

**(1) Sunni-Shiite ...**

Islamic rules. Addressing the attackers of Masjid Al-Zahra, Ghani said: "If you think you can create religious problems among Afghans by targeting sacred places, you should be assured that every Sunni defends the mosque of Shia and every Shia defends the mosque of Sunni."

"If anyone wants to debate with our ulema, they are welcomed and I can put in service this palace for them, I once again repeat that the brotherhood among Sunni and Shia Ulema is unique that is our pride," he said.

He called the ongoing year a horrific and depressing period for the Afghan people, particularly Kabul residents, saying all Afghans were in grief.

Ghani asked religious scholars to pray to the God to protect Afghans against more bloodshed.

He also asked the scholars to struggle to end the war, calm down seditions and eradicate illiteracy and violations as such things had no place in Islam.

"The fate of every Afghan has tied with Islam in the way that cannot be cut off, we believe that we were Muslims, are Muslims and would remain Muslims," he added.

He called the holy Quran guidance for humans and said: "If we face a hard day, we find relief in Quran, if we face with a happy day, we celebrate it with the Quranic verses. Quran is the guide in humans' every situation, because we cannot reach stability without this holy book."

A number of Ulema at the meeting asked the president to create Quranic education faculties in universities and create a commission for implementation of this demand. (Pajhwok)

**(2) ARG Hosts**

commercial market for the women in a bid to create jobs for over 100,000 people.

He said the plan for the development and economic growth of the capital focuses on responding to the needs of the Kabul city, create jobs, and pave the way for future development for the capital residents. President Ghani said further discussions will be made during the next meetings for the creation of momentum to implement the development and economic growth plan in the city as he emphasized that the plan will create jobs for the people.

The meeting was also attended by CEO Abdullah, cabinet members, presidential advisers, members of the independent directorate of the local governance, and representatives of donors supporting the Kabul program. (KP)

**(3) Government**

was organized on Monday morning in the presidential palace and was chaired by President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani.

The contracts approved during the meeting include road construction projects in Kabul city, starting from Parwan-3 area to Lab-e-Jar, and from 500-family area to Lycee Maryam and Khesht-e-Ukhtef.

The other contracts approved during the meeting include construction of canals in Laqi area, Shahrwan Takhar, and Seya Aab areas belonging to the ministry of energy and water, hiring of consulting firm for the construction of road from Trans to Hindukosh, maintenance project for Hamid Karzai international airport, and maintenance and repair of radars of Mazar-e-Sharif airport.

The procurement of spares for the Ministry of Interior vehicles, procurement of IT equipment for independent directorate of the capital zone development, and public awareness project belonging to the ministry of counter-narcotics were the other projects approved during the meeting, the ARG palace added.

The meeting also focused on the categorization of the private firms operating in the country to provide more opportunities for the small and medium enterprises, specifically to those firms owned and operated by the women. (KP)

**(4) Australia Gives..**

sanitation and hygiene activities for displaced and returnee children and women, the statement said. It added, the one year contribution was made through Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

As children in Afghanistan continued to face malnutrition and the country dealt with an increasing number of people on the move as displaced persons or returnees,

Australia's funding would provide ready-to-use therapeutic foods to treat severe acute malnutrition, and supply water, sanitation and hygiene services to prevent the spread of disease among internally displaced people, returnees and their host communities.

With over 9 million people in Afghanistan having limited or no access to essential health and basic education services, Australia's contribution would fund mobile health teams to provide basic health services to communities on the move, which are currently unserved or underserved by existing health facilities.

It would also enable UNICEF to extend the provision of safe learning spaces to educate and protect displaced children who are currently out of school or studying in overcrowded classrooms.

Announcing Australia's humanitarian assistance, Australia's Ambassador to Afghanistan, Mr Richard Feakes said, "Australia's humanitarian assistance focuses on protecting the most vulnerable, with a particular emphasis on women and children. Australia is proud to partner with UNICEF to support critical protection, health and education support for displaced and returnee children and their families."

Acknowledging Australia's support, UNICEF Representative to Afghanistan Adele Khodr said, "We welcome this generous contribution to UNICEF's work to provide vulnerable children and women in Afghanistan who have endured difficult journeys and transitions, with access to essential services to keep them healthy and safeguard them from harm and abuse."

UNICEF in Afghanistan works with Government and other partners within the context of the inter-agency cluster framework to provide emergency health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene, protection and education services to people affected by conflict or natural disasters. (Pajhwok)

**(5) Modi Thanks**

cargo of around 62 tons left Kabul airport on Monday evening and was welcomed by the Indian officials, including the Indian external affairs minister Sushma Swaraj who visited the New Delhi airport to receive the first plane as part of the air corridor program between Kabul and New Delhi.

According to the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries officials, the first flight transported cargo worth \$11 million, mainly consisting of medicinal herbs.

