

(1) Selab Military...

Nangarhar, Parwan and Kapisa provinces, as well as the Sarobi district of Kabul. Afghan Air Force Commander Brig. Gen. Suleman Shah said the warplanes had proved to be effective in hitting targets. The A-29s could carry heavy weapons to target militants. He said the A-29s can carry out precise airstrike, using laser technology and four types of weapons, 250 kg of bombs, guided and unguided rockets. Security in the Shinwari districts of Nangarhar is also the Selab Military Corps responsibility. Several air raids have been conducted against Daesh and Taliban militants in the town. However, Suleman Shah said the US had also pledged to donate a number of unmanned aircraft and other warplanes to Afghan forces in the near future. (Pajhwok)

(2) Govt. to ...

Meanwhile, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) and a number of religious scholars have said that the Taliban must stop killing Afghan civilians before attending peace negotiations. This comes as direct peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban are due to be held in Pakistan's capital Islamabad. It also comes at a time of heightened insurgency and the continued killing of Afghan civilians in suicide attacks - of which many believe are carried out by Taliban militants. Referring to the Taliban's ongoing insurgency, a number of scholars and human rights commissions have said that the attacks against civilians on eve of the peace negotiations indicate nothing but Taliban's unwillingness to join the peace talks.

"It is surprising that the government negotiates with those whose hands are stained with the blood of people. This must be clarified - who deserves the right to negotiate and which Taliban factions must be kept isolated from the peace process," AIHRC member Musa Mahmoodi said.

"If the Taliban are really committed to peace, then the group must stop the bloodshed and announce full support to peace," religious scholar Abdul Rahman Hedayat said.

In addition, a number of Afghan citizens have also condemned the deadly Taliban attacks in Kunar and Kabul province on Saturday, asking the militant group to end the violence.

"Innocent civilians were killed as a result of Saturday's attack, they (Taliban) kill the people on a daily basis, negotiations with such groups do not make sense," Kabul resident Sayed Jalal said.

Direct negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban are scheduled to take place in Pakistan in the first week of March. As the time frame for holding face to face talks between the sides nears, the Taliban has continued with suicide attacks - with Saturday's incidents killing and wounding dozens of people. (Tolonews)

(3) Refugee...

have. They face many hardships along the way to Europe, but after reaching their destiny they feel the journey was not worth everything. At least 125 Afghans voluntarily returned from Germany last week. (Tolonews)

(4) Some 100 ...

partners of Iran. The country imported 10.62 percent of Iranian exports over the past ten months of the current Iranian year (started on March 21, 2015) to become Iran's fifth biggest trade partner in the mentioned period. (IRNA)

(5) 40 Taliban ...

officials did not provide more details about the operation. Afghan security forces have increased military operations across the country after an increase in insurgency in a number of provinces. (FNA)

(6) Watchdogs Blast ...

be reduced from nine to seven and the IECC from seven to five. Wolesi Jirga, however, rejected the presidential decree on ERC suggestions. The rejection has darkened the fate of the entire process. The lower house revoked the decree because election laws already approved by it and endorsed by the president were in force. In line with Article 14 of the law, if there is a need for amendments, the issue should be referred to the In-

dependent Election Commission (IEC).

Javed Faisal, deputy spokesman for the Chief Executive Office, said the president's legislative decree had been approved in a Cabinet meeting and might be released ahead of the end of the lower house's winter holidays.

He said implementation of electoral reforms had been a prime demand of the people of Afghanistan and a pledge made by the unity government ahead of its formation. A month earlier, the Independent Election Commission (IEC) announced it had set an Oct 15 date for the long-delayed parliamentary and district council elections.

IEC Chairman Yousuf Nuristani told a news conference that the panel made all technical preparations to conduct the election process on October 15, 2016.

But, Faisal said the schedule for parliamentary and district council elections would be announced by new commissioners and the current schedule had no justification and was unacceptable.

