

(1) MoE to Increase...

Economy emphasizes the principles of effectiveness, transparency and public accountability when it comes to the implementation of projects," Minister Murad said. "In order to ensure transparency and accountability, this Ministry believes in continuous and close oversight."

Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah's First Deputy Khan Muhammad was also present at the gathering on Tuesday. He spoke about need for greater transparency in the contracting process with NGOs. He claimed that many contracts have been awarded on the basis of personal relations, rather than viability or execution.

"Some of the NGOs have influence in some of the ministries, and due to their influence, they take the contracts," Khan Muhammad said. "They don't have the technology for the contracts, nor the right personnel; they can only get the contract due to their influence, and sub-contractors. This is an issue that representatives from all ministries must pay attention to." (Tolonews)

(2) Drugs Fuelling...

jointly by the Ministry of Counter-narcotics and the United Nation Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC), 90 percent of the world poppy was being cultivated in Afghanistan and it was cultivated on 224 hectares of lands in 2014, while in 2013 poppy was cultivated on 209 hectares of lands.

According to the survey, 6,400 tonnes of opium was produced in 2014, while in 2013 it was 5,500 tonnes showing 17 percent increase. It said 79 percent of the drugs were cultivated in nine southern provinces where militants had strong presence. Helmand, Kandahar, Farah and Nangarhar were the leading provinces. (Pajhwok)

(3) Peace to be...

MoFA spokesman Ahmad Shekib Mustaghni told a press conference. It had been nine months that the new government was established, he said there was no sign of peace talks with Taliban. He said that stability in Afghanistan was in the interest of neighboring countries.

He said Afghanistan was committed to its agreements with Pakistan and Kabul was also waiting for commitment from its neighbor.

"Afghanistan prefers and prioritizes peace but the Afghan government will not stop building pressure on groups involved in disrupting peace of the country," he added.

He said a high-level Afghan delegation led by second deputy of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Mohammad Mohaqiq had participated in the meeting proposed for talks with the Taliban representatives in Oslo, the capital of Norway.

But he said that talks were informal and just to know each other view point. (Pajhwok)

(4) Counternarcotics ...

The new draft would be created in close coordination with the parliament," she added.

To effectively deal with the menace of drugs, she said, a revision of the counter-narcotics national strategy had been started and would be completed over the next 100-days.

The revised strategy would benefit regional countries and would involve Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Pakistan, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, China, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Azimi said currently poppy was being cultivated in 132 districts of the country, 56 percent of the cultivation took place in 10 districts, 36 percent in 31 districts and 8 percent in the remaining 90 districts. She said her ministry planned to reduce poppy growing by 90 percent in the coming 10 years. (Pajhwok)

(5) UN Envoy...

Haysom reported on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security. In addition, he also gave a summary of key political and security developments and regional and international events related to Afghanistan. He said the formation of the National Unity Government was nearly complete and stated the appointment of almost all the ministers, the formalization of the Office of the Chief Executive and the Secretariat of the Council of Ministers are important achievements made.

He noted that the development and implementation of 100-day action plans for each ministry, now under way, should help realize national objectives but said it was "imperative that the government accelerate its reform agenda".

"The creation of the Special Com-

mission on Electoral Reform demonstrates the commitment of the National Unity Government to electoral reforms, as provided for in the 21 September 2014 agreement," he said adding that comprehensive electoral reforms will be crucial for restoring the faith of the Afghan people in the democratic process.

He urged government to launch the electoral reform process and determine the electoral calendar but said the United Nations looks forward to engaging with the commission and stands ready to provide advice.

On the issue of security, he said the intensification of the conflict across the country hampered progress across a range of issues and exacted a terrible toll on the civilian population.

"I am deeply concerned by the dramatic increase in civilian casualties, despite public commitments by the parties to protect civilians. Attacks deliberately targeting civilians are strictly prohibited under international humanitarian law."

"During the (three month) reporting period anti-Government elements repeatedly attacked civilians working in the justice system, a deplorable targeting of civilian personnel. The conflict continues to displace significant numbers of civilians, in addition to those in Afghanistan displaced by military operations in Pakistan," he said. (Tolonews)

(6) Stanikzai to...

defense ministers will meet on Wednesday and Thursday this week where the main issue will be how NATO is adapting to a new and more challenging security environment.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg told reporters during a press conference that the NATO defense ministers will also review progress made since the launch of the NATO-led Resolute Support (RS) mission in Afghanistan.

He said "Finally, we will review progress made since the launch of our Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan at the start of the year. And the evolution of this mission." "And we will look at how we will continue to support the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces in the longer term," Stoltenberg added.

The Resolute Support mission was launched earlier this year as the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission was concluded after 13 years late in the month of December last year. (KP)

(7) Afghan Govt...

between Taliban representatives and Afghan High Peace Council (HPC) headed by Masoom Stanekzai in Urumqi, China, last month.