The Indian Embassy in Kabul says that second flight as part of the air corridor initiative will take place in the near future and will transport around 4 tons of fresh fruits to New Delhi. (KP)

**(6) Militants**

He said the issue has been shared with the security institutions to take steps in a bid to foil the attack plan. This comes as capital Kabul witnessed growing instability, mainly due to insurgency led by the militants and several attacks were carried out late last month and earlier this month, leaving hundreds of people dead or wounded. (KP)

**(7) Roadside ...**

Dostyar and four other policemen. Another two policemen were wounded.

But a security source in the province said six policemen had been killed in the blast.

There has been so far no word from insurgents in this regard. (Pajhwok)

**(8) COST, ...**

This is in an effort to ensure the projects are being implemented transparently. Economic minister, Abdul Sattar Murad, said publicizing such information is a step toward bringing reforms and that COST - which falls under the ministry of economy - will monitor all projects seriously. Murad said they are going to sign more agreements with other government institutions in future so as to share their project information with the people.

"Sharing information with the people is the start of a transparency process. The thing that we need in Afghanistan is transparency in government activities and in spending money," said Murad.

"The information will be released according to the procedure of the Construction Sector Transparency Initiative-Afghanistan and after the release of the information, in the second phase, the information will be categorized and then we will as-

sess the information as to whether it is correct or not," Sebgatulah Karimi, COST's national coordinator said.

Meanwhile, MoRRD and MoPW officials said they will share all project information with the people. The Minister of Rural Rehabilitation and Development Nasir Ahmad Durani said they had established an information bank at the ministry that not only contains information about the implemented projects, but also information about future projects.

"I am ready to share information about current or future projects. Also, I am ready to share the information about our activities in the past 13 years. We have digitalized the information and you can access to it," said Durani. (Tolonews)

**(9) No Plan to ...**

supported the government's reform agenda.

The president welcomed representatives of political parties and pointed to recent incidents in Kabul, saying: "The horrific terrorist attacks in the capital have caused all of us sorrows and pains."

He once again expressed his condolences to the affected families. The aim of the recent attacks was to disrupt the Kabul Process Conference, a major event after the Bonn Conferences, he alleged.

The war that was initially waged against the security forces had now been directed against the whole nation and its unity, Ghani remarked. The president called regional and international consensus on Afghanistan unprecedented, saying the world for the first time reached agreement on stability and prosperity in the country.

He stressed the consensus should be used effectively in the interests of Afghanistan. The fight should be transformed into a political struggle. Peace is dependent on ending the war, he said.

The president pointed to Kabul's peace talks with Pakistan and said, "We want a permanent and honorable peace so it would not open a door for future conflicts."

He added there should be a distinction between stability, peace and security because security might worsen if the peace process headed in a wrong direction.

Problems among countries should be resolved through governments, otherwise relations could not be established as non-political relations were unacceptable, he said.

Ghani stressed the need for cleaning up government organs, saying 70 percent of the reform process had been completed at the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

He also called for reforms in the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and all other security organs. Security forces should be totally neutral, apolitical and professional and that would have a deep impact on the overall situation, he believed.

He said the election process should be implemented with transparency and rules must be enforced over relationships and favoritism.

The president asked political parties to supervise reforms and recruitment to government departments.

Ghani said he had inherited governance-related and was trying to manage the country's economy and eradicate poverty. (Pajhwok)

**(10) Zia-Trained ...**

"It's going to be an extremist military that is going to be over a million strong, with very sophisticated intelligence, plus nuclear arms. And it will take, from our experience, four decades to clear Pakistan from that generation of extremists." The Afghan envoy said they were seriously concerned in Afghanistan. "We're not just worried about today's militancy ... we're worried about next four decades of our lives ... not just us. The world should worry. Every weapon, anything you sell to Pakistan today, will be used against it," Mohib said.

"This is a message to the Chinese. This is a message to the America. This is a message to Europeans. Because there is an extremist military on the rise," the Afghan Ambassador said, alleging that no one knows who in Pakistan to talk.

Pak Ambassador Chaudhry took exception to such a remark. "It is a matter of principle for me and I take exception to a direct comment (about internal matter of Pakistan) that the Ambassador made, because it is undiplomatic to say the least," a visibly upset Chaudhry said.

He alleged that Afghanistan has now resorted to blame game against Pakistan. "This is unhelpful", he cautioned. "It's not something new. We have heard for the last one and

half years to two years.. a mantra along these lines."

He said much more hostile rhetoric had been voiced. "But it has been our view that we would not respond to that hostility, because we do recognize the suffering in Afghanistan, and also in our own country. And we do not think that blame game would get any country far," he said.

