

### (1) Marzari's...

adding such gathering should not be used for political purposes.

The vice president lamented some people used Mazari name for their political purposes and widened the gap with what actually Mazari believed on.

About the social justice in regards to the implementation of development projects he said the unity government was implementing the development projects in every corner of the country and some uplift projects were being executed in areas of Hazarajat.

Former president and Jihadi leader Hazrat Sibghatullah Mujadidi said Mazari did not believe on ethnicity and never wanted differences among Muslims triggered under Sunni, Shia, Hazar or Pashto names.

He asked the people to follow the guidance of Mazari to further strengthen national unity.

Ustad Karim Khalili, deputy head of the High Peace Council (HPC), said: "One of our generations raised in the environment of conflict, asking the audience that shall we wait that another generation of our will be raised in conflict situation."

Hailing the international forces cooperation in fight against terrorism, he said insecurity was growing in the country every day.

Khalili stressed an Afghan-led and owned mechanism was the best way to reach lasting peace in the country and it should be followed. (Pajhwok)

### (2) China Vows ...

national stability and security," he stated.

At least 50 people were killed and 91 others were wounded after five attackers stormed Sardar Mohammad Daud Hospital in the fortified Wazir Akbar Khan diplomatic district Wednesday morning.

According to figures released by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), more than 3,490 civilians were killed and over 7,920 others were injured in conflict-related incidents across Afghanistan last year. (Tolonews)

### (3) Japan Announces ...

Representative (Protection) Ms. Tracey Maulfair, WFP Country Director and Representative Finbarr Curran, and Representatives from the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) Secretariat and KP government were also present.

The government of Japan has allocated \$3 million to UNHCR for implementation of its priority interventions in the provision of legal assistance to Afghan refugees in Pakistan.

The funding by Japan will, in addition to providing legal assistance to an estimated 22,500 refugees in Pakistan, also support an estimated 50,000 persons from the refugee population and the communities hosting them in accessing health care and education, as well as some 210 youths who will be undergoing vocational training courses throughout Pakistan.

With the assistance, WFP will support 82,389 beneficiaries including 42,874 children of 6-59 months of age and 39,515 pregnant and lactating women over the period of six months.

The \$4 million will enable WFP to procure a total of 1,097 metric tons of quality "Ready-to-Use supplementary foods" that will be distributed in four districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province i.e. Peshawar, Nowshera, Hangu and Kohat, identified as the districts hosting the highest number of Afghan refugees and host communities.

Speaking at the occasion, Quadir Baloch said that "the interventions are in line with the Government of Pakistan's priorities to ensure adequate nutritious food provision to Afghan refugees residing in Pakistan."

He said the government of Pakistan was committed to maintaining food security and protection of the Afghan population living in Pakistan.

He said his ministry will be working in close liaison with UNHCR and WFP to provide continuous support to Afghan refugees and host communities in Pakistan.

Ambassador of Japan Takashi Kurai said their government attached great importance to supporting Afghan refugees and their host communities.

"With this grant from people of Japan, assistance will be provided to host communities as well as Afghan refugees."

He added: "I am sure that this assistance will significantly alleviate the burden on them (host communities). Japan has been assisting Afghan refugees in Pakistan and their host communities for more than ten years with the grant aid of more than USD 200 million."

He hoped the grant aid would be fully utilized and put positive impact on the young generations and thus the future of Afghan refugees and host communities.

Acting UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator Indrika Ratwatte expressed gratitude to the government and people of Japan for demonstrating their commitment and supporting the uprooted people. "Japan has always been a strong supporter of the global humanitarian efforts," Ratwatte said, adding with this contribution, WFP and UNHCR will be able to provide meaningful support and assistance to those in need."

WFP Country Director and Representative Finbarr Curran said that "the Government of Japan has been a key partner in maintaining food security and nutrition of temporarily displaced population in Pakistan and Afghan refugees."

"The joint partnership will contribute towards supporting the tripartite agreement between Governments of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran for sustainable return of Afghan refugees in their country of return. WFP foresees that these investments in nutrition programme will have a significant impact on the economic development of both countries".

