

### (1) Abdullah Urges...

"We want to use our geography, resource capacity, and regional as well as international obligations to maximize usage of water for human, agricultural, power generation and other purposes under clearly mandated and legally binding regimes both at home as well as in the neighborhood."

Abdullah told the audience that over three decades of political instability and conflict have eroded Afghan infrastructure, capacities and resource management abilities. "But we have made significant strides in order to catch up with national development objectives as part of overall reconstruction strategies adopted over the past 13 years with the generous help of many friends in the international community, including all our neighbors."

On this note, he thanked all countries and international organizations present at the conference for their contributions and assistances to Afghanistan since 2001.

"Afghanistan is now in a position to engage more constructively at the regional and bilateral levels to address win-win solutions with our friends and neighbors, based on international legal guidelines and prior experiences, taking into account the legitimate interests of all stakeholders."

He said water is not and should not become part of zero-sum policies or relations. "Water can and should become a resource for friendship, growth and economic integration," he said.

"Not only do we all suffer when water is wasted or not used according to established rules and norms, but we also fail to achieve other social and economic development objectives in a coherent manner."

Abdullah, who has been on an official two-day visit to Tajikistan, also thanked his host, President Emomali Rahmon for his leadership on the critical and timely issue of Water for Life, and water sustainability.

He said that Tajikistan had initiated the process of Water for Life more than a decade ago at the United Nations, and today the country had brought all parties together to look back at the collective achievements, lessons learnt, best practices, remaining challenges, and the way forward. Among the dignitaries attending the conference is United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. His central Asia trip will cover five countries in as many days. They are Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

Ahead of his departure for the region he said his aim was to support and promote a common response to many cross-border challenges central Asia faces - from environmental degradation to drug trafficking and water scarcity.

Afghanistan's water has however been a recurring issue over the past few years with ongoing disputes over the resource with two of its neighbors - Iran and Pakistan.

More than 80 percent of the country's water resources originate in the Hindu Kush Mountains and virtually the entire supply of water used for irrigation, drinking, and maintenance of wetland ecosystems is carried by rivers.

Most of these are fed by rainfall and the seasonal melting of snow and permanent ice-fields in the Hindu Kush mountains. But, as stated by Tariq Ahmad in a paper for the Law Library, the supply is intermittent, leaving Afghans in a perpetual state of water insecurity. Furthermore, the lack of water storage capacity makes Afghanistan highly vulnerable to variations in water availability. In general, the country's water infrastructure remains highly underdeveloped; the majority of the country's 12 reservoirs were constructed between 1920 and 1940, and Afghanistan currently has one of the lowest water storage capacities in the world.

The primary river systems that have been cause for disputes in the past are those leading to Iran and Pakistan.

Though Afghanistan and Iran have had a water treaty covering the Helmand River since 1973, the treaty provisions are seen by some as being inadequate and inconsistently enforced. As a result, disputes over water continue to raise tensions between the two countries, wrote Ahmad in his analysis of the situation.

In addition many fear that Afghanistan's Khamal Khan Dam project on the Helmand River will severely affect the amount of water that flows into Iran, stated Ahmad.

Similar concerns have been raised about the Salma Dam, a major hydroelectric dam being constructed in Herat province, which some believe will significantly affect the flow of the Harirod River into Iran, stated Ahmad.

Meanwhile, there is no water sharing agreement or treaty between Afghani-

stan and Pakistan. According to news reports, millions of cubic liters enter Pakistan from the Kabul River every year. Planned hydroelectric projects on the Kabul River and its two main tributaries, the Kunar and Panjshir rivers, would ultimately reduce the amount of water to Pakistan, Ahmad states.

Abdullah Urges Regional Cooperation at High-Level Water Conference (Tolonews)

### (2) Never Talked...

About Pakistan, Ashraf Ghani said the neighbouring country had been engaged in the state of an undeclared war with Afghanistan for the past few years and thus peace should be made first with Pakistan.

"I have never talked to Pakistan about the Durand Line, I lack this authority which rests with the masses," said the president.

