

### (1) First Round....

and other groups to participate through their authorized representatives in the first round of direct peace talks with Afghan government expected to take place by the first week of March, 2016," the press release said.

The third round of the four-nation meeting was held in Islamabad on Feb. 6 with calling upon the Taliban to join the peace process.

According to the press release, the QCG has welcomed the decision by Afghan and Pakistan government to constitute a bilateral joint working group to work with Ulama or religious scholars of both countries to support the Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process through Fatwa or religious decrees against the ongoing senseless violence in Afghanistan.

The QCG also agreed to continue joint endeavors as part of their shared commitment to advance the peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan, the release said.

It also added that the next QCG meeting will take place in Islamabad immediately after the first round of direct peace talks.

Taliban militants fighting against the government to regain power in Afghanistan have yet to make comments on the peace talks. (Xinhua)

### (2) Armed Group ...

join the dialogue without response to our calls, then we run the risk of splitting our ranks, said an insurgency movement source to the paper.

Yesterday a Pakistani government official revealed to that newspaper that the negotiations between Afghan government and the Taliban could resume next week. (Prensa Latina)

### (3) New HPC...

the government-initiated process had national and international support.

He said religious leaders had a vital role to play in bringing peace and stability to the country by inviting people to join the peace process.

Ghani said as many as 40 members of peace committees in provinces had been killed by the enemies of Afghanistan and 185 individuals were perished after they joined the government-initiated peace process.

Dr. Abdullah said a dignified peace was the desire of every Afghan. He also said the Afghan government-initiated peace process had national and international support. He hoped neighboring countries and the international community would play their sincere role in establishing peace and stability in Afghanistan.

HPC chairman Pir Syed Ahmad Gilani said he would strive to ensure lasting peace in the country so that the government could function in an efficient way to serve the people and bring stability to people's lives. HPC was accepted back in 2010 aimed at brokering peace with the government's armed opponents, but after consuming millions of dollars, the council has been unable to achieve a major breakthrough. (Pajhwok)

### (4) Int'l Partnerships ...

is at the forefront of IoT innovation using different types of connectivity options to provide innovative solutions for the best customer experience. We see LPWA as a key enabler of IoT solutions and are leading the definition and adoption of global standards, which will drive economies of scale, consistency and innovation. A global standard for LPWA is critical for future success and Etisalat is at the forefront of making this a commercial reality."

The new initiatives announced by Etisalat build on the work the Group has already led in creating a global standard. Recently the GSMA announced that the mobile industry has agreed on the technology standards for LPWA, an agreement supported by Etisalat and 26 other operators from around the world.

Etisalat Group and Huawei have also set up a (JIL) joint IoT innovation lab with which will focus on NB-IoT new service innovation and development. Smart Parking and Connected car, are the first applications using JIL platform. More verticals, including Smart Metering, Smart Tracking, and Smart Lamp Pole are being included for testing as part of this JIL after it was formally inaugurated on February, 2016 which is the first such NB-IOT open Lab in the world. (PR)

### (5) Erdogan Urges...

on continued support for the PYD and YPG and its refusal to brand

them as terror groups, as demanded by Ankara, has infuriated Erdogan and other top Turkish officials.

The U.S. regards YPG as a force that has been effective in helping fight against the IS in Syria, while Turkey sees its link to PKK, a group that it is fighting in the southeast and listed as a terrorist organization as well by the U.S. and the European Union.

In his speech, Erdogan also stated that Syria has transformed into a country that exports terrorism. (Xinhua)

### (6) Finland to...

were many nationalities, including over 5,200 Afghans. The vast majority of asylum seekers will not receive a permission to stay in Finland and they will be deported.

An unprecedented number of migrants have also cancelled their applications and returned to their countries of origin before their cases have been reviewed.

The Finnish embassy said people whose applications were refused must return to their country of habitual residence.