"I think it is too simplistic to say that all the ills of today's Afghanistan are because of Pakistan. There are a host of issues that pervade Afghanistan, including government issues, corruption issues, weakening of the Afghanistan national security forces issues, graft, production and debt paid issues, and economic issues. Therefore, I think just to simply put the blame on Pakistan would, at best, deflect attention from the real causes of instability in Afghanistan," he said. Chaudhry said Afghanistan needs to focus inward, and see in itself what is it that it needs to do. "It needs to own up the problems that it has, and not constantly shift the blame to Pakistan."

He said if the Pakistan-Afghanistan border was sealed completely, would it fix Afghanistan or would it bring stability to Afghanistan.

Mohib disagreed. "I agree that Pakistan took action against those that were a threat to Pakistan ... those terrorists. We would like to see that kind of action taken against those that are a threat to the global ... not just Afghanistan but globally," he asked his Pakistani counterpart.

"Last year, the Taliban had close to 29,000 casualties. Where were they treated? These are simple questions, that anybody can ask, and any answer. There are no hospitals in the ungoverned spaces to treat those injured. There are also no fundraising efforts in those ungoverned spaces... This is not a cheap war. It requires a huge amount of resources," he asserted.

"The Taliban today are equipped with very sophisticated weaponry. It comes from a place. It comes from support. They're also training. Our security forces are trained by US and NATO forces. Where is the training that comes to the Taliban, and the logistical support that comes to it?" he said.

"If it was a blame game, as the Ambassador mentioned, then it should only have been Afghanistan. Among Pakistan's neighbors, Iran has also come out and embraced these concerns over terrorism from Pakistan's front. It only leaves China, and I think, if this trend continues, the strength of tolerating terrorism, or sponsor for terrorism, soon the Chinese will have its own issues," Mohib said. (Pajhwok)

**(11) EU-BOMNAF**

conduct border crossing formalities and checks, the Afghan Border Police (ABP) were using a primitive self-built building, which lacked necessary conditions for the job. Therefore, at the beneficiaries' request, BOMNAF included upgrade of BCP Aqina into its construction priority list and initiated construction works in late 2016.

The same year, the Presidents of Turkmenistan and Afghanistan officially opened the Turkmen-Afghan Railway, which passes through BCP Aqina, which is on an important import-export route for Turkmenistan and Afghanistan national businesses as well as local small scale cross-border trading; it is also known as a major supply route for fuel and agricultural products across the region.

Hundreds of trucks and railway wagons cross this BCP each week, carrying onions, potatoes, sesame seeds, nuts and pomegranates from Afghanistan to Turkmenistan and bringing in different types of fuel from Turkmenistan to Afghanistan. (AKIPRESS)

**(12) No Decision...**

where he believes additional forces could make the adviser effort in Afghanistan more effective," Dunford explained.

He said there was also an outstanding requirement from NATO. "We're short about 3,000 from the stated NATO requirement for forces in Afghanistan. That's where the numbers come from, but again, what I'd emphasize is that, any decision on numbers is going to be done in that broader context," Dunford said. (Pajhwok)

**(13) Taliban Kill ...**

insurgents have stepped up their attacks against Afghan security forces, and an affiliate of the Islamic State group has been trying to expand its footprint in the country by launching large-scale attacks across Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, one person was killed and six were wounded when Afghan security forces on Monday night moved in to dismantle the last remaining tent set up by protesters rallying in the capital, Kabul.

Abdullah Abdullah, the country's Chief Executive, first announced the incident during a live TV broadcast. He said the killings, which are under investigation, had "shocked us all."

The Kabul protest began earlier this month, after a powerful truck bomb killed more than 150 people and wounded more than 450 in the heart of the city. Since then, scores of protesters have spent almost three weeks under huge tents on a road near the presidential palace and the blast site, as well as in other parts of the city. By Monday night, only the one, main tent had remained.

The protesters, however, reported two deaths and said 27 demonstrators were wounded in the police crackdown. A statement from the group said 11 others were arrested. The different casualty tolls could not immediately be reconciled.

"We are in discussion with our people and soon will inform you on our decision," the protesters' written statement said.

The demonstration had prompted police to block all roads leading to the presidential palace and diplomatic areas and restrict the movement of vehicles and people during the past weeks.

In a separate report from eastern Nangarhar province, a judge was killed when his vehicle was blown up by a sticky bomb on Tuesday morning, according to Attuhullah Khogyani, spokesman for the provincial governor.

Khogyani said that Sher Rahman was a judge in an anti-corruption court. Three people were wounded, including two of the judge's brothers, in the explosion, which took place in the provincial capital, Jalalabad.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack in Nangarhar, but both the Taliban and Islamic States militants are active in the region. (AP)

**(14) Taliban Take...**

and took control of it at around 3pm on Tuesday.

The official said the Taliban were currently in control of the district center's building, police headquarters, and many other areas west of the district centre.

