see how two neighboring countries can collaborate for betterment of each other. This scholarship scheme is extremely important as fresh new minds from Afghanistan will bring fresh concepts and challenges for our students and faculty at LUMS." He went on to say that it was an opportunity to work jointly that would bring young students as Afghan ambassadors to Pakistan and when they go back to Afghanistan they would be Pakistan's ambassadors in their own country.

The government of Afghanistan has allocated an initial fund of \$1 million for this program, which would be complemented by an additional amount of \$2 million announced for the programme by the government of Pakistan.

LUMS plans to hold various marketing activities in Afghanistan to raise awareness of the programme. A "Summer Orientation Programme" will be organised for the ASP scholars to prepare them for regular classes at LUMS.

The programme will commence from the Academic year 2015/16. LUMS is ready to welcome the first batch of students from Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

### (12) Karzai Alleges ...

Europe expanded, Pakistan became an atomic power with a strong army, but Afghanistan is the country that suffered only," the outspoken Karzai added.

After the Soviet's defeat, the US abandoned Afghanistan to Pakistan as a result Afghanistan lost its army and government structure.

"After 9/11, the trend continued and nobody listened to us. Finally Musharraf (former Pakistani dictator) admitted himself it was Pakistan behind the destruction of Afghanistan."

Karzai said he had also repeatedly warned Pakistan's officials to stop using extremism as a foreign policy tool and to not bomb innocent families in Waziristan, Dir and Bajawar tribal region.

He was of the opinion that using force would breed more extremism and the menace needed political solutions. He called on Afghan Taliban once again to join the country's peace process.

Abdullah Abdullah stressed that peace was need of the hour, but insisted that the process should be transparent and carried forward with the consultation Afghans. (Pajhwok)

### (13) Several Daikundi ...

papers shut down.

"Light shadow" was another monthly paper that stopped working since one and half years. Mohammad Reja former editor-in-chief of the paper said any governor appointed to the province were not cooperative with them.

He told Pajhwok Afghan News that Information and Culture Department did not have the vision and ability for helping the local media to prosper.

Mohammad Reja said every time the journalists wanted to get information from the officials they made excuses. "This is the worst kind of restrictions that the officials are committing against the press" Parliament last year passed access to information law in six chapters and 32 articles which was also ratified by the president. Based on this law all governmental departments must provide the required information to the media.

The draft of the law took three years to be prepared by the ministry of information and culture with the help of journalists and civil society members.

Several journalists' associations welcomed the law and called it a major step towards providing better and accurate information to public.

Najia, women's rights activists, said the publications did not have anything on women's issues and only had their own political agenda. She also accused the women's affairs department for not having any publications for women de-

spite having a lot of funds.

Hamid Wafae, a journalist, said judicial organs were not cooperative with them. For instance, he said, a woman claimed that a justice department's employee asked for her daughter's marriage in return of resolving her problems over land.

Journalists complain these measures would cause media outlets and local radios to stop functioning. Residents also said that governance in the province was weak and corruption was rampant. But local officials believed things were improving.

Khuda Bakhsh Seerat, acting director of information and culture department, acknowledged that a number of media outlets in the province had been limited but said: "It was not a source of concern."

He added the main reason that some newspapers had ceased publications were lack of budget. Even the monthly newspapers like "Environment", "Daikundi Youth" and "Daikundi" that were being printed by his department stopped their publications because the ministry of information and culture could not fund them, he added.

Sayed Anwar Shahab said one of the reasons the media outlets were shutting down was because they started work without strong incentives only thinking they could earn money out of it.

Rahmatullah Sharifi a civil society activist in Daikundi said they depend on the projects without having proper plans for themselves. That is why they lose audience and finance. (Pajhwok)

### (14) 216 Suspected...

eleven month period by the security forces, the police chief said.

He added that 39 different types of weapons, ammunition and 65 vehicles were also seized during the past 11 months.

190 drug addicts were arrested from different parts of Nangarhar and referred to the related clinics for treatment, he told the news conference.

Nangarhar is one of the comparatively secured provinces in the eastern Afghanistan.

According to reports, in some of its border areas like Khogyani District there is still resistance to Afghan National Security Forces and heroin factories.

Reports indicate that the heroin produced in these factories are either used inside Afghanistan or smuggled to other countries. (KP)

### (15) 60 Disabled ...

ees were distributed certificates on completing the nine-month courses and were also financially supported in launching their own businesses. He said more special people would be provided similar trainings in future.

