

### (1) Suicide Attack...

in the police station attack. "We were in the dining room, eating lunch when a loud explosion happened. I couldn't see anything for a while," said Manizha, a policewoman who like many women in Afghanistan uses only one name. She said she managed to escape from the compound as the gunbattle continued inside. Thick black smoke rose above the police complex, and several rounds of small-arms fire and subsequent explosions were heard from inside the compound, according to the Mohammad Naser, a shopkeeper who has a store nearby. Dozens of windows were shattered on surrounding houses and shops, he added. The compound includes Kabul's so-called Sixth Police Station and is located next to the country's military school, which might have been the original target, along with cadets attending classes there.

Hours later, Sadiq Muradi of the Kabul police chief's office, said the gunbattle had ended and that security forces were carrying out a clean-up operation following the attack. Danish, the ministry deputy spokesman, said that in the second attack, which took place in eastern Kabul when a suicide bomber on foot targeted the office of the national intelligence service, two people were wounded. President Ashraf Ghani issued a statement condemning the attacks, saying that "terrorists and their alien masters once again tried to create an atmosphere of terror and fear in Kabul." Ghani linked the attacks to the recent death of a senior Taliban commander, known as Mullah Salaam, in northeastern Kunduz province and said the insurgents are trying to attack urban centers to boost morale among their followers. Meanwhile, the Taliban gained control Wednesday of local government headquarters in a district in northern Baghlan province, after almost three days of intense battles with Afghan security forces, according to local officials. Abdul Satar Barez, the provincial governor, said he could not confirm that the whole district of Tala Wa Barfak has fallen to the Taliban but said a number of checkpoints have fallen to the insurgents amid clashes Wednesday. A provincial security official said the security forces left their checkpoints and withdrew from the entire district, which is now in Taliban hands. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media. Mujahid, the Taliban spokesman, tweeted that their fighters have overrun the Tala Wa Barfak headquarters. (AP)

### (2) Afghanistan Urges ...

[border crossings with Pakistan] have now been closed for about two weeks, causing enormous hardship to ordinary people and damage to traders on both sides. We cannot be for regional connectivity if at the same time we continue to implement barriers to trade, transit and movement of people between us," he said. Zakhil attended the conference as a special envoy of Afghan President Ashraf Ghani. "Honorable Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, in the spirit of today's summit... it will be the right message if your excellency instruct the opening of our formal trade and transit routes between our two brotherly countries, Pakistan and Afghanistan," said Zakhilwal Kabul rejects charges that anti-Pakistan militants are using Afghan soil for staging attacks in the neighboring country. Mutual accusations The Afghan government in turn has reiterated its long running allegations that Islamabad harbors sanctuaries and leaders of the Taliban waging a deadly insurgency in Afghanistan, charges Islamabad denies as baseless. Mutual terrorism allegations have lately prevented the two uneasy neighbors from engaging in official talks to ease tensions.

Pakistan army spokesman, Major-General Asif Ghafoor, on Tuesday called on Afghan authorities to enhance security on their side of the border to prevent terrorist infiltration into his country, insisting the border closure is not an "indefinite" measure. "There are some things Afghanistan should be doing before the border reopens that can be decided through shared discussions, so that when the border reopens, no one from our side should be able to go there and no one from their side should be able to come here for terrorism." Pakistani officials were hoping for the Afghan president to attend Wednesday's ECO summit and billboards displayed at the meeting included Ghani's picture along with other leaders. But the rise in tensions prompted Ghani to skip the event and so did the Afghan foreign min-

ister, who Pakistani officials say had confirmed his participation days before the summit. (VoA)

### (3) De-Escalation...

points between the two countries. Highlighting the sufferings of people due to closure of the border and cross-border shelling from Pakistan, he sought reduction in tensions. He also promised to take action against terrorists on the basis of shared information. Ambassador Hussain, in his response, briefed on the circumstances behind actions taken by Pakistan. He stated that Afghan nationals were involved in recent attacks in Pakistan and stressed that Afghanistan should take appropriate measures for denying use of its soil by terrorists against Pakistan.

