

(1) Tens of...

said that the unity government was committed to realising the wishes of martyrs, which were justice, uniform development, political consensus, individual and collective rights.

The CEO Abdullah Abdullah called Mazari a symbol of national unity, integrity, bravery, faithfulness and honesty.

"Mazari still holds a place among the people," said Abdullah, who called Mazari a leader who awakened the masses about their national duty and for the defence of their rights and for what he himself sacrificed for his life.

"We as followers of our martyrs have the responsibility to realize their wishes," he said, declaring that the government would not enter a behind-the-scenes deal on peace.

"Peace is the demand of the entire nation and the government is committed to achieve that," he said.

Abdullah also praised sacrifices of the Afghan security forces and said their heroism would never be forgotten.

He hoped that peace efforts of the Afghan government will bring lasting peace in Afghanistan.

"I want to assure people that there will be no secret deal in peace talks and freedom of people and their achievements will be maintained," he said.

Meanwhile, the second deputy of the CEO, Mohammad Mohaqiq, stressed on peace talks with the Taliban. He, however, threatened that if peace talks failed, then people are ready to defend their country.

He stressed that Afghan security forces should be equipped with modern weapons. "Afghan air force should be equipped. Gaps that our army has should be filled and national police and local police should be equipped, otherwise a disaster will be on the way to come," he said.

He also criticized the share of political power in the National Unity Government.

"We have five ministers in the National Unity Government (NUG), but authority of these ministers is with others. We want a real partnership and management in all areas including police and national army," said Mohaqiq. Abdul Ali Mazari, the founding member of People's Unity party, was killed on March 12, 1995 by the Taliban who invited him for a political dialogue on an alliance against the then Islamic State. But he was arrested along with his five companions in Chaharasyab, near Kabul, and later killed. (DoA/Pajhwok/Tolo)

(2) Iran, Afghanistan ...

gold, iron, copper, uranium, coal and precious stones mines.

Shah Saba expressed the hope that with the signing of the MoU, cooperation between the two countries will further expand and investment of the private sectors in the field of mining will start. (IRNA)

(3) India Provides ...

during a meeting with Nangrahar Governor Salim Khan Kunduzi, a statement from the governor house said on Friday.

Vohra conveyed his condolences to the victims' families and pledged to provide assistance to them.

The Indian envoy thanked the governor and top security officials for the quick action to rescue the diplomatic mission during the attack. Kunduzi said considered Indian one of their close friend and there was close relations between the people of both countries.

During the meeting the governor offered more secure place for the Indian diplomatic mission in Jalalabad which the Indian envoy welcomed and said they would consider the offer. (Pajhwok)

(4) 1,500 Cases...

and then made a telephone call to AGO to bring charges but only four pages of papers are lying inside these documents," Roshan said.

Amid deep concerns over the huge number of pending cases, the Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA) blasted the AGO officials for failing to fulfill their legal responsibilities, arguing that several dockets relating to corruption cases have gone missing from the AGO's office.

"The main issue is that the AGO has failed to conduct a good job over the last several years, even we heard that some dockets have gone missing from the AGO's office," IWA Researcher Nasir Taimoori said.

The Attorney General's Office slammed the claims as baseless, urging that no case had been prepared on order of lawbreakers and that no case has been sidelined.

"All tasks are being carried out by the AGO in line with the laws, no case has been pushed to the sidelines and all cases are being processed. We strongly reject the allegations," Basir Azizi, a spokesman for the AGO said.

This comes at a time that the AGO is run by an acting chief. However, NUG this past week announced the appointment of Mohammad Farid Hamidi as new chief of AGO. Hamidi is expected to appear before the Wolesi Jirga (Lower House of Parliament) for a vote of confidence from the Afghan lawmakers. (Tolonews)

(5) Govt-Taliban ...

fourth meeting in Kabul the Quadrilateral Group decided that the first round of direct talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban would be held in Islamabad in the first week of March.

The QCG on Afghan peace and reconciliation issued a joint communiqué after its meeting, saying all Taliban and other groups will be invited to participate in the talks through their authorised representatives.

Pakistan's Foreign Affairs Advisor Sartaj Aziz surprised many in his speech at the Council on Foreign Relations in the US when he admitted that Pakistan had influence over Taliban, which it could use to bring them to the negotiating table, a fact that Islamabad denied for years. (Pajhwok)

(6) ANSF Recapture ...

on Thursday morning hours after evicting militants from the troubled area asserted, "Some 280 Taliban insurgents have been killed and around 200 others injured" during the operation, which is continuing.

Nevertheless, the official avoided commenting on casualties of government forces by saying, "our casualties are few."

Earlier in the day, Baghlan's provincial governor Abdul Sattar Bariz informed reporters about recapturing Dand-e-Ghori district. However, the governor didn't provide details, saying security officials would brief the media on the situation in Dand-e-Ghori later in the day.