About the controversial agreement between the spy agencies of Afghanistan and Pakistan, the president said the matter was between the two agencies, but he had to take the affairs into his hands after opposition raised against the deal.

"The memorandum of understanding will be signed with national consensus and keeping in view the national interests," said Ghani, who called as crucial peace with Pakistan.

The president said during former president Hamid Karzai's government, Taliban leaders were either killed in Pakistan or exiled after they had agreed to enter peace talks with the Afghan government. He said peace needed courage and could not be won with emotions. (Pajhwok)

### (3) Efforts Underway ...

Constitution will be discussed in detail, so that the House of Representatives' work can be extended based on three logical points. First, to prevent government despotism, secondly the House has to approve the budget and thirdly, without parliament, three branches of government in the absence of parliament will face a power vacuum," Inami said.

The Chairman of the Senate, Fazel Hadi Muslimyar has said that the duties of MPs will not be legitimate after June 22, adding that the Upper House is expected to issue a resolution deeming any continuation on the part of MPs illegal.

"The House of Representative is about to become illegal, we want the NUG to clarify the future of elections as soon as possible," says Muslimyar. But the Second Deputy of the House has called the statements of the Senate Chairman irresponsible, and adds that the House will continue its work with the current MPs after June 22.

"The Senate does not have a legal stand to call the House of Representatives illegal. I want Mr. Muslimyar to speak based on National Interests and to avoid making irresponsible statements," says Nazeer Ahmad Ahmadzai, second deputy in the House of Representatives. (Tolonews)

### (4) Regional Threats ...

of Daesh or Islamic State and other threats in the region with Tajik leadership and other neighboring countries. He said the Afghan security forces had been fighting non-state actors for security of Afghanistan and the region. Stability in Afghanistan was not the sole purpose of the war against terrorism, he added.

During his visit to Tajikistan, Abdullah held talks with Tajik president Emomali Rahmon and Prime Minister Kokhir Rasulzoda on bilateral relations. Rahmon pledged his country's support for Afghanistan during his meeting with Abdullah.

The Afghan government is concerned about the emergence of new threats at a time when informal talks with the Taliban have been intensified.

The reconciliation process was expected to be launched in March with Pakistan's mediation, but there has been no breakthrough.

The MoFA spokesman said recent meetings between Taliban and Afghan representatives were informal and the government had no record of them. Mustaghni, however, said such contacts might be helpful in bringing peace to Afghanistan.

The official said the unity government wanted peace and supported Afghan-led peace talks. He termed Pakistan's role as vital in the peace process and said the government still awaited practical action from the neighboring country.

President Ghani was expected to fly to Qatar in early June to discuss the peace process with the leadership of the gulf country, but the trip was postponed.

The MoFA spokesman said a new date for the president trip to Qatar would be announced before Ramadan. He said the president would discuss visas for Afghan labourers with the Amir of Qatar during his visit.

He said a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Afghan labourers was already existed between the two countries, but the president would discuss a new mechanism for the export of manpower to Qatar. (Pajhwok)

### (5) Taliban Overrun ...

local police left the area after residents insisted they were neither with the government nor with the rebels, he added.

The police chief said efforts were ongoing to regain control of the areas, but said without air support it would be a challenge to do so. (Pajhwok)

### (6) Govt. Launches...

of Education Asadullah Hanifi Balkhi acknowledged teachers' issues but stressed that the ministry also had problems left over from the previous government.

"When I came as the minister about a month ago, I found mountains of problems with insufficient resources," Balkhi told the opening ceremony. "In each government, the teachers have had dire situations."

So far, about 80,000 teachers have been given plots of land throughout the country, he said, emphasizing that the remaining teachers in Kabul, Ghazni, Uruzgan and other provinces would also get their plots in the near future. But one teacher, who has received his plot of land, says he is not happy with the scheme.

"The plot I got is at the top of a mountain. How can I build on it with only 8,000 Afghans which I am being paid a month. Except animals, no human being can live there," Akbar claimed. Minister of Urban Development Sayed Sadat Naderi, meanwhile, noted that efforts are underway to extend the program to other provinces as well.

"Teachers from about 80 out of 120 towns have received plots of land," Naderi said.