He informed that the border was closed to prevent crossing by terrorists. He stressed on the need for efforts by both countries to strengthen border management. The Ambassador, however, promised to transmit the Afghan requests to Islamabad. (Pajhwok)

### (4) 7 SCOS Sign ...

Women Activities & Social Services Association. Wassetstrom on occasion said the program would be implemented by the mentioned organizations in Kabul, Herat, Nangarhar and Bamyan provinces in the next four months. He said the organizations would investigate about reform efforts and distribution process of Tazkira (identity cards), high school certificates, business licenses for entrepreneurs, registration of documents at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and ensuring transparency in distribution of residential land plots to refugees.

These organizations are also responsible to investigate about transparency in tax paying process for medium tax payers, registration of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) besides monitoring the programme and providing public awareness. Wassetstrom said the organizations having experience in fighting corruption would help bring about positive changes by their investigation and public awareness. Babrak Osman, civil society programme director at DI, said the programme was for a trial period of four months after which it would be extended for five years.

He said the programme was aimed at bringing about transparency in the aforementioned spheres. Danish Karohkhel, Editor-in-Chief Pajhwok Afghan News, after signing the contract, called the programme as effective in combating corruption, saying the CSOs could play a considerable role in this regard. He hoped the seven organizations would bring about positive changes through the programme. He said Pajhwok would publish investigative reports, messages and articles about corruption during the period.

Meanwhile, Sohrab Zadrin, ACSF in-charge, said his group will work with the Kabul municipality to speed up the process of distributing business licenses/permits to entrepreneurs. He said the DI in the past had conducted similar programmes about corruption. (Pajhwok)

### (5) NPC Approves ...

other projects approved by the NPC. Procuring office equipment for the State Minister for Disaster Management (SMDM), allowances to the Ministry of Defense (MoD) and Administrative Office of the President, extension of timeframe for Doshi-Pul-i-Khumri road construction for another four months and amendment to the contract for a power line extension from Naghlo Dam to Tagab district of Faryab province were also approved. However, the NPC returned the Mehtarlam ring road project for a further review. The NPC meeting was attended by second vice-president Sarwar Danish, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, ministers of finance and justice, NPC officials, SIGAR officials, lawmakers, senators and others. (Pajhwok)

### (6) Border Closure...

suggestion to my brothers is that we should not do trade when there is a risk. We will not use the Karachi road for trade purposes until our destiny and situation is known," Khan Jan Alokzay, deputy head of ACCI said. "Hundreds of trucks have been stopped and this is a serious problem for us. Our drivers are spending days and nights in very bad circumstances." Tala Mohammad, head of Truckers' Union said. Haji Abdul Razaq, an Afghan trader has six trucks loaded with fresh fruit from Pakistan waiting on the Pakistan side of the Torkham border post. He says some of the fruit has already rotted and part of the load will have to be sold at low prices.

The Torkham border gate was closed eleven days ago and still remained closed. As a result, prices of fresh vegetables and fruits have increased in Afghanistan. "Fresh fruit prices have been doubled," said Mohammad Alim, a fresh fruit seller. "Before the border was closed, vegetables cost less, but after the closure, the prices have increased," said Aimal, a vegetable seller. Musafir Qoqandi, spokesman of Ministry of Commerce and Industries, commented on the issue: "Discussions are ongoing. We have always said that we want good trade relationships with all countries." ACCI says the border closure, in addition to creating problems in the transit of goods, has affected the small markets located near the borders in Afghanistan and Pakistan. (Tolnews)

### (7) ICG Acknowledges...

production and trafficking of illicit narcotics and that it preached peace and reconciliation, ICG Members reaffirmed that sustainable stability in Afghanistan can only be achieved through a political settlement between Afghans. They welcomed the agreement reached with Hezbe-Islami and expressed their support for the National Unity Government as the elected and legitimate government of Afghanistan in its efforts to engage with all armed groups in a political process leading to the renunciation of violence, breaking of all ties to regional and international terrorist networks and respect for the constitution. ICG Members were briefed on the state of implementation of the agreed reform agenda under the "Self-Reliance through Mutual Accountability Framework." Taking note of measures adopted to fight corruption, they urged the government of Afghanistan to pursue further vigorous policies in this regard.