Mohammad Yusuf Rashid, executive director of Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan (FEFA), voiced concern about the delay, saying since the inception of the unity government the leaders were prolonging the process.

He told Pajhwok Afghan News there was no clear roadmap for electoral reforms and the unity government's leaders were divided on the vital issue.

Rashid said a political will was important at this moment and a further delay in this regard meant further waste of time and opportunity.

He warned without proper reforms the upcoming parliamentary elections would be marred by fraud, corruption and behind-the-curtain dealings which wouldn't be acceptable to a majority of the people. He said the government should launch an effective lobby to get the reform agenda passed through parliament. He hoped past mistakes would not be repeated this time and that the election reforms decree would win lawmakers' votes. (Pajhwok)

(7) Major Attacks...

were killed following a so-called insider attack in northern Kunduz province.

On Feb. 10, two police officers launched an insider attack, killing five policemen and injuring six officers in southern Kandahar province. One attacker was killed in shootout.

On Feb. 8, six civilians were killed and nine wounded in a suicide bombing in eastern Paktika province.

On Feb. 8, three military officers were killed and 18 injured when a suicide attacker struck an army bus in northern Balkh province.

On Feb. 1, 20 people, mostly police officers, died and 29 others were wounded when a suicide bomber detonated his explosive jacket at the gate of Civil Order Police station in western Kabul.

On Jan. 30, a police chief and an intelligence director were killed in an IED attack in the Dangam district of Kunar.

On Jan. 26, Zubair Khaksar, a local Journalist and cultural advisor to governor of Nangarhar, was killed in a targeted killing.

On Jan. 26, some nine police were killed in an insider attack in southern Uruzgan province.

On Jan. 20, up to seven media workers and a policeman were killed and 24 others wounded as a suicide car bombing struck a bus carrying employees of a local TV channel in western Kabul.

On Jan. 17, a suicide attack struck a guesthouse of a local leader Malik Usman Shinwari in Nangarhar, killing 12 civilians and injuring 13 others. Shinwari was among the injured.

On Jan. 13, seven security forces and two civilians were killed and 11 injured after three gunmen attacked a building near Pakistani consulate in Nangarhar.

On Jan. 4, one suicide bomber was killed after his car bomb went off along a main road near Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul. The target remained unknown. On Jan. 4, three civilians were killed and 38 others, including two foreign soldiers and five policemen, wounded after a suicide truck bomb hit Camp Baron, a heavily protected residential compound of foreign civilian contractors near Kabul airport.

On Jan. 3, gunmen seized a building near Indian Consulate office in Balkh, killing one security force soldier and injuring nine others.

The gunmen were killed after one-day clash with security forces.

On Jan. 1, three civilians were killed and 18 injured after a suicide car bomb targeted a local French restaurant in the Qala-e-Fatullah Khan area of Kabul. (Xinhua)

(8) France to ...

Khogyani told Pajhwok Afghan News that the French ambassador said he would invite foreign envoys to extend their countries' development programmes to Nangarhar.

Jean Michel Marlaud said his country had approved scholarships for Nangarhar students besides assisting agriculture and livestock sectors of the province.

Governor Kunduzi urged the French envoy to provide technical aid, training and improved quality seeds to Nangarhar farmers.

"France has established a well-equipped hospital in Kabul and we expect Paris to open a special ward in the civil hospital of Nangarhar in order local residents are offered good healthcare services," he said. In response, the French ambassador said his country would cooperate with Nangarhar in this regard. A resident of Jalalabad, Burhanullah, told Pajhwok Afghan News that foreign organizations had lately reduced their activities in the provincial capital, causing joblessness.

He said he was working with a foreign NGO which closed its office in Jalalabad three months ago, rendering all workers jobless.

He said if the foreign firms resumed their activities, it would create jobs and overcome joblessness to some extent. (Pajhwok)

(9) More ISIS ...

better living condition for the militants joining peace process.