The protesting teachers, however, continued on Tuesday to warn government that as long as their demands are not met, they will continue their strike.

"We are grappling with a number of problems. If our problems are not addressed, we may not be able to teach the students in a good manner," a teacher from Istalif, Bacha Khan, said. In addition, the teachers also demand a salary increase. Teachers currently earn between 7,000 and 13,000 Afghans.

Ghani's deputy spokesman Sayed Zafar Hashimi said on Tuesday: "The president has earmarked 800 million Afghans for teacher salary increases." Based on statistics, Afghanistan currently has more than 200,000 teachers across the country. (Tolonews)

### (7) Teachers' Strike...

receive their salaries for months on end because of the government's cash-flow problems. The Education Ministry has said it is holding daily meetings with teacher representatives to try to resolve the latest dispute and reopen the schools.

The teachers have expressed sorrow over cancelling classes, but say they feel they have no other choice. Ahmadullah Alkozai, a striking teacher from Kabul's Ghazi high school, said he has been teaching for 27 years and still doesn't own a home. He is among 180 teachers at the now-closed school, which has 4,500 students.

"I am so upset for my students that the school is closed, but I had no other choice," he said, adding that the strike will continue until the teachers' demands are met.

"The strike will continue until we get our rights from the government," said Fazel, the head of the teachers' council. (AP)

### (8) Senate Insists...

the election date is known or another legal solution is sought, the lower house will not have a legal basis and we won't recognise it."

He warned if no steps were taken to set a date for the vote, the upper house would be left with no choice but to disapprove bills referred to them from the lower house.

Jumauddin Gayanwal, another senator, said: "Not holding parliamentary elections will push the country into crisis."

He alleged the lower house had approved the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) between Afghanistan and the US after US officials promised them one year extension in their work. Senator Gul Ahmad Azami said if the lower house continued unconstitutionally, it would have a negative impact the Senate as well. "The Wolesi Jirga won't be able to approve or change any law once its term is over." Senate Chairman Fazel Hadi Muslimyar said if dates for the next parliamentary elections were set, the work of the sitting house members would be legal.

"If the elections are going to take place in the next two or three months, the

Wolesi Jirga can continue with its work," he added.

Muslimyar urged the unity government leaders to set aside their differences and rescue the parliament from becoming an illegitimate entity. (Pajhwok)

### (9) 'Impunity for...

local police left the area after residents insisted they were neither with the government nor with the rebels, he added. Recently a lawmaker from northern Baghlan province, Haji Asheghalah Wafa, threatened the head of local Tanvir TV, Shir Mohammad Jahesh, on May 26, saying: "Your life will end this Saturday, May 30, when I arrive," the Reporters Without Borders said.

Jahesh told the organisation he was terrified by the threat and sought refuge in Kabul. "All this was because of a report about a police commander who was replaced and transferred to another region," he said.

President Ashraf Ghani has signed a letter of commitment to support free media and journalists and the letter has been endorsed by Abdullah Abdullah, his chief executive in the national unity government.

"It (the letter) aims to render justice and end impunity and to reopen cases of journalists murdered during the past ten years."

Journalists have paid a high price in Afghanistan since 2001. At least 33 journalists have been killed in line of duty.

They include 15 foreign journalists — four German, two French, two Italian, two Swedish, one Australian, one Canadian, one Norwegian, one American, and one British. Most of these murders are still unpunished, the statement added. (Pajhwok)

### (10) Green Movement ...

secret is national treason. Also the NUG leaders promised to create a model government but not only did they not fulfill promises they also do not believe in being accountable to the nation," said Zaman Refat head of the Green Movement in Ghor province. The protesters warned the government that unless they address issues, including that of promises made, the Green Movement would mobilize protests countrywide. (Tolonews)

### (11) Daesh Seeking ...

mines of Afghanistan can be a good economic source for this group," Saba said to MPs on Monday. "The activities of this group create insecurities; for example, we have 339 contracts, of which we cannot monitor over 100 of them due to security challenges." The Chairman of the House called Saba's statements shocking and demanded the national unity government take immediate action to address the issues facing the mining sector as well as the ministry more specifically. Close to 40 MPs asked questions during the session.

