

(1) Regional Cooperation...

militants and play sincere role in Afghan reconciliation process. He said Afghanistan wanted cordial relations with all its neighbors and international community. Afghanistan's soil would never be used for proxy war.

He welcomed one year extension in the travel ban on five Taliban leaders, who were released from the Guantanamo Bay detention center and transferred to Qatar. The spokesman said it was an agreement reached between the government of Qatar and the United States.

The move comes after a number of top American lawmakers expressed concern over the efforts of these Taliban leaders to establish contacts with their leadership in Afghanistan.

According to agreement, former Taliban leaders would not be allowed to meet other people and would remain under strict observation. (Pajhwok)

(2) UK Pledges ...

began in 2010 with the establishment of the High Peace Council to bring the Taliban to the negotiation tables.

"The need to proceed with a peace process that has to be the long-term future for Afghanistan and I am confident that Pakistan has a proper role to play in facilitating that process and the United Kingdom will do everything it can to assist with that as we move forward."

The UK has been among the largest donor countries to Afghanistan, playing a major role in Afghanistan's reconstruction after the ousting of the Taliban in 2011. (Tolnews)

(3) Afghan War...

Civilian and military deaths in both countries total almost 149,000 people killed, with 162,000 seriously wounded, its author, Neta Crawford, found.

Most civilian deaths happened after 2007, with more than 17,700 civilian deaths recorded by UNAMA between 2009 and 2014. Most civilians were killed by militants, she said. (Pajhwok)

(4) Taliban, Haqqani...

Meanwhile, a number of Afghan political experts have voiced their opinions over these comments.

Mir Ahmad Joyenda, a political analyst said that Laghari's comments clearly show the control of Taliban and Haqqani networks are in the hands of Pakistan.

But former Pakistan ambassador to Afghanistan Rustam Shah Mohmand said he believes so far no policy of Afghanistan has been effective on Islamabad in relation to honest cooperation with Kabul.

"Those who were in Quetta, now they have left those areas and I think that Pakistan had enough impact on them."

MP from Kandahar Khalid Pashton said the first meeting with the Taliban insurgents was in 2010 in Kato city, Japan. Maldives was also host to a peace talks meeting in 2012 and yet this process still continues. It's expected that a meeting will be held in Dubai on June 6 and after that a meeting in Qatar with Taliban representatives.

"Until the government has a clear policy over the Taliban and the peace process, such a meeting will not have any benefits."

This comes after President Ghani recently issued a list of demands issued to the Pakistani government.

Ghani made a number of demands including: "An official declaration by the political leadership of Pakistan condemning the launching of the Taliban offensive operation; a directive by the military leadership that sanctuary will be denied to the Taliban and effective measures by the security forces and civil authorities that the directive is carried out."

The letter further demanded "a direct(ive) to extend the counter-terror campaign to the Haqqani network and verification that those responsible for the recent terror campaign in Afghanistan are arrested."

The letter comes as both the Afghan and Pakistani governments have tried to portray their relations as improving. (Tolnews)

(5) NAI Stresses...

Wafa's plan. He said the lawmaker called him and used abusive language and warned threatened him to death. (Pajhwok)

(6) IMF Approves ...

The new government is resolved to push ahead with economic reforms and improve governance to pro-

mote economic growth and development that benefits all Afghans. The international community and key donors have reaffirmed their partnership and commitment to Afghanistan at the London Conference held in December 2014. They welcomed the new government's commitment to macroeconomic stability and reforms that will promote sustainable and inclusive growth.

It stated that the SMP is designed to support the authorities' reform agenda with a framework to address economic vulnerabilities and facilitate engagement with the international community to sustain donor support. The SMP will foster continued close engagement with Afghanistan, address immediate fiscal and banking vulnerabilities, and help manage risks. The SMP will also preserve buffers (low debt and a comfortable international reserves position), maintain low inflation and competitiveness, and lay the basis for high and inclusive growth. The budget and external deficits are projected to be financed by donor grants.

It further added, Under the SMP, fiscal policy will focus on mobilizing domestic budget revenue to finance projected expenditure and rebuild the treasury's cash balance. Monetary policy will aim to preserve low inflation, and exchange rate policy will protect international reserves and competitiveness. Structural reforms will focus on: (i) budget revenue mobilization, expenditure control and repayment of arrears; (ii) financial sector reform to promulgate and implement the new banking law, amend the central bank law, strengthen banking supervision to deal with weak banks; and (iii) better economic governance by strengthening anti-corruption, anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism regimes.