This comes as the Afghan defense officials recently said the loyalists of the terror group in Afghanistan have faced major setbacks as a result of the mounting military operations before they manage to establish and expand foothold in the country.

The coalition forces officials earlier said around 1,000 to 3,000 Islamic State fighters in eastern Afghanistan are trying to establish a base of operations in the rugged mountains of Nangahar Province.

The officials further added that the loyalists of the terror group are operating in four or five remote districts of Nangarhar province.

Meanwhile, the US Forces in Afghanistan have also increased air campaign against the terror group in this province, carrying at least 20 airstrikes between late January and early February.

According to reports emerging earlier this month, the US forces in Afghanistan carried out at least 20 airstrikes targeting the loyalists of the terror group in a period of three months from late January to early February. (KP)

(10) Saudi Arabi...

condolences to the victims' families as well as the government of Afghanistan. He wished speedy recovery for those who were injured in the assaults, which were also condemned by NATO. (Pajhwok)

(11) Air Strikes, ...

of several villages in Chardara district over the past three days.

Meanwhile, an army spokesman in the province, Abdul Khalil, in talks with media confirmed the operations and said more than 60 militants have been killed and more than 30 others injured in Khan Abad, Dasht-e-Archi and Chardara districts over the past three days.

The official also confirmed that three security personnel have been killed and six others injured during the operations which have been continuing in the said areas. However, Zabihullah Majahid who claims to speak for the Taliban outfit, in contact with media confirmed the clash in the said districts, claiming that the militants have inflicted huge casualties to security personnel.

Taliban militants who briefly captured Kunduz city, the capital of Kunduz province 250 km north of Kabul in September, according to political observers, have been attempting once again to overrun the strategically important province along the border with Tajikistan. (Pajhwok)

(12) 130 Militants ...

Taliban surrender is reported amid the visit of Afghan first vice president Abdul Rashid Dostum to Faryab province and launching operations against militants in Faryab's

different districts.

Dostum also said Saturday that 120 Taliban fighters including three commanders had been arrested and several villages liberated in Khawaja Sabz Posh district. Surrendering and arresting more than 200 militants in two days, according to political observers, could be a major setback to the Taliban outfit in Faryab and adjoining areas. (Xinhua)

(13) Pakistan ...

transit trade route had been closed by Pakistan for reasons best known to the neighbouring country.

He said when the border crossing was closed he had informed the government in Kabul.

The governor's spokesman, Samim Khpalwak, also confirmed the route's reopening, but he was clueless about the reason behind its closure.

He said authorities in Pakistan had previously also many times closed and reopened the border crossing. Thousands of people and vehicles carrying commercial goods travel between the two countries on a daily basis through the Friendship Gate. It closure not only creates problems for commuters but also leads to heavy financial losses for traders.

Haji Syed Mohammad, who trades in food and fresh fruits, said he suffered heavy financial losses due to the closure of the border crossing. He said his trucks loaded with fresh fruits and vegetables remained stranded across the border in Pakistan for four days and the products had decayed.

He said traders should be informed in advance about the closure of the gate in order they could review their business affairs. (Pajhwok)

(14) Sangin Police...

been disarmed and currently held at the 215 Maiwand military corps headquarters.

"According to my information, there is no big problem and there has been some misunderstanding, the district police chief and the other policemen will be released soon."

Sarjang said foreign forces did not take part in arresting and disarming the police, something only done by the ANA personnel.

He said more policemen had been sent to the district to control the security situation there.

On the other hand, a reliable source in the 215 Maiwand Military Corps told Pajhwok Afghan News that the detained policemen had been cooperating with militants in area of military equipment. (Pajhwok)

(15) Cash-Strapped ...

the illicit plant in their fields. But Omari said in this regard: "No official has allowed farmers to grow poppy crop, these reports are baseless." "We are expecting the provincial administration to launch a general poppy eradication campaign," the district chief added. He said if farmers were assisted and informed about the hazards of narcotics, they would shun growing the banned plant. Omari said the residents of Garamsir were fully cooperating with the government in maintaining security and as a result, all schools and health facilities in the town were operational.