They welcomed overdue progress towards electoral reform and stressed the need to create capacity to implement reforms, especially those aimed at minimizing the risk of fraud, in preparation for free, fair, inclusive, and transparent parliamentary elections. Looking forward to the Seventh Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA) in Ashgabat, ICG Members emphasized that regional cooperation held the key for economic development in Afghanistan.

They noted that sincere regional security cooperation which promotes security for all states is a condition for enabling the whole region to develop economically. They noted the growing importance of Afghanistan and its neighbours sharing responsibility for development and stability in the region, including through developing a common counter-terrorism strategy that delivers tangible results. The Contact Group thanked the OIC for its hospitality. On behalf of the Government of Germany, the Chair thanked ICG Members for their continued dedication to the support of Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

### (8) OIC Meeting ...

to the importance the OIC has always attached and continues to accord to the situation in Afghanistan as well as its readiness to maintain its role in helping the country restore peace, security and development," he added. Hekmat Khalil Karzai, deputy foreign minister of Afghanistan and co-chair of the session, stressed that Afghan national unity government remained highly committed to taking every measure to protect civilians, women and children against the brutality of enemies who deliberately target them. He stressed that the national unity government was undertaking key reforms that will advance the cause of peace in the country. The ICG has regularly met in different countries to discuss issues related to Afghanistan and its peace, security, stability and development. The OIC had hosted a previous meeting of the ICG in March 2011. (Pajhwok)

### (9) NGOs Play ...

Suhrab Bahman, spokesman of the ministry. Insecurity and money shortages continue to be the main challenges facing NGOs. Afghanistan Educational and Vocational Organization (AEVO) is an NGO established six years ago to provide educational and vocational opportunities for men. Despite security challenges, it is operating in the farthest parts of the country. "Currently the needs for NGOs is high, because it is NGOs that work in farthest and under-served areas," said Karima Rahimyar, head of AEVO. Students of this organization also said NGOs can play a vital role in removing obstacles. "Since I have been studying in this NGO, I have learned a lot and I want

government to increase this kind of service," said Rahila Danish, a student of the AEVO.

Although the NGOs activities are important, the lack of monitoring is a concern if the actual budgets that are being allocated for different projects, are not spent.

"If NGOs activities are monitored regularly, their performances will doubtless be important for the country," said Abdul Qadir Bahman, ICC director for Afghanistan.

The Ministry of Economy has said NGOs law has been amended. Based on the new version, any NGO violating the law, will be dealt with. (Tolnews)

### (10) Pakistani PM ...

session. Addressing the summit after assuming its chairmanship, Nawaz Sharif called for intensified collaboration to exploit enormous potential of ECO to turn the region into a citadel of peace, progress and prosperity. "The Summit's theme, Connectivity for Regional Prosperity, represents our collective vision to build ECO into a community of shared prosperity through greater economic integration and close people-to-people contact," Nawaz Sharif told the day-long opening session of the summit. (Xinhua)

### (11) Sayyaf ...

call on militant groups last month to end slavery for the outsiders.

He insist that the militant and terrorist groups fighting in the country should not brand their insurgency as Jihad, emphasizing that killing of children, women, destroying houses and committing other horrific crimes are not a holy war. (KP)

### (12) Afghanistan to ...

efforts to install electronic systems to complete the requirements," Yusufzai said. Meanwhile, members in National Banks Union said further measures should be applied by local banks to come off of the list. "Our trade will improve and expand once Afghanistan is of the FTAF list. Our problems will be solved internationally. The local banks would be able to do deals with other countries in an easier way," said Najibullah Amiri, head of the union. (Tolnews)

### (13) Rula Ghani ...

capacities, something the first lady believes will help the Afghan women towards self-reliance.

"This morning the US president delivered a key-note speech. It was a policy speech, but he did not mention Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Libya once. This raised concerns in my mind about why he did not refer to these countries. All things he mentioned were positive though. Does such a policy statement by the US mean that US's position on these countries have become negative and include a cut in aid? I hope that this will not happen, but we need to be prepared," said Rula Ghani.