Pakistan has been home to millions of Afghans for more than 37 years and continues to host the world's largest protracted refugee population. (Pajhwok)

### (4) IEC Needs ...

the [upcoming] elections will face hurdle if we use the traditional and old systems," she added.

Schedule of parliamentary and districts councils' elections is not finalized yet, but the IEC will decide about it in the near future, Badghisi stated.

She mentioned that 38 percent of electoral commissions' seats are vacant and that the IEC has kicked off the process to appoint new staff and fill the seats.

Meanwhile, Sarwar Danish, the Second Vice President, at an event in Kabul on Friday, pointed out to electoral issues and said government is committed to hold the upcoming elections as a key element for practicing democracy in the country.

"Election[s] is a key element for practicing democracy in the country. The National Unity Government will hold the [coming] parliamentary and districts councils' elections," he said. (Tolonews)

### (5) Ghani Vows t...

Ghani was present on the occasion. At the start, Eng. Zalkia Wardak congratulated the Afghan women on the occasion of the international women's day and called today's gathering a unique one.

She said the Afghan women suffered the most in the ongoing conflict as they lost their soldier sons in the line of duty. She thanked the president for listening to the problems and suggestions of the bereaved mothers at today's gathering.

Advisor to the president, Malalai Shinwari, named a woman Zil Hajja who lost her three police sons to the insurgency in southern Helmand.

Zil Hajja, who was present at the gathering, said her sons had been martyred by the enemies of Afghanistan. She said her fourth son who was injured in the line of duty was still in the battlefield.

The grief-stricken but undeterred mother said she was proud of her sons who sacrificed their lives in the defence of the motherland. She urged the president to resolve problems of the widows of the martyrs and their children.

After listening this, the president said: "This day belongs to those women whose voices are not heard or ignored, but I as an elected servant will listen to you and you take measures to resolve your problems."

He praised the patriotism and bravery of Zil Hajja and said it was the responsibility of all to respect the mother and resolve her issues.

The president said he had directed the departments concerned to take urgent measures for assessing problems of the fallen soldiers' families. (Pajhwok)

### (6) India to ...

plan to build low-cost houses as he was speaking during a gathering for the first ever training batch of officers from Afghan Revenue Department, at National Academy of Direct Taxes (NADT) last month.

India has played a major role in the reconstruction of Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban regime and has invested over \$2 billion in various reconstruction and infrastructure projects.

The construction of the major Salma Dam, the new Afghan parliament building, Zaranj-Delaram highway, and some other projects are among the key investments India has done so far in the country.

In the meantime, the government of India announced a new aid package of \$1 billion for the reconstruction of Afghanistan. (KP)

### (7) Afghanistan...

regarding the 1,266 artillery shells fired on eastern provinces since the month of January that has inflicted casualties to the residents besides causing collateral damage.

The memo also contains information regarding the displacement of more than 400 families due to the shelling. Tensions between Kabul and Islamabad intensified following a series of deadly terrorist attacks in both the countries.

Both Afghanistan and Pakistan claim that the attacks are plotted and carried by the militants having safe havens in the two countries.

The lists of alleged terrorists and information regarding the sanctuaries being used by Taliban and Haqqani network were handed over to Pakistan in response to Pakistani military's list of 76 alleged terrorists.

However, no breakthrough has been reported despite the Afghan government welcomed to jointly work with Islamabad to resolve the issue. (KP)

### (8) Some Paktika ...

Attorney General Office about the involvement of four provincial council members in corruption.

Waziri said they faced problems due to the lack of female prison and female attorneys. He said attorneys would be appointed next year in districts lacking them. (Pajhwok)

### (9) Azizi Bank ...

wishes to all distinguished ladies on the women's day and also articulated the intentions of Azizi Bank to support the cause of the society in the coming days as part of its CSR initiatives.

Mr. Karimi also presented momentous to Her Excellency's - Ministers and other distinguished officials.

Also while speaking on the occasion, Her Excellency Ms. Spozhmai Wardak, Deputy Minister appreciated Azizi Bank's initiative for the cause and called upon other private sectors to contribute and support such humanitarian initiatives.