"Applications that appear likely to be refused will be given priority and fast-tracked. The negotiations with Afghanistan will continue in the spring."

It said Finland welcomed Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's assurance that Afghanistan has the responsibility to accept the return of its citizens if they have no legal right to remain in Europe. Finland hopes that an agreement on the returns will be concluded as soon as possible. (Pajhwok)

### (7) Iranians Asked...

in areas of information technology, energy, and telecommunications, technical and engineering services.

"Afghanistan is willing to import products and services from Iran," Farhang said, assuring Iranian traders they would enjoy the same import tariffs offered to WTO members. (Pajhwok)

### (8) Rabbani Renews...

government's priority to a political process derived its legitimacy and support from the overwhelming consensus inside and outside the government on a results-oriented reconciliation process, he continued. New HPC Chairman Pir Syed Ahmad Gilani and his deputies would bolster efforts to consolidate the national consensus on peace with Taliban groups through a political process, he hoped.

Rabbani expected the QCG meeting would reach agreement on early initiatives by Afghan and Pakistani religious scholars in support of reconciliation in Afghanistan and against violence and terrorism.

Rabbani said the entire nation desired peace with dignity, but the elements refusing to quit the insurgency would be dealt with sternly in accordance with the law.

The constitution did not stop anyone from jumping on the reconciliation bandwagon, he explained. "We are working together to achieve peace. Those who choose to join the process are welcome."

Three of the four-nation meetings, involving representatives from Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and the United States, have already taken place in Kabul and Islamabad.

At the last meeting on February 6, the participants had agreed on a roadmap for the resumption of peace talks that were suspended after the announcement of Mullah Omar's death.

Javed Faisal, deputy spokesman for Chief Executive Officer Dr. Abdullah, said the date and venue for direct talks would be decided by the meeting. The government remains serious about talks with all rebel groups, including Taliban, HIA and the Haqqani Network.

President Ghani's deputy spokesman Syed Zafar Hashemi said the meeting would decide on which groups to talk to and when. "Reforms in the High Peace Council would hasten the reconciliation effort, he believed.

Set up in December 2015 on the sidelines of the Heart of Asia Conference in Islamabad, the four-nation group has already developed a roadmap for peace negotiations. (Pajhwok)

### (9) 98pc of Police ...

completed.

He said the new officers would be appointed in Kandahar City, the provincial capital, and districts and their joining would have a positive impact on professionalism. He said the process to appoint youth in the police force has been intensified and most of the recruits were educated individuals. The police chief said previously they had to call educated officers for administrative related affairs from Kabul, but now that

shortcoming had been overcome.

The training centre commander, Gen. Nasrullah Zarifi said the newly graduated 478 police officers were imparted training in professional skills for six months. He said the police had become more professional than they had been in the past, bringing improvement to security maintenance and police conduct with people.

He told the police officers that the people of Kandahar had suffered the most in the 14-year-old war in Afghanistan and they should be treated nicely and encouraged towards cooperation in maintaining security.

A young police officer, Abdul Samad, who graduated from the six-month training, told Pajhwok Afghan News he joined the police force after completing his high school. He said his motive to join the police was to serve the people and the country and win people's hearts.

Thousands of police officers have earlier graduated from the training centre and they are serving in various parts of the province. (Pajhwok)

### (10) Afghanistan ...

to forgive the loans.

Kohistan said Afghanistan needed loans for completion of some projects and talks in this regard were underway with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Abdul Qayyum Arif, a teacher at Kabul University, acknowledged Afghanistan needed loans for some key projects, but transparency in their spending should be a priority.

He said Afghanistan needed to obtain foreign loans for electricity production, development of mines and other key projects. Arif said countries like the USA took loans from international financial institutions for key and long-term projects.

He, however, expressed displeasure that the cash the international community had provided to Afghanistan in aid over the past 14 years had been ineffective. (Pajhwok)

### (11) Obama to...

of Obama's plan are unlikely to be revolutionary.