The IMF has assisted Afghanistan in strengthening economic institutions and in providing advice to the government on economic policies and reforms for more than a decade. IMF staff will work closely with the authorities to monitor progress in the implementation of their economic program. In addition, the IMF will continue to provide technical assistance to support Afghanistan's capacity-building efforts and its reform program. The SMP is designed to build a track record and successful performance will catalyze donor flows and support a future request for an Extended Credit Facility (ECF) arrangement, the statement further added. (PR/IMF)

(7) Senate Denounces...

in the southeastern Asian nation. "The US is blind about the atrocities committed by non-Muslim people and their leaders. Muslims are being killed brutally for no reason and the US neither raise concerns nor played a role to control the crisis," Muslimyar noted.

He praised Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and a Sikh businessman for helping the Muslims in Burma. The senate chairman asked the government to break diplomatic ties with countrains that have friendly ties with Myanmar. (Pajhwok)

(8) Travel Ban...

Qataris," he said. The travel ban will remain in until an additional agreement can be reached about steps that the US believe are necessary to protect the national security of the United States, he said.

Before these individuals were transferred from the prison at Guantanamo Bay, the Secretary of Defense had to certify that there was a strategy for mitigating the risk that these individuals posed to the United States and its national security.

"That strategy has been implemented by our partners in Qatar, and we continue to be in touch with them about what system will be in place moving forward," Earnest said.

In a statement, Senator Jim Inhofe, senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said a last minute agreement between Qatar and the U.S. Department of State has temporarily extended the travel ban on the Taliban five terrorists. This was done because the State Department is concerned about the threat the Taliban five poses to the United States.

"However, as is typical with this administration, there is no long term plan on how to prevent their return to Afghanistan or other regions where our men and women in uniform are serving on the front lines of war," Inhofe alleged.

The House Committee on Homeland Security Chairman Michael

McCaul said extending the travel ban on the Taliban five terrorists is the right thing to do.

"But the fact that the travel ban even needs to be extended is another clear indicator that these terrorists are dangerous and should have never been released from Guantanamo," he said. (Pajhwok)

(9) 21 Projects ...

Saadat said, adding the NPS had been focused on 934 villages.

Mohammadullah, a local resident, said they had to confront several issues in the absence of electricity, but the projects addressed their concerns. (Pajhwok)

(10) Corruption Runs...

"In the past 24 hours, the council has prevented embezzlement of 15 million Afghanis. Now you may calculate how much is embezzled in a week or a month," she continued, adding that corruption in the mines had been ongoing for years. The council, she said, had presented its evidence to local officials and the Ministry of Mines, but no measures had been taken so far to stop the anomalies.

"People have also become disappointed. To whom they should complain? To a bigger thief against a smaller one?" she asked.

Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahimy tasked the house commission on national economy and central audit with investigating the matter.

Khairullah Anosh, the acting governor of Samangan, said the council had been set up to prevent smuggling of coal by powerful figures and private sector. "I ask the Mines Ministry to place such councils in its structure because they have proven very effective."

He added the day the council started its work, government's income from the province had increased.

According to the governor, more than 12,000 people work at Dara-e-Souf mines, which contribute more than 60 million Afghanis to government's coffers.

Last year alone, the governor said, the mines generated over two billion Afghanis income for the government.

Mines Ministry spokesman Muhiuddin Noori said: "we welcome such acts by local people in exposing corruption and corrupt faces." (Pajhwok)

(11) Foreign Militants ...

and Kohistan districts of Faryab. Hashimi said Faryab was as insecure the way Helmand province was made insecure. Apart from Taliban, dozens of Uzbek fighters and their family members had presence in the province.

These foreign fighters plan to disrupt security situation of Central Asia, he added. What are their sources of income, Hashimi questioned, saying: "A country that has ambiguous policies and has no proper definition of terrorists and political opponents, with no control over far-flung areas it is natural that regional countries would take benefit from such situation."

He added contingents of army were deployed in Helmand province but the number of soldiers deployed in Faryab was even less than those of Sangin district in Helmand.

Provincial council head said he met separately with almost all top officials regarding security situation in Faryab and received promises that still have not been materialized.

Hashimi added interior minister had promised to appoint new officials in security organs.

"The security situation in north and specially Faryab is deteriorating and if the government does not take tangible steps, districts will fall to Taliban like domino," he warned.

According to security officials, Qaisar, Almar and Pashtunkot districts were among the most affected parts, which were under attacks intermittently.

Dozens of families have been displaced due to clashes and more than 10 civilians have been killed since the beginning of the current year.

Abdul Qader, who has been displaced with his eight-member family from Qaisar district said: "Neither Taliban nor government care about civilians. When there is fighting both sides fire rockets and mortars, affecting civilians."

He had lost a child in a mortar attack and had no choice but to come to provincial capital. "The government and Taliban should not harm civilians. If the situation continues like that then what will happen to our lives?"

Security officials insist that insurgents do not have the capability to face security forces. They said majority of localities in Qaisar and Al-

mar districts have been cleared and soon people would return to their homes.