Azizi Bank, the largest banking group in Afghanistan have made specific corporate social responsibility plans for the year and will continue to support the cause of the society in the coming days. (PR)

### (10) Af-Pak Border ...

Afghanistan-Pakistan sub-region, he said.

"The convergence of these groups and, in particular, the convergence of the Afghan Taliban and its component, the Haqqani Network, and Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, is of particular concern given the direct threat posed to US and coalition personnel and the Afghan government", Votel said.

Key to improving the security environment in Afghanistan was eliminating sanctuary of militant groups in Pakistan's territory," he said.

"The US maintains consistent diplomatic pressure on Pakistan to take appropriate steps to deny safe haven and work to improve the security of the tumultuous Af-Pak border region," the CENTCOM commander said. (Pajhwok)

### (11) Trump Admin...

"I know the secretary has spoken to both the President Ghani and, as well as CEO Abdullah in recent weeks, and days, in fact. He emphasized in those conversations his continued support for the National Unity Government of Afghanistan. And of course, we continue to work with our Afghan partners across a broad spectrum of issues that include security force development, counterterrorism cooperation, as well as economic development," he said. (Pajhwok)

### (12) Kabul Municipality ...

She said cleanliness was not a gender-specific duty, asking the public to play their role in keeping the city clean.

Kemia, 45, another worker, said about International Women Day: "It is good that women have a day. But in Afghanistan, the day is celebrated just for the heck of it. If there is a real will to give women their rights, the municipality should raise our salaries and provide us lunch."

Bibi Gul 50, joined the cleanliness drive four months ago. A mother of six, she said three of her children had to do hard labour to support the family's daily expenses.

Ahmad Behzad Ghayasi, head of the municipality's cleanliness department, confirmed hiring 170 women workers, including 14 for cleanliness. Currently 3,625 women work for the Kabul Municipality. (Pajhwok)

### (13) Daesh,...

or Iraq; it's actually the morphing and mutating of Taliban, TTP (Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan) and IMU into Daesh.

"They are the same people, but there is a lot of re-branding here," he said, adding the groups might be fighting in Nangarhar, but they were collabor-

ating against the Ashraf Ghani government in the northeast.

At a meeting in a few weeks from now, Afghanistan, Russia, India, the US and other players would work out regional and global strategies to tackle curb instability in Afghanistan, he said. (Pajhwok)

### (14) Hospital ...

were not just the patients, doctors, nurses and medical staff, but civilians, including alarming numbers of children, who were denied essential care when clinics and hospitals were forced to close. (Pajhwok)

### (15) Turkmenistan ...

Afghanistan and Turkmenistan. The two posts were insufficient to protect the border, he added.

He criticized the government for protecting and escorting motorcades of two Taliban commanders Mullah Nangyali and Mullah Niazi while the two commanders still spearheaded clashes with security forces. "Dealing this way with Taliban is dangerous."

However, the Turkmenistan consulate in Herat City in a message to reporters rejected Ismail Khan's claims as 'baseless.'

The governor's spokesman, Farhad Jilani, said the Afghan security forces had defeated the insurgents in parts of the province. He said it was untrue that the government was supporting two rebel commanders in Shindand district.

The two commanders are said to be linked to Mullah Rassoul group, a splinter Taliban group that parted ways with the main group after developing differences over the insurgency leadership.

Herat shares the bulk of Afghanistan's 740 kilometers border with Turkmenistan. (Pajhwok)

### (16) Af-Pak ...

and many more wounded.

Both border crossings were closed Wednesday evening for an indefinite period of time, a senior security official told Pajhwok Afghan News. Long queues of trucks loaded with Afghan transit goods are still parked on the Pakistani side. (Pajhwok)

### (17) Security ...

Afghan National Police (ANP), Afghan National Army (ANA) and other security forces.

Durani added five rings of steel and security posts had been set up around the city, with all routes to the provincial capital placed under surveillance. All roads and streets leading to the city would also be watched by the security organs. Security for the celebration of Nawroz was being tightened, he continued.

He said no vehicle would be allowed to ply roads two kilometers from the venue and searching of cars had already been launched at rings of steel. (Pajhwok)

### (18) Govt. Lambasted ...

celebration of women's day is a discriminatory act. Those having connections with the director were invited to the ceremony."