He went on to say that next meeting between the two parties was scheduled to be held the current month. The peace talks between the Afghan government and Taliban were circulating at a time when heavily-armed insurgents mounted a botched attack on Afghan parliament on Monday. Militants attacks in parts of Afghanistan have intensified markedly, which sparked strong criticism against Pakistan by the Afghan government.

Earlier in May, Pugwash organized a two-day seminar in Qatar between Afghan officials and Taliban in Qatar. A 21-member Afghan delegation and eight members Taliban exchanged their views regarding peace and stability in Afghanistan. Gulbadin Hikmatyar led Hezb-i-Islami (HIA) also participated in the conference.

Earlier, the Taliban delegations from its Qatar office also visited Japan, France and Iran in the past. Besides attending different meetings and conferences, they also held talks with officials of these countries.

The visit of the Taliban delegation to China came shortly after the newly-elected Afghan President Ashraf Ghani paid a four-day official trip to China.

Aziz latest overtures have seen with an optimistic view by many Afghans amid hopes of greater peace and reconciliation in the country. (Pajhwok)

(8) India Wants...

parliament in Kabul, leaving two civilians dead and 28 others wounded. No lawmaker was hurt in the brazen attack that lasted one and half an hour until the last attacker was killed.

Nicholas Haysom, the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) chief, said Afghan security forces were "undeniably stretched" but resilient amid a push by insurgents for more territory.

"The Afghan National Security Forces face operational challenges, their commitment is beyond question and they are demonstrating resilience in

the face of insurgent efforts to take and hold ground," Haysom told the UN Security Council.

Mukerji said the security situation in Afghanistan was not good that required the international community to reconsider the exit plan from Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(9) Director and...

officials being charged, sources close to the issue, who spoke with TOLONews on condition of anonymity, have identified Kabir Khan, the Director of the Clearance Department, and Muhammad Aziz, his deputy.

Experts have expressed concerns in response to the news, suggesting that corruption in the bank's clearance process would further undermine public trust in the financial sector. "Such actions question the clearance process, and in order to ensure transparency audit and control measures must be taken," university professor Nasrullah Stanekzai told TOLONews. "What guarantee is there that such actions have not already taken place during the clearance?"

Meanwhile, President Ashraf Ghani, who re-opened the Kabul Bank case in late 2014, has said that all debtors to the bank must payback what they owe within a week or be referred to the Attorney General's office and banned from exiting the country.

"The president has ordered that if the debtors of Kabul Bank do not return their loans by the end of this week, then they will be referred to the Attorney General's office," Ishaqzai said. (Tolonews)

(10) Anti-Corruption...

of embezzling millions of dollars in funds meant for ministry projects. The Attorney General's office has taken up the case and is expected to pursue prosecutions. Chief Executive Abdullah has assured that justice will be served and an example made for all other government employees when it comes to the repercussions of corruption. "There is hope that, by addressing these cases, corruption will be prevented - something that was ignored over the past 13 years," he said.

However, Mr. Fakhri's comments on Tuesday expose the full extent of skepticism that exists, even among officials, when it comes to the government's ability - or even willingness - to completely follow through and punish those involved in corruption. "The announcement of these files is not enough," he said. "Investigative work needs to be done regarding the main perpetrators of this case."

As with the Kabul Bank case, some commentators have expressed doubts about the intentions and commitment of the government. "One of our concerns is that this case might become political, and the main perpetrators of the case might be released," MP Abdul Qader Zazay said.

Corruption remains one of the biggest weaknesses facing rule of law in Afghanistan. Despite making good governance a top priority since taking office, President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah still face widespread corruption among both local and high-ranking leaders. (Tolonews)

(11) MPs Praise...

security forces responded so well to the attackers."

However, the session soon took an extraordinary turn when emotionally charged MPs started arguing amongst themselves while discussing the security situation in the country. At one stage tempers were quite raised and many MPs were on their feet shouting at each other. Some were calling for officials to be summoned to Parliament to answer questions over how insurgents were able to attack the Wolesi Jirga while others criticized government over its recent meetings with Pakistani security and intelligence officials.

One MP Daoud Kalakani spoke out about President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah's move to improve ties with Pakistan and said: "Pakistanis are killing our sons every day but we remain silent. Government officials should give us details about what they discussed at these recent meetings," Kalakani said.

Almas Zahid, another MP said that Monday's "attack was organized very well and they knew from which side to attack," adding that "our security forces were committed to fighting off the attackers. But security officials should be asked how they attacked the House of the People."

"Monday's attack should be taken very seriously," said MP Harif Rahmani adding that security officials need to answer questions over

the incident. (Tolonews)

(12) President...