He has long argued that many Guantanamo prisoners should be transferred overseas and some should be tried by military courts. (AFP)

### (12) Germany Presses...

will be pursued in the coming weeks. He says if it's not helping reduce the influx, other "pre-eminent" European "measures would have to be considered.

The European Union is worried about new police restrictions being imposed on people traveling along the main migrant route through the Balkans.

Police chiefs from EU states Austria, Croatia and Slovenia plus non-members Serbia and Macedonia agreed last week to only allow in people "arriving from war-torn areas." The EU's executive arm said Tuesday that it "has concerns about this approach and will raise the matter with the relevant countries."

People from Afghanistan are now being stopped from moving through the Balkans. That is ratcheting up the pressure on Greece, where most of the migrants arrive in Europe, since many Afghans are getting stuck at its border with Macedonia.

Many from Afghanistan could potentially qualify for asylum.

The Czech prime minister says the European Union should stop migrants along the Balkans' route if the measures taken by Turkey and Greece are not enough.

Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka says "if the flow of migrants is not stopped in Greece, we have to stop it in the western Balkans area." Sobotka says the EU should do that after next month's summit of EU leaders. He says thousands of migrants cannot be allowed to enter the EU daily any more.

Sobotka said Tuesday that four Central European countries - the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia - support creating a new barrier on Greece's borders with Macedonia and Bulgaria. The plan is controversial - and opposed by Germany - because it effectively eliminates Greece from Europe's passport-free Schengen travel zone. But Sobotka says Greece would not remain alone and receive an unspecified help from the EU.

The head of Europe's border control agency says more border officers, ships and planes are needed to guard Greece's sprawling maritime border, where most migrants enter the 28-nation European Union.

Frontex chief Fabrice Leggeri says Tuesday the agency's 2016 budget has been increased to 250 million

euros (\$275 million) from 142 million euros last year. In 2017, the agency's budget will increase to 320 million euros.

Some 775 EU border officers are currently deployed in Greece and about 280 in southern Italy where migrants arrive across the Mediterranean from Libya.

Leggeri says January migrant arrivals are down significantly over December, but are many times higher than the number who arrived in January 2015. Last year saw more than one million migrants land on Europe's shores.

The head of Europe's border control agency says it's proving near-impossible to return to Turkey migrants who arrive in Greece but have no case for asylum in the European Union.

Frontex chief Fabrice Leggeri said in Berlin Tuesday that newcomers who don't meet requirements for protection and are considered economic migrants are supposed to leave Greece within a month. Since the vast majority arrive on boats from Turkey, that means they should return to Turkey.

But Leggeri said "practically almost no migrants can be returned to Turkey." He suggested that if no country is taking the unwanted economic migrants it's likely they'll all remain in Greece. (AP)

### (13) Afghanistan Tells ...

Deputy Chief of Army Staff, General Murad Ali Murad, as saying that such installations have been built and destroyed several times in the past.

He also said that Pakistan has been warned that such actions will undermine the environment of trust between the two countries.

Previously, Pakistan had built installations in bordering areas in Paktika and Nangarhar provinces. (ANI)

(14) Residents Protest people and has been changed to a residential area," he said.

He added: "According to a presidential decree, this area should be recovered and should be returned to the Ministry of Agriculture."

The MAIL officials said the area should be left naturally in order to be the natural habitat of wild birds. (Tolonews)

### (15) Logar Tribal...

However, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid denied the group's involvement in kidnapping the elders. "Sometimes Afghan Local Police (ALP) forces stop people and take them hostage in Azra," he claimed. (Pajhwok)

### (16) NATO Advises ...

to change strategy, Shoffner said.

"If you're a local chief of police or village elder, you want as many checkpoints as you can get around your village. So we often have conflict between the Afghan army that is trying to reduce checkpoints and the (local) leaders ... that want them."