Rula Ghani said that in the view of political and economic change in the US and European countries, there is a possibility that foreign aid to Afghanistan would decline. She urged Afghans to take pre-emptive measures and to be prepared for such a challenge. Meanwhile, Sima Samar, chairperson of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) has stressed the need for a broader participation of Afghan women in national politics.

She said restoring peace in Afghanistan will not be possible without the effective role of women.

Samar said currently the women in many provinces are suffering from hardships and they do not have proper access to basic health and education services. "First, we need to increase the number of the women in politics, it is not at 50 percent now. It should be at least 45 percent, but it is not the case. We need to work more in this respect, otherwise no sustainable peace or development is possible," said Samar. "Restrictions are imposed on work women may do. Women are not given authority," said Haseena Nekzad, chairwomen of the west zone. "The number of women in Samangan government are few. They are not allowed to work in government institutions," said Shakila Mohammadzai, chairperson Samangan Business Women Council. Some women representatives have raised major concerns over the deprivations women in southern province of Helmand and Paktia suffer. "There is no recognition of foe or friend in the city. The women are very concerned about it," said Halima Sabar, women's rights activist in Helmand. "There is no sign of women at the leadership level in government institutions," said Mahirah Ahmadzai, chairperson Women Network in Paktia. Women rights activists have said the role of women in the national political sphere is weak.

They calling for a broader participation by women in the national decision-making process, including politics. (Tolnews)

### (14) US Forces ...

military in their continued fight against the Taliban and other terrorist groups. "USFOR-A will continue to work with our Afghan partners to carry out its mission and target those who are enemies of a peaceful, prosperous Afghanistan," the statement added. (KP)

### (15) Baloch ...

not only in Afghanistan but in Pakistan, Iran, Arabic countries, Central Asian and even in Europe and Africa."

"The language and culture of Baloch has faced ups and downs in Afghanistan, as in 1340-50-60s of solar years, Baloch children had access to learning Balochi language." Abdul Ghafoor Liwal, acting borders and tribal affairs minister, acknowledged Baluchi language was one of the neglected languages and there was a need for steps at strengthening and improving it. "The Ministry of Borders and Tribal Affairs along with the Ministry of Education has a scheme at hand to provide education in Balochi language in areas where Balochs reside."

Sayed Kamal Sadaat, acting information and culture minister, said: "In the history, the bravery, championship and brilliant culture of Baluchis has a mention and preserving their culture, basic work and measures are required."

President Ashraf Ghani through a message readout on the occasion marking culture and language of Baluchis, said Baloch culture was a great spiritual heritage which should be strengthened and introduced to all. President Ghani said the Constitution considered Baloch language as third official language in areas where it was spoken after Pashto and Dari.

Article 16th of the Constitution says: "From amongst Pashto, Dari, Uzbeki, Turkmani, Balochi, Pachaie, Nuristani, Pamiri and other current languages in the country, Pashto and Dari shall be the official languages of the state. The article adds: In areas where the majority of the people speak in language, in addition to Pashto and Dari, shall be the third official language, the usage of which shall be regulated by law. The state shall design and apply effective programs to foster and develop all languages of Afghanistan, the article says. "Usage of all current languages in the country shall be free in press publications and mass media. Academic and national administrative terminology and usage in the country shall be preserved." (Pajhwok)

### (16) 'Harassed' ...

another is Sattar, who is the commander of Dostum's guards. They have not appeared for questioning and have said that Dostum has not allowed them to avail themselves for investigation," Eshchi added. Regarding the legal issues of the case, Gul Ahmad Madadzai, deputy head of Afghanistan's Lawyers Union said he believed that the country faces a lack of rule of law. "The rule of law is weak and we do not blame police force members who were ordered to arrest the guards. I believe that the relevant organizations are blamed in this respect," Madadzai stated. (Tolnews)

### (17) Clashes Ongoing...

forces' check posts in Naw Abad region have collapsed to the Taliban, the source added. Security officials have not commented on the report. TOLOnews reporter Hamid Sherzai said residents of Mangalua village have evacuated the area due to the clashes and have migrated to Shahr-e-Jadid region in Baghlan-e-Markazi district. Local officials said commando forces have been sent to Baghlan-e-Markazi and army soldiers are fighting the Taliban in Doshi district. (Tolnews)