Last month a group of local men, women and children complained to governor that illegal armed groups were harassing them in their areas. The residents had complained four guards of commander Saleh of highway police had killed one members of their family and had wounded three others.

Saleh denied the allegations but security officials said they would investigate the matter.

Officials of the provincial Human Rights Commission said several complaints had been registered about murdering, sexual assaults, extortion and torching houses on fire in the past one year. Enforcing law would be impossible without stability.

The commission director Sayed Hafizullah Fitrat said most of the complaints were registered against rebels, local powerful individuals and illegal armed people.

He went on to say other complaints pertaining to collecting of Zakat and misusing of humanitarian aids. On the other hand, the United Nations (UN) linked increasing civilians' casualties to the ongoing conflict between Afghan security forces and Taliban.

According to a report released by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), as many as 665 civilians including 55 women had been killed and 1,155 others including 117 women injured in the first quarter of 2015.

Most of the casualties were said to be inflicted by militants while insurgents reject the figures as propaganda tool against them.

Provincial council head Sayed Abdul Baqi said that joblessness and poverty were another problem that forcing youths to travel to Iran for work.

"There is no job opportunity in Faryab. The Maimana-Faryab highway could help residents improve their life and economy if it is asphalted. But some neighboring countries disrupt its construction process," he said, adding that they faced problems after Wolesi Jirga took the right of evaluating local governance from them.

Baqi added that the council had paid enough attention to share people's problems about security situation, job opportunities and elimination of corruption with the government and civil society organizations but he regretted that the government did not pay any attention in this regard.

However, a civil society activist Waisuddin Samil said provincial council was ineffective for people and its existence has caused increase problems and insecurity.

Most of the people who voted for the council members expected the council would resolve their problems pertaining to corruption, security, reconstruction and other issues, but the council members have focused to protect their personal interests, he added.

"The council did nothing for people from the time it has started working. We did not see they resolved any tribal dispute, but they only criticize the government without any reasons," Samil said.

A government official Mohammad Suhrah Masumi also alleged the provincial council had no capacity to tackle people's problems efficiently.

He said the council members were busy traveling to attend seminars and workshops without bringing positive results in people's lives.

"We voted the council members to defend people's rights, the Wolesi Jirga took the right of evaluating local governance from them but they started protests and regained the right. They did nothing for the welfare of people," he said.

A shopkeeper in Maimana city, the capital of the province, Naik Mohammad said the council members had promised to change people's lives for positive but "we did not see their faces for months." (Pajhwok)

(12) Militants Receive...

forces have been ordered to quickly act against these groups as soon as information about their where about is received.

Sediqi called on public to assist security forces by informing them regarding any insurgent activities they see in their respective areas.

He said that a huge investment has been made upon Taliban this year but insisted that security forces have the ability to defeat them.

A remarkable increase has been seen in Taliban attacks after announcing their spring offensive last month.

At the time there are severe clashes between the militant group and security forces in parts of the country. (KP)

(13) American Woman...

serious problem was the lack of buildings for schools. He said 130 of 600 schools in Balkh had buildings. (Pajhwok)

(14) Gunmen Kill...

remarkable increase has been seen in Taliban attacks after announcing their spring offensive last month.

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(15) New Parliament ...

As a gift to the Afghan people, the edifice has influence of Mughal and modern architecture and will have Asia's largest dome as one of its key features. (Pajhwok)

(16) Afghans Turn ...

system was impossibly slow-moving.

"A central factor leading people to go to the Taleban and seek rulings from them is that cases are not dealt with in a timely manner," he said.

In addition, there were no judges or prosecutors working outside the main towns, and officials were unable to go to the more remote areas when disputes arose. Under the circumstances, ordinary people had no alternative but to turn to Taleban courts, Saqib said.

Ahmad Khan Ahmadi, the head of Zabul's justice department, admitted that corruption existed but said it was not unique to the legal system.

"Corruption exists not just in legal and judicial agencies, but also in all other government agencies," he said. "However, people are very quick to complain about the legal and judicial organisations, because underprivileged people use them so much."

Ahmad added that the authorities were cracking down on corruption and a number of individuals had already been prosecuted.

Tribal elder Faqirullah Darwesh said that the vast majority of ordinary people were dissatisfied with the state system.

"It is very difficult to get access to judges and lawyers here," he said. "You have to go through ten [body] searches before you get to the judge. Once you are with the judge, he won't even look at you unless you put something in his pocket. People get disheartened by this."

Gul Islam Syal, spokesman for the governor of Zabul, agreed that there was a problem with corruption across various agencies including the judiciary, but insisted action was being taken to combat it.

"The governor's office is working to reduce the level of corruption," he said. "The governor meets legal and judicial officials every two weeks and discusses how to prevent administrative corruption."