Abdullah Abdullah and other senior officials were also present on the occasion. Essa Khan said he trapped the attackers and shot six of them dead.

Ghani said as a result of security forces swift action, the nation was protected from a big catastrophe. The Ministry of Defence also in a statement confirmed the courage and resilience shown by ANA soldier Essa Khan during attack on parliament.

It added the gallantry of Essa Khan was praised by the entire nation and majority of lawmakers donated their one and two month salaries to him. Also members of Mesharano Jirga in today's session lauded Essa Khan and decided to cut 5,000 afghanis from the salaries of every lawmaker and donate to the ANA soldier. Senate Chairman Fazal Hadi Muslimyar and Eng. Farhad Sakhi, a lawmaker from Kabul, donated 200,000 afghanis to Essa Khan and 200,000 and 300,000 to others security officials of the parliament. (Pajhwok)

(13) Paktia...

even in the capital of the province. Only few male doctors could not serve the large population," he said. Orguni added only a 60-bed civil hospital was available in Sharan, the capital of the province where both civilians and military patients were treated.

The only single hospital could not treat all patients of Paktika province, he said, asking the government to pay attention to resolve the problem on emergency basis.

Momin Afghan, a resident of Sharan City, said they were facing shortage of health professionals, which was a serious problem.

"Entire Paktia has no professional doctor. If someone faces serious health problem then he or she should go to Kabul or Pakistan to treatment," Momin said, adding that some patients succumbed to illness due to lack of medical services. Orguni said that provincial council members had held meetings with officials of different organizations about implementing reconstruction projects in dams, bridges, embankment walls and other projects. (Pajhwok)

(14) Turkey...

worsening militant violence.

"We strongly condemn this terrorist attack which aimed at the democratic will of the Afghan people represented by the assembly. We wish God's mercy on those who lost their lives, convey our condolences to their relatives and wish a speedy recovery to the wounded," read the statement on the Turkish Foreign Ministry's website, which was published on Monday.

It continued, "We believe that such heinous attacks cannot deter Afghanistan from its swift progress towards stability and development, and reaffirm once again Turkey's support to the Afghan government's combat against terrorism."

Fighting in Afghanistan has spiraled since the departure of most foreign forces from Afghanistan at the end of last year. The insurgents are pushing to take territory more than 13 years after US-led military intervention toppled them from power. (Agencies)

(15) Foreign Spies...

endorsement but his appearance was postponed for the next day.

The house decided to contribute financial assistance to Issa Khan -- who has since become social media focus -- and other security forces for giving a befitting response to the assailants.

Fawzia Kofi, lawmaker from north-easter Badakhshan province, said yesterday's attack was in reaction to stern opposition from MPs to the intelligence deal with Islamabad. She demanded serious investigation into the incident.

Some government officials, however, say the intelligence agreement between the spy agencies of Afghanistan and Pakistan has been finalised and would be signed after completion of five procedures.

Earlier, some members of the house had called on the government to cancel the deal, opining it was against the interests of Afghanistan. Farooq Majrooh, hailing from western Herat province, said: "We won't sign the deal even if we die."

Shekiba Hashimi, an MP from southern Kandahar, claimed the attack had been plotted by Pakistan and other intelligence agencies. She said they wanted a non-existent parliament and to facilitate the expansion of Daesh in Afghanistan.

Almas Zahid, another lawmaker,

likened the strike to an attack on the Afghan nation. He wondered how the attack took place at the western gate that was the closest to the house.

"For a decade, I have been part of this august house. But I don't know about the weapons cache here, how did the insurgents get this information?" The cache exploded in yesterday's attack.

Some MPs alleged the attack was conducted with the connivance of some government officials. One of them, Farkhunda Zahra Naderi, saw "traitors" behind the incident. She urged the government to unmask the elements. (Pajhwok)

(16) Pakistan Behind...

critical condition.

Spokesman of the Public Health Ministry said 31 wounded civilians had been shifted to Istiqlal, Emergency and Sadri-Ibni-Sina government hospitals for treatment.

Senate Chairman Fazal Hadi Muslimyar denounced the attack in strong words. He said the enemies of Afghanistan were involved in the attack and they were known to everyone. "Pakistan is the enemy of the people of Afghanistan and they do not want peace and stability in our country," he noted.

The lawmakers demanded immediate halt of the ongoing peace process and asked the government to tackle insurgents with iron hand.

He said peace could not be achieved when it was the desire of a single party and our holy book Quran teach us to hold talks with those who are willing for. (Pajhwok)

(17) Armed Enemies...

following the end of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)'s combat mission and the transfer of full security responsibility to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF)," the Afghan Ambassador to the UN, Zahir Tanin, told members of the powerful UN Security Council.