### (18) Engineers ...

Zabihullah Mujahid, said any company working in an area under Taliban control should seek permission from the movement. "Any development projects implemented in our area should also be monitored and authorised by the Taliban," he said, adding a company violating the policy would be responsible for whatever happened to it. The road construction process started about two months ago. The district police chief and three workers of the Global Construction Company were injured and a policeman killed by a roadside bombing during the first survey for the road. (Pajhwok)

### (19) Uprising Leader...

economic problems, low public awareness and insecurity usually caused such tragedies. She urged tribal elders and relevant organs to

jointly work for public awareness to prevent such incidents.

Najibullah Farhang, head of Aqcha District Hospital, confirmed receiving two dead bodies of women with bullets holes in the stomach and chest. (Pajhwok)

### (20) Airstrike Target...

located in the outskirts of Lashkargah city yesterday, targeting a convoy of the security forces who were transferring prisoners to southern Helmand province. (KP)

### (21) 8 Dead in ...

had been sent to the area to investigate the incident. Recently traffic accidents on the Kandahar highway have increased. (Pajhwok)

### (22) Forced Marriage...

of her suffering at the hands of her husband and his family, saying that "My husband and the in-laws always physically tortured me and threatened to throw me out of the home." She said: "I don't know why they were treated me so cruelly. I was constantly beat me on slight pretext of not cooking food to their taste or for not keeping the home tidy. They always looked for excuses to torture me physically. My husband treated me cruelly because my father was too old to help me and also I had no brother, who could come to my rescue." (Pajhwok)

### (23) Former Addicts...

often round up addicts from the streets and bring them to the centers. Billions of dollars have been spent on counter-narcotics campaigns in the past decade, including encouraging poppy farmers to switch to other cash crops.

Still, officials say the number of drug users is growing. Most addicts come from the millions of Afghans who work in neighboring Iran and Pakistan, where narcotics are even more of a problem. (AP)

### (24) Trump Rolls ...

said his administration is to introduce new merit-based immigration system to regulate new arrivals and reduce the flow of low-skilled workers into America. (Xinhua)

### (25) Trump to ...

week that he wanted to see "very significant" tax reform passed before Congress's August recess. (Xinhua)

### (26) Putin's Central...

Stanislav Pritchkin, research fellow at the Center for Central Asia and Caucasus Studies of the Oriental Studies Institute in Russia. During Putin's visit, Russia and Kyrgyzstan also agreed to strengthen military and technical cooperation to fight terrorism and crimes. (Xinhua)

### (27) UN Panel ...

Aleppo gave civilians no option to remain at the end of the protracted campaign, in which daily aerial bombings killed hundreds of people and left all the hospitals in the area out of service. (AP)

### (28) Amina Mohammed ...

(ECOSOC) Segment on Operational Activities for Development. Mohammed resigned from Nigerian Federal Executive Council on Feb. 24. Previously, She was a key player in the Post-2015 development process, serving as a special adviser to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon on post-2015 development planning. Mohammed became only the second African woman to be appointed to the role of deputy secretary-general of the UN. The first one was Tanzania's Asha-Rose Migiro who served in the role between 2007-2012 under Ban Ki-moon. (Xinhua)

### (29) China Moves ...

National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), told a press conference Wednesday. "Seven of the world's 10 largest ports in terms of container throughput are located in China," Li added. (Xinhua)

### (30) ECO Leaders...

emerging economy of Asia and economic activities are transferring from the West to East. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in his address called for early completion of reforms in ECO, strengthening of human resource of ECO Secretariat and a evolution of a mechanism for ownership of projects. He stressed on cooperation in energy and said his country would support all initiatives aimed at realization of this objective. (Xinhua)

### (31) Takfirism, ...

outrifts. In December 2013, the UN General Assembly overwhelmingly voted to approve a resolution approving Rouhani's WAVE proposal, which calls on all nations across the world to denounce violence and extremism. (Presstv)