Nargis Haqmal, who taught tailoring to six disabled women, said the trained persons could now support their families.

Mohammad Nabi, who received training in carpentry, said after his father's death, he was the only bread-winner for his family. "I won't face difficulties now like I did before." (Pajhwok)

### (16) Malaysia Should...

t of the students had traveled to Malaysia on scholarships and the Afghan government provided them with all the available facilities, Jamshid said.

He said that a large number of Afghan traders had their businesses in Malaysia, with one Afghan had established Momin Ghee Factory in that country.

He noted that Malaysia was one of the important countries in the Islamic world and enhanced ties with Kuala Lumpur would leave far-reaching positive impact on Afghanistan's trade activities. (Pajhwok)

### (17) Herat Woman ...

months premature. The 32-year-old mother and the last and surviving baby were in good health, the doctor said. (Pajhwok)

### (18) Baghlan Electricity ...

Haidar said, adding the power would be cut again if it failed to clear bills.

Extending the electricity to 900 residential buildings and shops had helped increase in the revenue, he said, adding that currently six megawatt of electricity was provided from the second Ghorri dam while 12 megawatt of that was imported from Tajikistan.

Sultan Aziz, a resident of Pul-i-Khumri, the provincial capital, said that three months ago they had access to electricity only three hours in 24 hours but currently the

facility is available 12 hours daily. (Pajhwok)

### (19) Clash Over Land ...

village in the Zazi Aryud district near the border with Azra district in central Logar province.

He said the two tribes had a dispute over a graveyard and a mountain and several people were injured in yesterday's clash.

But a health official in the district, declining to be named, told Pajhwok that seven people had been killed and more than 10 injured in the incident.

Hamidullah, a resident, also confirmed the clash and the casualties. Similar clashes on ownership of mountains, forests and land between tribes had claimed several lives in the past. (Pajhwok)

### (20) Kerry and...

would be an indication that fundamental choices are not being made that are essential to doing that," Kerry added, also emphasizing that Obama was prepared to halt the talks if he thought they were not being productive.

Zarif said Rouhani would not accept a small, short-term agreement, nor a broad accord that left room for interpretation.

A recent U.N. report said that Iran had refrained from expanding tests of more efficient models of a machine used to refine uranium under a nuclear agreement with the six world powers. Development of advanced centrifuges is feared to lead to material potentially suitable for manufacture of nuclear bombs. Iran says it does not intend to develop atomic bombs. (Reuters)

### (21) Turkey Seizes...

militants from using it as a base, said the prime minister, adding that Turkey would hold a relocation ceremony in Syria's Esme district in a couple of days.

Turkish troops did not engage in any clashes, but one Turkish soldier was killed by accident during the evacuation, Davutoglu said.

"Turkey did not ask permission nor demanded help from any parties," the prime minister added.

Every party was aware that we would respond drastically if intervened," he said indirectly referring to IS militants in Syria.

In 1921 when Paris still ruled Syria, France and Turkey reached a deal to assign the tomb as Turkish land. The 25 square km area was guarded by Turkish soldiers and fled the Turkish flag. (Xinhua)

### (22) Syria Slams ...

operation, but didn't wait for the Syrian government's authorization.

Also on Sunday, a Turkish diplomat told Xinhua that Turkey issued a diplomatic note to the Syrian general consulate in Istanbul over the military operations as the embassy of the war-torn country has been suspended due to the strained relations between the two countries.

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### (23) Kurdish Fighters ...

diplomatic solution and they started supplying the country's opposition groups with their arms and funds. Logistic and medical Links between rebel groups in the Southern parts of Syria with Israeli intelligence and military forces have been disclosed in various reports which testifies that the security crisis in Syria was mainly planned by Tel Aviv. (FNA)

### (24) Iran Enjoys Mos...

relevant remarks in December, Lieutenant Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Brigadier General Hossein Salami underlined Iran's military and defensive power, and said the country's missile power is a major deterrent to enemies' military attacks. "Our missile power prevents practice of military attacks by the enemies, specially the US," General Salami said. (FNA)

### (25) Tajikistan...

xchange of the Tajik national currency, the somoni (TJS), for the yuan has not yet begun in Tajikistan's currency market," Tajik central bank head was quoted as saying by the NBT official website. (Asia-Plus)