Baz Mohammad said only three governmental security posts were resisting the Taliban west of the district and Daesh militants were now in control of an area named Awlad south of the district centre.

The district chief said if security reinforcements didn't arrive immediately, the remaining three check posts would also fall into the hands of Taliban.

However, Jawzjan police chief Brig. Gen. Rahmatullah Turkistani said a heavy clash was ongoing between insurgents and governmental forces in the district centre as of 4pm Tuesday and Daesh fighters had captured only two security posts.

He said Afghan air forces were targeting insurgent hideouts. However, an area resident, Zabiullah, alleged the district was left to the Taliban under a 'deal'. He said Taliban and Daesh could clash again and civilians might suffer casualties and financial losses. (Pajhwok)

**(15) 3 Ex-Officials ...**

Bakhtyar, Director of Housing Enterprise and Mohammad Yaqub Ibrahim, the Deputy Director for Housing Enterprise, were jailed for seven years each.

The special tribunal also awarded a fine of 443 million for each of the former officials on charges of the embezzlement and misuse of the authority.

The three officials except Mohammad Yaqub Ibrahim are serving in Jail. Ibrahim is on the run and the verdict during the trial was announced in his absence as efforts are underway for his arrest. (KP)

**(16) Death of ...**

protesters are claiming that two of their members were killed and eight others were wounded during the clash with the security forces.

The sit-in camps in busy parts of the city were erected earlier this month after several people were killed or wounded during the clash with the security forces as hundreds of people were marching during a rally to protest against the deadly bombings in Kabul city.

The protests turned violent as the rally participants were attempting to move towards the presidential palace, chanting anti-government

slogans and demanding the resignation of the government leaders and security officials. (KP)

**(17) Former Urban ...**

seven years in prison and imposed a 440,000 Af\$ fine.

"This office had no legal base. The suspects had been operating on their own and were misusing their official posts," said prosecutor Sultana Khak Nezhad.

The two sentenced to 20 years in prison each were Mohammad Qane and Sayed Amanullah Sadat who worked at the ministry during former president Hamid Karzai's administration.

Qane had been the director of apartment affairs at Khawja Rawash township while Sadat served as head of the financial department of the concerned institution. (Tolonews)

**(18) Two Protesters ...**

(security forces) appeared at the area with one Humvee for each protester. They (security) did not hesitate any pressure (to push back the protesters and remove the sit-in camp)," said Kalimullah Ham-sukhan, a member of the Uprising for Change Movement.

The second victim was Ejazulhaq, a 23-year-old from Safid Shir village in Panjshir province. He was a law faculty graduate. (Tolonews)

**(19) Courts are ...**

Syria, Yemen, Sudan, Somalia and Libya from traveling to the United States. That included legal permanent residents. The order also blocked all refugees from being resettled in the United States. The order caused chaos and confusion at airports around the world. Some travelers arriving in the United States were detained before being sent home, and people overseas were blocked from boarding U.S.-bound flights. (AP)

**(20) French Defense...**

President Emmanuel Macron, over allegations of possible fake job contracts.

The probe was launched after a former employee of the party and ex-parliamentary assistant of European deputy Jean-Luc Bennahmias revealed that he was paid for the 2010-2011 in part by the European Parliament for a job he did for the party. (Xinhua)

**(21) EU, Britain...**

sure that the withdrawal of UK happens in an orderly manner.

"In the first step, the negotiation rounds will be broken down into three groups -- citizen rights, the single financial settlement, and other separation issues.

"These groups will report back to their respective principles during each negotiation week. David Davis and I, as chief EU negotiator, will discuss the issues together, tackle difficulties, and lift obstacles. (Xinhua)

**(22) Diplomatic and...**

the Mar-a-Lago meeting to bolster economic and trade cooperation. It is obviously crucial for the world's two major countries to strengthen their communication and cooperation in the fields of diplomacy and security, which are an important part of bilateral ties, in addition to trade and economy. (Xinhua)

**(23) Macron Opens ...**

in command of defense and air operations was quoted as saying by the Le Figaro newspaper.

The 52nd International Paris Air and Space Show kicked off on Monday at le Bourget Airport in northern Paris to showcase the cutting-edge technology of today and the future of the air and space industry. (Xinhua)

**(24) Germany's Merkel**

that others in the world wouldn't be able to get around so easily," given that a U.S.-EU accord would cover about 30 percent of world trade. (AP)

**(25) EU Says...**

formal negotiations with the EU began.

London will then make a detailed proposal next week, Davis said. Reports in British newspapers this month said May would make a "big generous offer".

But with EU citizens already guaranteed these rights across the 28-nation bloc, De Rynck said "there is nothing particularly generous about this issue." (AFP)

**(26) Merkel Ready...**

presidency of the G20 club of big economies, said she would fight to achieve the "broadest accord possible" on a free-trade pact at a summit in Hamburg next month. (AFP)