In addition to the challenges posed by Daesh, Minister Saba outlined a number of other more internal problems facing his ministry. He said there is an overall lack of capacity, vague policies and absence of strategies when it comes to the mining sector.

"With the capacity that I saw at the Ministry of Mines, I had goose bumps; if we move forward with these capacities, we will go toward a disaster rather than welfare," he said.

Saba also strongly criticized the level of interest shown by the Chinese MCC Company, which he said had reneged on its commitments. "The ministry is not able to cancel the Aynak copper mine contract," Saba said. "If I cancel this agreement, they will introduce me to the international courts, as there are some very tight laws and articles in this agreement." (Tolonews)

### (12) New Governors ...

is the chairman of civil society coordination center and director of Hayat group.

Former governor Khogyani congratulated the new governor and wished him successes in his future.

Deputy Economy Minister Hukam Khan Habibi has been appointed as the governor of Khost, a government source said, calling Habibi a qualified person with enough experience in governance.

President Ghani had previously appointed a female as the governor for Maidan Wardak province. (Pajhwok)

### (13) No Female...

trained as nurses.

Apart from the provincial capital, not a single district of Kunar has a gynaecologists, an issue that has been shared with the Ministry of Public Health in Kabul. Additionally, the Asadabad Civil Hospital's building is also in shabby condition, according to the official.

With the completion of the training course, he is optimistic, the shortage of gynaecologists and midwives at the district level will be overcome.

A resident of Manogai district who is currently being trained as a midwife, Khadija has passed her 12th grade

exam. Desirous of providing public health services since her childhood, she went to school in her area in the hope of being able to serve mothers and new-borns. "With family support, I was selected on merit for the training course."

Her colleague from Sarkano district Arzo stresses women's role as health workers in any society, saying she was getting training at the institute in the spirit to serve local women. "Even now we go to districts to help females in need of medical care."

Lalalai Amin, a trainer at the centre, says they teach the girls under training theoretical and practical skills from morning to evening in a highly professional fashion. Some of the trainees, who are taught computer and English lessons, are also sent to clinics to learn basic skills. (Pajhwok)

### (14) Differences Deepen ...

of naming Tahir Zahir as the Bamyan governor.

Her colleague Mohammad Akbari said Zahir was an emotional person and they did not want him to be the governor.

Also last week, Akbari said Zahir's duty record had been negative in the past and people would not support him.

However, Meshrano Jirga member from Bamyan, Qais Wakili, said the protesting lawmakers feared Zahir would not allow fraud in the parliamentary elections.

"Most of these lawmakers have entered the Wolesi Jirga through fraud in elections," he said.

Meanwhile, hundreds of residents gathered in Bamyan City in support of the new governor. One of them, Mohammad Amin Ayan, said the new governor was an educated man and had no problem. He added that the president should implement his decision as soon as possible because Bamyan was currently without a leader.

Around 800 residents of Bamyan City and those coming from districts attended the gathering, Ayan said.

Mohammad Tahir Zahir is a resident of Dara-i-Souf Bala district of Samangan province. He received his bachelor's degree in sociology from Kateb private university. (Pajhwok)

### (15) No Doctors, ...

rates had been high in the past, but the deaths had been markedly reduced. He said a plan had been devised to ensure that TBAs performed their duty, adding TBAs, who did not go to the job, had been denied course completion certificates.

The public health director acknowledged Paktia faced the shortage of health workers, but said he would not give up efforts to solve the issue.

He said specialist doctors demanded high salaries to work in remote areas and it was one of the main reasons behind the lack of doctors. "The shortage of medicines is throughout the country not only in Paktia," he replied when asked about the deficiency of medicines.

Dr. Allahmir, a member of the provincial council's health committee, said they had held meetings with the officials concerned to address the issues of lack of professional doctors and medicines in the province on a priority basis.

Abdul Wali Sahi, the deputy governor, said though many problems remained, yet health related issues had decreased in the province compared to the past. He said construction work on a new 100-bed hospital would be completed soon in Gardez. (Pajhwok)

### (16) Illegal Gunmen...

The food items were being carried four 260 families in Aqdara, Taht Zghan and Sar Hawz areas of the Pashtun Kot district.