Without going into details, the official alleged some foreign intelligence agencies were trying to create insecurity in the district. He said they had discussed with the provincial government an increase in the police strength in Garamsir and this problem would be resolved soon. (Pajhwok)

(16) Violence Against ...

also said the continuation of the culture of impunity, the non-implementation of violence against women bill and the illogical interference of local lawbreakers has contributed to the increase.

"Murder cases occurred in insecure regions of Badakhshan such as Kishm and Wardoj-three cases of violence occurred in Wardoj where Taliban shot them," a civil society activist in Badakhshan Sayed Omar Baher said.

The recent killing of three women in Wardoj district and another in Kishm district of the province have raised concerns among the residents and local officials.

"There are numerous women who are facing violence in the country, their nose and ears are cut off and they are beaten, cars are driven over them, they are shot with bullets and prosecuted in open courts without legal permits and laws," Ahmad Naweid Fawa, head of Badakhshan human right's department said. (Tolonews)

(17) ANP Foil ...

the attack plot so far.

Baghlan is among the relatively volatile provinces in Northern Afghanistan where anti-government militants are actively operating in a number of its districts and often carry out insurgency activities. The Afghan national security forces are busy with the clearance operations in Dand-e-Ghori district where the Taliban militants were actively operating earlier. (FNA)

(18) Farah Can ...

produce dates for 100 years and it started bearing dates after four years.

The saplings planted in these farms had been imported from Qatar. Matin said besides Farah City, the provincial capital, date trees could be planted in Juwayn and Bakwa districts of the province.

Deputy Governor Mohammad Younis Rasouli said Farah's weather conditions were suitable for the plantation of date trees, adding that a few date trees at the governor's house, which were more than 30-year-old, produced kilos of date every year. (Pajhwok)

(19) Kabul Suicide...

the area when the powerful explosion occurred. I saw a column of thick smoke rising into the sky."

He said the explosion targeted a security forces' vehicle that was comprehensive destroyed and some people were killed and wounded. He, however, did not give specific casualty figures. (Pajhwok)

(20) Taliban's...

the area. While spurning Haq's warning, he said clearing operations would be launched soon against the militants.

On the other hand, the government and Taliban claimed inflicting casualties on each other during pitched battles in the district.

Massoud Ahmad Massoud, commander of Junbish-i-Millie (JIM) led by Gen. Abdur Rashid Dostum, said Khwaja Musa Bazaar was cleared of militants on Saturday.

He claimed a large number of fighters suffered casualties during the fighting, with some bodies still in the control of security forces. He added 17 weapons were also seized from the rebels.

A security official, wishing not to be named, said three Afghan Local Police (ALP) members were also killed and 14 others wounded in the clashes. (Pajhwok)

(21) Three Brothers...

in the attack. They were the sole bread winners in their family. They lived in Marawara district of the province.

"These brothers worked on the streets to bring food for their family. Three of them were killed and another brother is injured in the attack. He is in the hospital now. All of these three brothers were married and have two to four children each," said their uncle, Gul Akbar. The family has expressed their concern over the future of their children.

"The attack happened in public and no foreigners were killed in it. All the victims are those who were busy at their work and we want [government] prevent such attacks," Dalbar Bajawari, a relative of the three brothers said.

Shuhaibullah Gharwal, another relative said: "These three brothers were married and they have children and we are concerned for their future."

The ulema said that killing of innocent people is against Islam. (Tolonews)

(22) Pajhwok ...

guards at the gate did not allow him. "I told them I am a journalist, but they refused to let me in."

The reporter accused the security personnel of misbehaving with him and quoted one of them as saying: "You cannot enter (the compound) even if you have strong props."