In Kunar in the east of Afghanistan, speakers similarly argued that corruption was endemic in the justice system.

"Corruption has increased so that it is extensive in this country's legal and judicial institutions," Hamish Gulab Shinwari, the local government chief in Kunar's Marawara district, said. "Without reform, the people will be forced into revolt."

Civil society activist Sayed Jahan Asir said people needed to know their constitutional rights.

"Public awareness [campaigns] can inform people what rights they have under the law, what powers officials have, and what their responsibilities to the public are. People should be told what constitutes an abuse of power on the part of officials, and what action they can take to combat it," Asir said.

In Nuristan, Afghanistan's easternmost province, audience at the debate heard that the legal system was under-resourced. (IWPR)

(17) 3 Rebels ...

But Taliban on their website claimed killing six policemen and seizing two police check posts. Three policemen, Taliban said were detained after the firefight was over.

Separately, in Larkhabi locality of Baghlan-e-Markazi district of Baghlan province, nine policemen were taken hostage by militants.

Col. Abdul Basher Rashid, acting police chief of the province, said that efforts had been geared up to ensure safe release of the kidnapped police personnel.

Mohammad Akbar, local police chief in the locality, said his men visited Baghlan-e-Markazi to get weapons but militants abducted nine policemen following a brief

clash.

Meanwhile, three other local policemen were taken hostage by Taliban in Tawkam village of Baghlan-e-Markazi district last. (Pajhwok)

(18) 22 Taliban ...

He said three dead bodies of Taliban remained in the battlefield and another six militants were said to be killed and some more injured in the clash.

He said the surviving militants took the six dead bodies of their colleagues to a house and the injured to a health clinic and they were allowing no one to enter the house and the clinic.

The Taliban have so far said nothing about the clash.

The Mol spokesman said 10 Taliban fighters were killed during the past 24 hours in Uruzgan province and a group of suicide bombers had been busted in southeastern Paktika province. The three bombers wanted to target national police posts, he said. (Pajhwok)

(19) Afghans Enjoy...

on good security in Mazar-e-Sharif and our people don't have any security concerns."

Mazar-e-Sharif, the capital of northern Balkh province, is one of the relatively calm provinces in war-torn Afghanistan. Also, women who work in offices are happy with the relatively secure environment, and women employed at radio stations claim they are treated equally.

"This radio station helps the women to understand their rights and realize that they have the right to work like men, to earn a living and have the right to decide about their lives," Mania Ahmadi of Rabea Balkhi Radio for Women told Reuters. "Since I started working with this radio station I have noted that the radio programs are very effective for women." (Tolnews)

(20) Nangarhar Clash...

Taliban left behind six bodies of their dead colleagues, he added.

The district's chief Hazrat Khan Khaksar confirmed the incident and said police had reached to support ANA soldiers. He said ANA soldiers suffered casualties but he had no exact details into casualties. Security forces, he said had recovered huge arms cache after the firefight was over. Zabihullah Mujahid, Taliban spokesman, confirmed attack on police in Surkh Rud area but gave no further details. (Pajhwok)

(21) US Drone...

the figure of militants killed at five and said that an ammunition-packed car was also destroyed in the strike. "At least five militants were killed in the drone strike. Three of them are said to be Uzbek and two Pakistani Taliban militants. Two other Pakistani militants are injured," he said. North Waziristan is one of seven semi-autonomous tribal districts that border Afghanistan. It has been a hub for Al-Qaeda and Taliban militants since the early 2000s. The area is generally off-limits to journalists, making it difficult to independently verify the number and identity of the dead. (Tolnews)

(22) Russia...

that the militants were expanding into Libya. "And even in northern Afghanistan which is very close to Central Asia which is next door to Russia." (AFP)

(23) IS Suicide...

city of Samarra where the casualties were taken. Some police officers said the suicide attacker used a tank to muscle his way into the police base, located between Samarra and Tharthar lake, northwest of Baghdad. The area is being used as part of a military operation aimed at cutting off the Islamic State group's supply lines in Anbar province of western Iraq. IS fighters have in the past year seized a formidable arsenal of military vehicles, weapons and ammunition from retreating Iraqi forces. (AFP)

(24) Yemen...

on Houthis fighters who have seized large parts of Yemen. The Houthis, members of a Shi'ite sect hailing from a Yemen's far north, seized the capital in September and fanned out southward, triggering the Arab military intervention. They describe their spread as a revolution and a victory against corruption, but Sunni Muslim Gulf Arab states worry that they are a proxy for the influence of their regional Shi'ite rival Iran. Saudi-led air strikes hit Houthi positions along Yemen's far northern border with the kingdom and struck military bases aligned with the group in the capital Sanaa on Tuesday. (Reuters)