"CHECKPOINTS STOP THE TALIBAN"

South of Kabul, members of the Afghan National Army's 1st battalion, 111th Capital Division hold a string of checkpoints to secure the mountain passes between the Afghan capital and Logar province.

Of roughly 600 soldiers in the battalion, more than 500 are based at checkpoints, while a small, more heavily armed mobile reserve force remains at a central base, said battalion commander Lieutenant Colonel Mohammed Reza Khuram. "We have to have checkpoints to stop the Taliban," Khuram told Reuters. "If we are not there, the Taliban will be."

The outposts range from small earthen forts strung with barbed wire, to makeshift dugouts and shacks perched on rocky slopes. Many have no vehicles of their own, limiting troops' ability to venture far without help from the central base. While the area is not among the most violent in the country, soldiers say they are regularly targeted by Taliban snipers and find roadside bombs.

The Defence Ministry referred Reuters' requests for comment for this article to Major General Abdul Nasir Ziaee, 111th Division commander. He said checkpoints were not necessarily wrong.

"We have two groups of soldiers at each checkpoint. One is the security group and another is the reaction group," he said. "The security group patrols and the other one responds to attacks, or when they get a report they react."

But recent examples underline the risk of relying on static defenses. This month, insurgents used captured military vehicles to attack a checkpoint in Helmand, southern

Afghanistan, killing seven soldiers and 15 policemen.

In the east, checkpoints were among the first targets for militants supporting Islamic State when they attacked last year.

When troops fail to leave forts to conduct patrols and operations, it allows insurgents to place roadside bombs and mines, further restricting the military's ability to move, according to coalition officers.

Western officials privately estimate the Taliban are contesting as much territory as at any time since their regime was toppled in 2001, underlining the need to wrest back the initiative.

Government forces, numbering more than 300,000 including soldiers and police, are only fully in charge of about 70 percent of the country, the U.S. military says.

Outposts can be a key part of disrupting insurgent movement, NATO military officers say, and during more than a decade of combat operations the coalition itself fought fiercely to establish small bases in Taliban strongholds in eastern and southern Afghanistan.

But fewer, stronger outposts can be an advantage, Shoffner argued.

"The idea is to reduce checkpoints and to consolidate onto strong points, so that not only does that strong point have the strength to defend itself, but so it also has a maneuver capability," Shoffner said.

"So if there is a security situation in a nearby village or checkpoint, it's got enough combat power to overwhelm whatever the security threat is." (KP)

### (17) Air Strikes...

sectarian attacks and also target security forces occasionally.

Kurram is one of the most sensitive tribal areas as it borders three Afghan provinces and at one point was one of the key routes for militant movement across the border.

The mortar attack on the border comes amid high tensions in the agencies as an indefinite curfew was imposed in parts of Mohmand Agency after various clashes between militants and security forces. (ANI)

### (18) Falcons Among...

the charity organization would release another 150 rare birds next Thursday in Farah. He said the organization had brought some of the birds from Qatar and had reared others in Farah.

The Qatari organization would release each year from 500 to 1000 birds under agreement with the Afghan Ministry of Agriculture and Environment Protection Agency.

Under the agreement, the Qatari organization would increase the population of the rare birds, but they could hunt down 30 percent of the birds as well.

For the past few years, Arab nationals have been visiting Afghanistan, particularly Farah province, for hunting birds in defiance of a ban imposed in compliance with a presidential decree. (Pajhwok)

### (19) Uprising Member ...

the area. Amarkhil said few days ago Ahmadzai and his colleagues had severely beaten two residents of the area and then shot them injured.

"Our job is to serve the people and protect them, we are against cruelty and harassment of civilians," he said, and adding that every ALP and uprising member would be arrested if he harassed civilians.

Abdullah, a resident of Kajiri area, also confirmed the operation against the accused uprising members and asked the government to punish the detained person because he had tortured a large number of local people. (Pajhwok)

### (20) Taliban ...

killed include six ALP officers and seven civilians in addition to the bomber, the official added.