He said they used insulting language and beaten him with Kalashnikov butts in the presence of high-ranking security officials. (Pajhwok)

(23) Gunmen ...

late on Saturday, taking away seven vehicles and as many drivers. He confirmed three drivers and five vehicles had been recovered from the clutches of the gunmen. He did not say if the attackers were Taliban or not. Obaidullah urged security forces to increase their security. The Taliban have so far said nothing in this regard. (Pajhwok)

(24) Husband ...

area to investigate the incident. Tribal elders would be asked to

help probe the murder, he said. Despite attempts, Pajhwok could not contact area residents. Dozens of women in Afghanistan lose their lives to family violence every year. (Pajhwok)

(25) Egypt Migrant...

gaining with Turkey to try and stem the flow of migrants from there, is concerned that the Egyptian authorities are not stopping smugglers. But it is reluctant to use aid and trade ties to pressure Cairo to do more when Egypt remains an ally in an increasingly troubled region. (Reuters)

(26) Britain's Ruling ...

party. Everyone has to go out of their way to make sure that the debate within the Conservative Party is a constructive one, an amicable one and one that doesn't involve attacks on each other," said Christopher Grayling, leader of the House of Commons (the lower house of parliament) who supports leaving the EU. (Reuters)

(27) Syrian ...

reporters witnessed Saturday in Damascus' commercial al-Qassa area that streets were once again packed by shoppers. (Xinhua)

(28) Iraqi Security...

left their homes in Abu Ghraib area. The fears in Baghdad pushed Brigadier General SaadMaan, spokesman of Baghdad Operations Command, to issue a brief statement calling on the people "not to listen to malicious rumors about the existence of displacement of Abu Ghraib families," asserting that what happened was only a failed attack by the extremist militants on Hitawyeen area not Abu Ghraib itself. (Xinhua)

(29) Syrian Refugees

try, hoping that it would last." Abou al-Ghosi, a widow living with her five children under a tent, considered the truce as "a light of hope that would end the disastrous situation in Syria and the first step to stop this inhuman displacement that is endangering hundreds of thousands of Syrians deployed from here to Europe. (Xinhua)

(30) Militiamen...

in the attack on Jan. 28 at the Maashiq palace in the crater district, for which Yemen's branch of Islamic State claimed responsibility.

"They wanted to discuss compensation for those killed and paying the medical bills for the wounded ... When the guards blocked them, a gun battle erupted involving light and medium weapons," the official said. (Reuters)

(31) France Prepared...

reactors to 50 years from 40 years, Royal said: "Yes, I am ready to give this the green light, depending obviously on the opinion of the Nuclear Safety Authority (ASN) ... the French people have for years invested a lot in the nuclear reactors." (Reuters)

(32) Turkey has...

traffic lights in the administrative heart of the capital, killing 29 people, most of them soldiers. NATO member Turkey faces multiple security threats. It is part of a U.S.-led coalition fighting Islamic State in neighboring Syria and Iraq, and is battling Kurdish militants in its southeast, where a 2-1/2 year ceasefire collapsed last July triggering the worst violence since the 1990s. (Reuters)

(33) Air Strike...

50 people. IS have taken advantage of the chaos since the 2011 ouster of longtime dictator MoamerKadhafi to spread its influence in the oil-rich country. (AFP)

(34) Germany wants ...

one million asylum seekers last year, Germany is trying to reduce arrivals, including with a law to declare Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia safe countries of origin. A similar designation adopted for several Balkans countries raised the bar for asylum applications and sharply reduced the influx from the region of what Germany considers "economic refugees". (AFP)

(35) PIA, Pakistan...

out any enforcement machinery and without any reporting requirement." He said these elements would be essential features of outcomes of the last NSS. (Agencies)

(36) Turkmenistan's ...

resources of the Caspian Sea and the agreement on cooperation in the sphere of prevention and liquidation of emergency situations in the Caspian Sea. (Agencies)