Dand-e-Ghori has served as bastion of Taliban in the northern Baghlan province from where the militants organized their activities in Baghlan and its neighboring Kunduz and Takhar provinces.

To evict Taliban from the area, the government forces launched major offensive, five weeks ago which have claimed hundreds of lives and scores other homeless.

Taliban militants who have claimed killing some 100 security forces over the past five weeks of fighting in the restive Dand-e-Ghori, are yet to make comment on the situation there.

Meantime, local military analysts believe that cleansing Dand-e-Ghori from Taliban by government forces would demoralize militants in the neighboring Dand-e-Shabudin and Baghlan-e-Markazi districts to escape the ongoing military onslaughts. (Xinhua)

(7) Govt. 'Failing' ...

yielded good results in other countries," said Alias Wardak, an expert of energy and water.

Experts say the international community has not invested enough in dams and water management in Afghanistan over the past 14 years and as result, Afghanistan - despite its sound potential to generate hydropower - imports 78 percent of its electricity at a high cost from neighboring countries.

"Unfortunately, the international community has done nothing in terms of water management in Afghanistan. However, it is very important for agricultural and economic growth of Afghanistan," said Najib Fahim, a lecturer at Kabul University.

Officials at the Ministry of Energy and Water said investment in water resources in Afghanistan is one of government's top priorities.

"We are trying to pave the ground for the construction of dams through domestic resources and then we want to pave the ground for joint investments with neighboring countries," said Abdul Basir Azimi, spokesman for the ministry.

He, however, said that such investment should be in line with the national interests of Afghanistan.

Afghanistan has the capacity of 75 billion cubic meters water annual-

ly, of which 82 percent is surface water and the remaining 18 percent is underground water.

Based on these figures, Afghanistan utilizes only 25 percent of its water capacity, say experts. (Tolonews)

(8) US Deputy

and a date for direct talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban.

The four-nation group had invited the Taliban to attend the talks with the Afghan representatives in Pakistan in early March.

However, the Taliban have so far said nothing about their participation in the talks. (Pajhwok)

(9) Washington,...

between the insurgency in Afghanistan and organized narcotics trafficking, the State Department observed.

"2015 saw a resurgence of the security challenges seen in earlier periods of the insurgency, and the intensity of active battles undermined progress toward the Afghan government's drug control goals," the report acknowledged.

An Afghan farmer works on a poppy field collecting the green bulbs swollen with raw opium, the main ingredient in heroin.

The State Department explained that drug traffickers provide weapons and funding to the Afghan insurgency in exchange for the protection of drug trade routes, cultivation fields, laboratories and trafficking organizations.

The Taliban generates revenue by taxing drugs trafficked through areas they control, the State Department noted.

Afghanistan has one of the highest substance abuse rates in the world with an estimated 3 million people being addicted, or 11 percent of the population, it added. (Sputnik)

(10) Despite Challenges,...

completed in-time and the pace of work had been slow. He urged security institutions to cooperate with MoPW in implementing project as he expressed his concern over the current state of law and order situation across the country.

Rohani, however, said despite challenges and problems the contractors faced, many as 24,000 kilometres of roads in the country had been asphalted. Of the asphalted roads, 3,060km were regional highways, ring roads, provincial roads and national highways.

Rohani said more than \$4 billion spent on asphalt works had been provided by aid-giving countries.

He said Afghanistan had 18,000 kilometres of roads asphalted before the decades of war. The continued conflict in the country led to the destruction of 15,000 kilometres of roads.

He said his was striving to construct more roads in order to improve economic situation of the county. (Pajhwok)

(11) Belarus President ...

Belarus has strong positions in that country. The relationship with the leadership of Tajikistan is very good.

"Through Tajikistan we can cooperate with the neighbouring states. The cooperation with Tajikistan should be further promoted," the President said. (Agencies)

(12) Focus on ...

language lessons. It is reported that up to 40 migrants between the ages of 15 and 18 are now living in the town of Alta.

But there are some concerns that facilities provided to the Syrian refugees aren't available to the Afghan migrants. For instance, the Syrians are getting an education while the Afghan education begins with simple tasks such as learning to shower or to use a western toilet.

Although, Europe-wide statistics for 2015 will not be available until the spring season, national figures cited the proportion of unaccompanied minors among asylum seekers has risen.

The trend was particularly noticeable in Norway and Sweden, where about one in five asylum-seekers was a minor traveling alone, up from one in 10 the year before.

Elyas, 17, is one of the unaccompanied migrants. He said him and his brother were taken to Russia by a powerful man in his village, who promised them work so that they could send money to their parents. "For poor people, when they see a little goodness in life, they quickly accept that," he said from the former hotel where they now live.