Secondly, Naseri said, all programmes relevant to women were implemented in the city, and no initiative had been taken for the women residing in rural areas.

According to her, women in rural areas and villages of Takhar were suffering illiteracy, domestic violence and the harmful traditions.

Another civil society activist, Farkhanda Shola, told Pajhwok Afghan News millions of dollars were spent on improving women's situation, but they were still experiencing violence.

Shola said 90 percent of cases of violence against women took place in the countryside, but the government executed almost all of programmes in cities.

"Still women are being killed, married off in Ba'ad, deprived of rights, and suffering all kind of violence." She asked the government to initiate awareness programmes for women in rural areas.

Meanwhile, Takhar Women's Affairs Director Razam Ara Hawash confirmed most women-related incidents occurred in rural areas.

Hawash said the women's affairs department had registered 369 cases of violence against women during the ongoing year in the province, including five murders and six sexual assaults.

"Many of the incidents have occurred in rural areas, mostly committed by irresponsible armed individuals, who couldn't be arrested even by police. They are facing many issues which haven't been paid any heed."

The women's affairs department, acknowledging women's problems in rural areas, promised initiation of public awareness programmes next year with support from Germany.

March 8 is marked as Women's International Day, which was also celebrated in Afghanistan like other countries

of the world. (Pajhwok)

### (19) Daesh Presence...

zone, told Pajhwok that she was concerned about the security of women in the presence of the Islamic State group.

She said the Daesh affiliates had kidnapped a number of women during their attacks in the Kot district and similar concerns remained.

In a video message played at the gathering, First Lady Rula Ghani praised the bravery of Nangarhar women. (Pajhwok)

### (20) Daesh Militants...

graveyards and then went on to set alight shrines in the villages.

He said Daesh was not only killing those who were alive but they did not spare even the dead in their graves.

He said the area where the incident took place was under control of Daesh and Taliban militants.

Jawzjan deputy police chief Col. Abdul Hafiz Khashi said confirmed what he called desecration of the shrines by Daesh militants.

He said the same group was behind similar attacks in other parts of the country. He said the area where the shrines were torched was located far away from the provincial capital, Shiberghan.

To a question, he said, a military operation in Qush Tapa and Darzab districts had been discussed with the authorities in Kabul and they had agreed, but no dates had been firmed up.

Jawzjan provincial cleric body head Mufti Mohammad Rassoul said constructing structures on graves and wishing something from the dead was not legitimate in Islam, but the destruction of graves was also wrong. Residents of Darzab district said they were concerned about the incident.

They said torching the shrines was an insult to the saints buried there. (Pajhwok)

### (21) Besieged ...

roads to the three districts had been cut off with Sharana, the provincial capital, in Gawashti area by the Taliban.

He said the residents including women and youth were contributing to the security of the district.

Abdul Shakor, the head of local security force, said he had lost 35 members of his family to keeping security of the district.

Some days back, he said, the Taliban executed his cousin in the Gawashti area and distributed a video of the murder to local people.

Afsar Khan Sulimankhel, a member of the provincial council, said the residents of the three districts had rendered many sacrifices, but currently there were under siege and lived like prisoners.

He asked the government to immediately resolve the security issue, otherwise the people would face famine.

Paktika Governor Elyas Wahdat said they might not be in the position to reopen the roads in near future due to a lack of resources. He said they needed more security personnel and proper planning to reopen the roads. (Pajhwok)

### (22) Taliban Control ...

"As we don't have any check-post. After patrolling the highway in daytime, we return to the Kunduz police headquarters and discharge duty from 8am to 4pm on the highway. But as soon as we leave, the insurgents take control of the highway."

Abdul Lateef, another official at the police headquarters who discharges duty with a rocket on his shoulder, said: "As we leave in the afternoon, Taliban come out of their hideouts and by establish a checkpoint."

"They (fighters) search commuters and the highway remains under their control at night" the official said, adding the situation offered cause for concern for drivers and passengers.