Appearing before the 15-membered body for a special discussion on Afghanistan, Tanin said today, the enemies of Afghanistan conducted a heinous attack against the Afghan Parliament in Kabul, wounding dozens of civilians, including children.

"We strongly condemn this deliberate attack against democracy and the representatives of the people. This new wave of fighting is compounded by an unprecedented convergence of extremist and international terrorist networks on our soil, comprised of Taliban, thousands of foreign terrorist fighters and violent extremist groups like ISIS," Tanin said. (Pajhwok)

(18) Fourth C-130...

Air Force's first four engine aircraft with this type of expanded capability," said Denver native Lt. Col. Tyler Faulk, deputy director of the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan's Security Assistance Office. "This fleet allows them to transport supplies or troops within Afghanistan, as well as to partner nations where they can execute missions, trainings and exercises; a whole host of international activities."

Faulk explained that the C-130 is a medium-lift aircraft, capable of expediting troop and supply movement, and allows for international reach, making it "a huge force multiplier."

"Afghanistan needs to perform more missions and having a fourth C-130 allows for that," said Afghan Air Force Capt. Muhammad Azimi, a C-130 pilot who has been anxiously awaiting the arrival of the aircraft. "We need to support more troops, moving them as soon as possible from one point to another, getting them into the fight faster. Getting commandos from the north to the south by helicopter would take days, but by C-130 it will take only a few hours." (KP)

(19) Kandahar Embarks...

to ensuring improved services to the people, the committee would work to increase the municipality's and other departments' revenue, increase coordination and cooperation among government departments and NGOs and implement developmental affairs, according to Khpalwak.

Another task of the committee is construction and reconstruction of roads in Kandahar City. Work on some of the roads has been launched following repeated requests from the people concerned and asphalt work on other roads would be launched soon, the official said. (Pajhwok)

(20) 85 Taliban Dead...

purged of the entire district and majority of the slain rebels were dreaded commanders.

He said the fleeing Taliban were being chased and captured. Meanwhile, Governor Mohammad Umar Safi said six security personnel were also killed in the Chardara fighting.

Murad also said security forces who were captured by the Taliban during attack on the district headquarters were also released. The infantry commander said the freed troops joined other security forces in Chardara district.

Chardara district was fallen to insurgents following heavy attacks on Saturday night. The district is located 10 kilometres west of Kunduz city. (Pajhwok)

(21) 23 Nangarhar...

anti-state activities and planting roadside bombs."

He explained his main duties while serving as Taliban commander, "I was responsible to bring armed militants to safe areas who were crossing from Pakistan."

Kitab Khan, another commander, said that he had faded up with war and fighting and he decided to join peace process. He urged government to provide them with security and source of living.

At least 587 armed rebels have joined the peace process in Nangarhar. (Pajhwok)

(22) 67 Welfare Projects...

was a big development. Sayed Ahmad, a resident of Samak village of Dawlatyar district, said they had been without electricity in the past, but the activation of a small hydropower dam had electrified 340 homes in the area.

He said previously people could not watch TV for the lack of electricity but now they could. (Pajhwok)

(23) 12-Member...

did not have exact information. Majid Akhundzada, provincial council member, also confirmed military operation in the area but said that several areas were insecure despite carrying out military operation.

Taliban rebels have not commented on the incident as of yet.

Meanwhile, Qari Yousuf Ahmadi, Taliban spokesman, said Janan, commander of Afghan Local Police (ALP), was killed the other day along with three other security officials in a mine blast. But Helmand security officials rejected Ahmadi's claim of killing security officials and ALP commander. (Pajhwok)

(24) White Elephant...

Pakistani military officials and political leaders visited Kabul as a token of support for HPC initiatives. Subsequently, a flurry of informal meetings took place between the Taliban and representatives of the Afghan government and parliament. (Pajhwok)

(25) School Headmaster...

Iranian national being kidnapped on Herat-Islam Qala Road in one month. He urged government to make necessary arrangements for the security of Herat-Islam Qala Road. No group had claimed responsibility for the kidnapping by the time this report was filed. (KP)

(26) Russia-China...

,the media have their due role to play in acquainting peoples of both nations with the EAEU-framework and the construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt. (Xinhua)

(27) China, U.S....

welcomes "healthy and fair competition" from China and believes that whenever possible, China should be included at the table of writing the rules. Liu said that given the complexity of today's global affairs, the domain where both countries should and can cooperate is vast. (Xinhua)

(28) Canada Strongly

further added that attacks like these demonstrate the Taliban's total disregard for the Afghan people and those who are working to establish a democratic future for the country. "Canada continues to stand by the Government of Afghanistan as it strengthens its efforts to combat terrorism in all its forms in order to bring peace and prosperity to all Afghans," Rob Nicholson said. (PR)