"In Russia, we didn't do anything... only work. From 4 o'clock

in the morning up to 8 o'clock at night."

After their bad experience in Russia, last fall they heard that the Norwegian border was open, they wanted to go, but they had no money to leave Russia and move to Norway.

Elyas said they stole about \$1,000 USD for tickets to Norway.

After a brief stay in a border camp, Elyas was transferred to the Alta shelter. Because his brother is 18, he was taken to an ordinary refugee shelter.

Elyas, whose case is still being processed by Norwegian immigration authorities, worries about being sent back to Russia, but most of all he worries about his parents.

He said what he doesn't want to think about is that his parents might have been punished after they escaped in Russia.

"We are just worried now about our family. Where are they? Are they alive or not?"

Meanwhile, Elyas's legal guardian has said on condition of anonymity that the boy is one of tens of thousands of Afghan teenagers who showed up on Europe's doorstep last year, in perhaps the most unexpected and challenging aspect of the migrant crisis.

Statistics show that up to 20,000 young Afghan migrants reached Sweden in a matter of weeks, equaling the number of unaccompanied minors that applied for asylum in all of Europe the year before.

"This is very difficult," says 15-year-old Abdul Kabir from Afghanistan as he narrates his journey. "We are all young boys, 15, 16. Some are sick, some have problems."

Kabir's uncle paid smugglers to take him to Iran, Turkey and Bulgaria. He says he was detained by police, beaten by smugglers, and now years for his family.

"Smugglers come and kick us every time. And when we want water, they say they don't have water 'go fast, fast,'" he explains. Meanwhile, an official at the Alta migration center has said that the Norwegian government has established a camp for these migrants to help them learn local activities and make sure they integrate into western society.

"The camp for the minors here in Alta is fairly new, so we just started one of the most important things about integration and that is connecting them to local activities, teams playing football and handball and other activities with the local youth," head of Alta migration center said.

Analysts are still trying to work out why the Afghan numbers soared so suddenly in the fall. Most cite a deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan, where civilian casualties of the war rose to record levels for the seventh year in a row in 2015, according to the United Nations. (Tolonews)

(13) Trump Favours ...

have to get India involved. India's the check to Pakistan," Trump said in a radio last September when asked what he would do if Pakistan "the most dangerous country in the world other than Iran," became unstable. (Pajhwok)

(14) Face-to-Face...

next two months where they will issue a fatwa on the ongoing war in Afghanistan - and even they will term it haram (forbidden) in Pakistan," he added.

The peace negotiation process stalled this past summer after it was revealed that the Taliban's longtime leader Mullah Omar had been dead for two years. (Tolonews)

(15) Splitting Electoral...

and district council elections would be impossible next solar year if the security situation further worsened or not improved.

The IEC has announced an October 15 date for holding the long-delayed parliamentary and district council elections, but the announcement appeared to have been made without coordination with the government.

Sadat said ensuring security and financing elections was not the job of election commissions, but the responsibility of the government and the international community. He believed the government had no intention to hold the elections because illegal interference in the electoral system proved the government was not honest towards the process.

"The parliamentary rejection of the president's legislative decrees on electoral reform shows the government is interfering. I don't think

the president will again commit such a mistake because releasing decrees was a historic mistake by the president," he said.

The president is expected to release another legislative decree on electoral reform before the parliament's winter recess ends and the new legislative session of the assembly begins.

"The electoral system cannot be reformed by replacing election commissioners rather the move would worsen the situation because all government positions are divided between the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the president. It would bear dangerous consequences if the election commissions are also divided," Satad warned. (Pajhwok)

(16) Rare Afghan...

Afghanistan," tells a powerful human story of resilience and creativity amidst the ruins of war in Afghanistan, focusing on the lives of the young Afghan artists living and working there.

"This showcases Afghanistan's amazing cultural history," the Afghan Ambassador to the US Abdullah Mohib told reporters during a press preview at the prestigious Smithsonian's Arthur M Sackler Gallery here on Thursday.

This would show the people the other side of Afghanistan, which is the beautiful and artistic side of the country, he added, saying there was much more to see in Afghanistan than what usually makes the news. For centuries, Afghans had been the world most talented artisan and craftsmen. Their work had been collected, treasured and appreciated, the Ambassador said.

The exhibition, which would be in display till January next year, has been made possible by the support given to Turquoise Mountain Trust through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It has also invited Afghan artisans to participate in the exhibition.

Sugra Hussainy, the artist who travelled from Afghanistan to attend this art exhibition said situation in Afghanistan for artisans had improved tremendously in the last few years. "During Taliban regime, I was at home. Now I am doing the work that I like, which has brought me to the United States," she said.

For this exhibition, she and two friends have made all the raw material - including paper, pens, and pigments - to create a piece of illumination work and calligraphy. (Pajhwok)

(17) MoI Concerned...

government officials.