Shafiq, a driver on the Kunduz-Takhar highway, complained the route was insecure and passengers could not travel comfortably, particularly in night. (Pajhwok)

### (23) Govt's Security ...

institutions must safeguard the people.

Behnam who was serving others became a victim of the terrorist attack on Wednesday leaving three children and widow behind.

"I feel pain in my heart. I lost a piece of body, my elder son. He had a family, he had three sons, he had wife," said major general Behnam.

Religious scholars have denounced Wednesday's attack at the military hospital as a crime against humanity. Behnam's three other brothers also serve in the ranks of Afghan National Army (ANA).

They said that the terrorists will kill more civilians if the government does not take firm action.

"I put myself forward with complete

determination. Perhaps I will face a similar fate again. I served in the army for 35 years, perhaps my other sons will also face a similar situation. What happens to the people happens to me as well," added Behnam. (Tolonews)

### (24) Taliban Stones...

district administrative chief Dawlat Mohammad Khawar confirmed the incident and said the woman was stoned to death after she faced a trial openly along with the man from the Taliban insurgents.

This is not the first time the Taliban insurgents have public tried and executed women over adultery and other charges in Badakhshan.

According to the statistics provided by the local officials, the group has executed at least five women over various charges in the past two years in this province. (KP)

### (25) Hizb-E-Islami...

Abdul Sattar Murad, head of political committee of Hizb-e-Islami.

"Peace is the main aspiration of the people of Afghanistan, we have made a lot of sacrifices for peace," said former presidential advisor Niamatullah Shahrani.

"As a consequence of the return of Hekmatyar, article 3 of the constitution will find a big supporter," said Sayed Hussain Alimi Balkhi, chairman Aital Party of Afghanistan. (Tolonews)

### (26) 20 Taliban ...

In the meantime, the Ministry of Defense (MoD), said the Afghan forces also conducted an airstrike in the vicinity of Nish district.

MoD said at least four militants were killed in the airstrike and another militant was wounded.

The security situation had improved considerably during the recent years but the anti-government armed militants have resumed their insurgency as they attempt to boost insurgency in key southern provinces. (KP)

### (27) Kabul Plans ...

Ahmad Behzad Ghiasi, head of Kabul municipality cleanliness department.

It is expected the similar projects will be implemented in other provinces once the project is executed in Kabul. (Tolonews)

### (28) Russia Committed ...

repeated U.S. accusations groundless. "Let them present the facts of these violations. We have heard enough baseless conversations lately," Ozerov said.

Worries about a new arms race between Russia and the United States have risen after U.S. President Donald Trump proposed last month to raise its 2018 military and security spending by 54 billion U.S. dollars. (Xinhua)

### (29) EU Summit...

to the conclusions.

Tusk on Thursday won another term despite opposition from his home country Poland.

"The European Council today re-elected Donald Tusk as its president for a second term of two-and-a-half years, from June 1, 2017 to Nov. 30, 2019," the council on Thursday announced in a statement. (Xinhua)

"(30) ASEAN, EU... be a solution, but will rather reinforce the problems."

The challenge for leaders is to make a strong case for open, fair and free trade and to ensure it is efficient, benefits small businesses and increases investment and jobs. (AP)

### (31) Russian Warplanes...

the last four years.

After taking control of the ancient city of Palmyra, the Syrian government troops continued their offensive to the east of the city, capturing dominant heights, and extend the security zone to the north and south, Rudskoy said. (Xinhua)

### (32) EU Leaders ...

against unfair trading practices, wherever necessary. We want to set the global standard for free and fair trade," he added. The leaders during the meeting have discussed the European economy with the president of the European Central Bank. (Xinhua)

### (33) Merkel's ...

44 percent support.

In February the same poll had shown 49 percent of Germans wanted Schulz, the former European Parliament president, to become chancellor compared with 38 percent who wanted Merkel to stay in office. (Reuters)

### (34) Syrian Crisis ...

To get the forefront in the Moscow meeting and cast shadow on issues such as Turkey's demand of absolute trade normalization since Moscow imposed sanctions after downing of the jet, said Sezer, adding that he is not optimistic that Russia will meet Turkey's expectations entirely. (Xinhua)