Each package contained 150 kilograms of flour, 70 kilograms of pea, 10 kilograms of ghee, salt, kitchen utensils and clothing.

The acting governor of Faryab, Abdul Sattar Barez, confirmed the report and said that a commission would be constituted to identify the looters, take them to justice and wrest back the items.

Provincial Natural Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) director Abdul Wahab said local illegal commanders had previously taken away food items enough for 50 families from trucks on the pretext to distribute them to affected families in their areas. (Pajhwok)

### (17) Rebels Harass...

He said his fighters had suffered casualties during clashes against the rebels in protecting the district center.

But Tajdar said he was currently attending a patient in Firozkoh, the capital of Ghor, and Taliban militants in his absence had started disrupting the security situation of the town.

He said his 200-member militia had been resisting the rebels without government's support.

"Negligence on the part of the government and its poor performance has enabled the Taliban to increase their influence in the area," he said. A provincial council member, Mohammad Hashim Faizi, said the Taliban had recently seized a large number of areas in Pasaband and Dolina districts and they tortured and harassed local residents.

He said the Taliban also disarmed some pro-government residents and looted their belongings.

Faizi, also a resident of Dolina, said the Taliban laid siege to the house of a pro-government local commander, Mahmoud, and warned him to surrender or face their wrath.

He said residents wanted to put up resistance to the insurgents, but they lacked government support.

The public representative said both local illegal armed commanders and the Taliban forced residents to provide them meals and pay for their operation costs. (Pajhwok)

### (18) Pouring Onto...

with family members. But when the light goes off, we come out and sit under solar pylons," he said, adding their studies go on till 2-3am. There are no security concerns; only sounds of vehicles and motorcycles break the area's silence intermittently. "It would have been much better if we had electricity at home."

Abdul Rahman, another student, usually studies on these streets till midnight because there is no electricity in his hostel. "I have a lot of wishes for my country. I just want to have a good education and serve my people."

Abdullah, an official at the police headquarter, asked them to remain calm and not to worry, as security forces were fully alert. "In a setting free of worries, they study late at the night and well into early morning at times," the official said, adding Ghor student secured high marks in university tests.

Abdul Qasim, a 12th grader from the Sultan Allauddin Ghor high school, got the highest marks in the university entry test in 2012. With 333 marks to his credit, Qasim chose to study at the Economic Faculty of Herat University. (Pajhwok)

### (19) 7 Killed...

with Afghan Taliban who later joined the Islamic State (IS) group. Asif Shinwari, education department spokesperson, confirmed the death of four high school students in the drone strike. Two of the killed were graduated this year, Shinwari added. Armed rebels have not commented so far about the incident. (Pajhwok)

### (20) IS Seizes...

has exploited the general turmoil and security vacuum in Libya, where two governments are vying for power four years after the ousting of Muammar Gaddafi, to build up a presence in several cities.

The militants earlier this year captured most of Sirte, Gaddafi's home town, seizing the airport and driving a force loyal to the Tripoli government out to the city suburbs. (Reuters)

### (21) Israel Concerned

of the U.S. armed forces, Yaalon spoke at a security conference of a need to maintain Israel's "qualitative edge" as it seeks increased defense grants from Washington.

"The Gulf states are arming themselves, mainly with Western, American weaponry, in the understanding they will need defensive capabilities to contend with the new Iran situation," Yaalon said, referring to international talks on curbing Tehran's nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief. (Reuters)

### (22) China ...

tive equipment, while the developed countries have advanced technologies, he said. The Chinese government expects companies with competitive advantage to cooperate with western companies to develop the third-party market, so as to realize mutual benefit and win-win, he said. (Xinhua)

### (23) Tajik President...

a total of 346 million U. S. dollars in Tajikistan. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and International Finance Corporation are also active in Tajikistan and working closely with the UN Country Team (UNCT). The aim of the UN in Tajikistan is to assist the government in implementing the Country Development reforms and provide support in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. (Xinhua)