He said a high-ranking official from the Attorney General's Office in Paghman district was arrested for having taken a 70,000 Afs bribe adding that in addition, "a criminal investigation officer from the 15th district was arrested, but was unfortunately released by the relevant court," he added.

He expressed his deep concerns over the alleged interference of high ranking officials in securing the release of corrupt officials and smugglers.

"These people have links with high ranking officials and lawmakers. They [officials and lawmakers] force us not to arrest criminals," Andarabi added.

Meanwhile, TOLONews has received documents that show that a security chief at the police headquarters of Logar province has been arrested for smuggling and has been in police custody for the past 10 days. However, Mohammad Azim Mohseni, a lawmaker from Baghlan province is trying to release him. (Tolonews)

(18) Terrorists...

told the media here.

"It is noteworthy that attackers could not breach security," he added.

Earlier yesterday, at least six people were injured, after a suicide bomber detonated himself near the blast-hit area.

The blast was a suicide attack, which was followed by gun fires. (ANI)

(19) 5 Militants ...

firmed two Afghan security personnel also lost their lives to the clashes that left another three security men injured.

But a Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, claimed the fighters killed 17 ALP members and wounded another 15 in their attack. He acknowledged the killing of only two militants and injuries to three others. (Pajhwok)

(20) Remote-Controlled...

blamed Taliban outfit for organizing the bloody bombing, saying militants loyal to Taliban group usually conduct subversive activities to terrorize the people.

Taliban militants who are active in parts of Balkh province have yet to claim responsibility. (Xinhua)

(21) Sugar Price ...

bourhood, said the price of one gram of Arabian gold was sold for 2,250afis and the price of same quantity of the Russian variety stood at 1,800afis.

Abdul Hadi, a filling station worker in Wazirabad locality, said a liter of petrol was sold at 39afis and the same amount of diesel at 33afis, the same prices as last week's. (Pajhwok)

(22) Ringleader...

been involved a series of kidnappings including the kidnapping a 14-year-old boy Aminullah, son of Qandi Shah, the statement added. The NDS also said a ringleader and his five accomplices involved in kidnappings had also been arrested in Parwan province. The statement identified the ringleader as Mohammad Afzal aka Major General Pikar. The five other detainees included a woman. (Pajhwok)

(23) Taliban Prisoner ...

the jail for having links with the Taliban group, Gen. Dil Agha Adil, head of Sar-e-Pul jail told RFE/Radio Liberty.

He said the prisoner was looking to use the opportunity on Thursday morning which is normally the visiting day for the relatives of the prisoners. (KP)

(24) Police Rescue ...

put me in a white car and brought me here." Meanwhile, his father, Wasi, said that he is a car dealer and the kidnappers had demanded a ransom of \$1.5 million USD for his son. "I was ready to pay them \$70,000 to 80,000 USD, but they didn't accept that and I didn't have \$1.5 million USD," he added. (Tolonews)

(25) EU Outlines...

operation. "Our efforts are not done yet," Chancellor Angela Merkel told a joint news conference with President Francois Hollande. "I understand that Turkey also expects Europe to deliver. (Reuters)

(26) Civilian ...

structure continued to be destroyed or damaged throughout February, with both parties targeting protected civilian sites. On Feb. 3, 14 civilians were killed and 53 injured, including children, after air strikes reportedly hit a cement factory in Amran. In the same incident, 11 houses and shops were damaged and 11 vehicles destroyed, including an ambulance and a police car. (Xinhua)

(27) Russia "Seriously..."

nuclear test on Jan. 6 and went ahead with a long-range rocket launch on Feb. 7. The move has been condemned by the international community. The U.N. Security Council on Wednesday unanimously approved a new package of sanctions against the DPRK, which includes a ban on all exports of coal, iron, iron ore, gold, titanium ore, vanadium ore and rare earth metals from the DPRK. (Xinhua)

(28) Iraqi Army ...

In Diyala, a suicide bomber struck a funeral in the town of Maqadiyah and killed 34 people, including Ali Hamad al-Temimi, Diyala's provincial leader of Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq militia. Six more prominent leaders of Shiite militias were among the killed in the funeral. (Xinhua)

(29) Germany ...

from this reactor, and that's why the environment minister demands the reactor be shut down as soon as possible," said Stephan Haufe, a spokesman for Germany's environment ministry.

Haufe said the incident was discussed by a Franco-German nuclear safety panel at the time, and Berlin agreed with Paris' assessment about the seriousness of the incident - "one" on a scale from zero to seven. (AP)

(30) Idea of Early ...

said. "The idea... is not just provocative it is really unrealistic and would be proof that there is no negotiation and no discussion taking place." A statement issued by the Kremlin after the conference call said plans by Bashar al Assad's government to hold elections in April "will not hamper steps towards a peace process. (Reuters)