The government established the ALP, or community police, in 2010 to protect villages and districts where army and police have limited presence.

The suicide bombing in Siaguard district of Parwan province took place just one day before holding the four-nation talks in Kabul on Tuesday to discuss the Afghan peace process and find a roadmap for bringing Taliban into negotiating table to end lingering Afghan crisis through dialogue. (Xinhua)

### (21) I Killed, 7 ...

Akbari told Pajhwok Afghan News. He said the bomb was attached to the car of Haji Qadir, an influential resident of Khanabad district. Qadir and a number of others were wounded in the incident and shifted

to hospital.

Kunduz Civil Hospital Director Dr. Naeem Mangal confirmed receiving eight people, including Qadir, in wounded condition.

Two pedestrians and a traffic policeman are also among the wounded. However, one of the wounded in critical condition succumbed around 1pm today, Mangal said. (Pajhwok)

### (22) A Septuagenarian ...

Afghan News that she immediately left home and went to the hotel where the suicide attack had happened because her son had also been invited to the wedding party.

"People had shifted the dead bodies to hospital, they told me to go home. I did not know whether my son was martyred or not but when I arrived home, I saw my son's body lying on the yard," she said.

The mother was continuously shedding tears and complaining about her family's problems.

Their breakfast included bread and cold water. "This dried bread is donated by our neighbours," Aytash said.

The orphaned children were disappointedly looking at their grandmother without saying any words. They were patient eating the dried bread because they knew there was nothing more to eat than that. (Pajhwok)

### (23) Germany, ...

Ukraine's reform process since the new government came to power in November 2014, stressing that Kiev still has much work ahead to carry forward the reforms. "Over the past 14 months, the current Ukrainian government has carried out many reforms, but still, there is a lot to be done on this path," said Ayrault. (Xinhua)

### (24) US Surveillance...

by a country intent on protecting its largest oil companies". German-US relations were badly strained after fugitive US intelligence contractor Edward Snowden in 2013 revealed widespread US foreign surveillance, including tapping Merkel's mobile phone. (AFP)

### (25) Putin Ally ..

the Islamic state created in Chechnya by Kadyrov ... will not over time become a new "Islamic State" ready to declare jihad on Russia," Yashin wrote. (Reuters)

### (26) Migrant

seekers, including some based on nationality. Referring to caps imposed by Austria and Slovenia, the UNHCR said: "These newest restrictive measures risk violating EU law and undermine efforts for a comprehensive and coordinated approach to deal with the refugee and migrant crisis in Europe. (Reuters)

### (27) China Welcomes ..

important part of the political process in Syria, adding that it can help to maintain progress and peace talks.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon welcomed the agreement. "It is a long-awaited signal of hope to the Syrian people that after five years of conflict there may be an end to their suffering," he said in a statement. (Xinhua)

### (28) DPRK Warns ...

the Korean People's Army (KPA). If the U.S.-S.Korean armed forces continued to make military provocations despite warnings from the DPRK, the KPA would enter the phase of its second round of attacks, which would target U.S. bases in the Asia-Pacific and even U.S. territories, the statement warned.

The DPRK is accusing the United States and South Korea of attempting to bring about a "collapse of the DPRK social system," read the statement. (Xinhua)

### (29) Iraqi Kurds...

to help locate the girl and rescue her from IS militants, according to the statement.

It also said that the young girl is now in Iraqi Kurdistan region and will travel back to Sweden as soon as the necessary arrangements are finalized. (Xinhua)

### (30) S. Sudan Denies...

base is sheltering around 50,000 civilians out of about 201,000 displaced South Sudanese spreading across eight such bases in the country. Meanwhile, the UN children's Children Fund (UNICEF) said that a number of children were injured and others were separated from their families during the outbreak of violence in the Malakal's UN civilians protection site. (Xinhua)