

### (1) Security Agencies...

Ghani spoke of his support for special operations against terrorists, but called on the Special Forces of the Afghan National Police and the National Directorate of Security (NDS) Forces to be more diligent and to not torture those who are captured during their operations.

"There must be no torture and inhuman deeds in the national directorate of security and dealing with the enemy must be based on the law," Ghani said.

Ghani meanwhile emphasized the need to continue special operations. "Our special operations are important because it creates fear in the heart of the enemy," Ghani added. At the end of the ceremony Ghani also honored six members of the NDS with state medals for their efforts.

This comes after government also announced the finalization of the next solar year's military operations plan.

This operation will start in the spring under the name of "Operation Nusrat" and according to government officials, assessing the strengths and weaknesses of this year's operational program has played a key role in preparing next year's plan. (Tolo news)

### (2) OIC Urges Sincere...

regional cooperation and mobilize resources for political settlement, normalization, and speedy reconstruction of Afghanistan, which are imperative for stability and sustainable development in the region and beyond," the Secretary General said.

### (3) Pak Presses US...

"There was also a great deal of focus on peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan and, both sides welcomed Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's recent peace offer to the Taliban," said Ambassador Aizaz Ahmed Chaudhary, who attended both meetings.

Gen. Joseph L. Votel, who heads the US Central Command was included in the US team for the talks. Gen. Votel's inclusion in the White House team was supported by Pakistan as he has always strongly advocated maintaining a strong relationship with Islamabad.

"They do realise Pakistan's importance, repeatedly said it, and stressed it yesterday too," said Janjua when asked if Gen Votel was the only US official who considered Pakistan an important ally.

She pointed out that she had come to Washington on a "reach-out" visit, but when US officials learned about it they arranged high-level meetings, reflecting the fact that Washington continued to value this important relationship.

"We told them that this is a long-term relationship, which needs a structured dialogue process," Janjua said.

Janjua further pointed out at 'many actors' in Afghanistan and suggested that they might not be completely in support of Islamabad reconciliation efforts.

"We can only play a facilitative role, she added.

The last US-Pakistan strategic ministerial process was held in Washington in February 2016. (ANI)

### (4) US Rules out...

troops from Afghanistan -- a precondition set by the rebels for talks. America's senior diplomat for South and Central Asia said the US was in Afghanistan at the request of its government and people would be stay there to make sure the country did not become a safe haven for terrorists again.

"The recent Taliban letter to the people of the United States, I believe, misses the point. For eight years, the US has been prepared to support a peace process, but we cannot be a substitute for the Afghan people in the Afghan government negotiations with the Taliban," Alice Wells remarked.

Speaking at the US Institute of Peace, a Congress-supported think-tank, she said: "The Taliban were at

war with the Afghan people long before US military operations began in 2001. Now obviously the US has a direct interest in the resolution of this conflict and the Taliban have frequently stated the need for all foreign troops to depart Afghanistan is a precondition for negotiations.

"We are in Afghanistan as a guest of a sovereign Afghan government that's recognized by the UN and international community, with our presence enshrined in the strategic partnership agreement and a bilateral security agreement."

She added the US would continue its mission so long as the independent Afghan government agreed to host and work with the Americans. To a question, she said the Taliban could not expect direct talks with the US as had happened in the case of North Korea. There was no comparison between North and South Korea and Afghanistan, the diplomat argued.

Wells noted North and South Korea had spoken to each other in advance of the president's offer to engage in the conversation.

"So, what we're looking for in Afghanistan is a fundamental recognition that in an insurgency, the insurgents and the government that is ruling need to engage in a conversation with one another as well as with other interested parties to that settlement. We have been very consistent in this approach," Wells said.

President Ashraf Ghani recently concluded the second Kabul Process conference, laying out some important principles in his remarks about implementation of the peace process. That would require the support of the international community.

There was no way to walk away from Afghanistan even in a time of peace. "But I can certainly assure you we understand how difficult it is and how essential it is to the success of the overall effort.

"Certainly it's only going to be when we see the success of the stabilization of Afghanistan that we in the international community can draw the confidence that the level of our presence is not required," Wells said.

The Afghan government's ability to manage its own security and territory in a responsible fashion would all feed into the international assessment of how to structure future relations with Afghanistan, Wells said.

Accusing the Taliban of being indifferent to the Afghan people, she believed it was time for the conflict to end. "There's a way to end this conflict. There's a will to end this conflict. There's international support to this. It's the Taliban who are the stumbling block to peace."

The diplomat said it was up to the Taliban leaders to respond to this serious offer of talks from Ghani. The US supported Ghani's move and was prepared to facilitate it, the official explained.

Wells said when it came to the United States, its conditions-based South Asia strategy ensured the Taliban could not win on the battlefield, but it recognized that a resolution to the conflict would be through a negotiated settlement. (Tolo news)

### (5) Ministry of Mines...

that we will achieve results," said Sayed Zaman Hashimi, a legal expert in the mining industry.

Seventeen years ago, attempts were started to begin the extraction of minerals at the country's largest mines.

Of these, Aynak Copper Mine, Hajigak Iron Mine, Tajik and Amu Darya oilfields, and several other mines, were earmarked as key mines but little has been done to date to get these mines up and running. (Tolo news)

### (6) Sherpao Stresses...

normalising relations between the neighbours

Both countries should demonstrate cooperation and a firm resolve to

eradicate violence on both sides of the border, Sherpao said, adding his party was trying to protect the rights of Pakhtuns.

"Both Islamabad and Kabul should promote security and stability through fruitful dialogue," remarked Sherpao, former chief minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. (Pajhwok)

### (7) 9 in the Run...

Samim Barakzai, and Irfanullah Irfan for the deputy secretary.

Ballots are being cast days after the Wolesi Jirga -- lower house of parliament -- returned from a 45-day winter recess. (Pajhwok)

### (8) Super Six...

keep their hopes of Super Six qualification alive.

Chasing just 195 for victory, Afghanistan wrapped up their first win of the tournament by six wickets with 11.2 overs to spare, the ICC reported.

Captain Rashid Khan sprung a surprise by walking out to open the innings and got things off to a lively start, hitting five fours during a 14-ball stay that reaped 21. His partner Javed Ahmadi was more sedate, building his way to 26 off 54 balls and from 93/2, Nepal really needed to force a dramatic collapse if they were to achieve an unlikely victory. It never came.

No.3 Rahmat Shah hit 46 off 75 balls and Mohammad Nabi 34 off 32 before both were removed by Dipendra Singh Airee, ICC reported.

Following their recent results, there will have been a few nerves among the Afghanistan camp but they didn't show. Najibullah Zadran brought about an early finish with a brisk 47-ball 52 featuring three sixes and four fours - including an 18-run over off left-arm spinner Basant Regmi to put the result beyond doubt.

Earlier, the spin trio of Mohammad Nabi (4/33), Rashid Khan (3/45) and Mujeeb Zadran (1/24) did the bulk of the damage, while Shapoor Zadran, the fiery paceman, got two wickets towards the close to end with 2/32, but the standout performance came from the gallant Nepal captain Paras Khadka, who almost single-handedly kept his team in the fight with an 82-ball 75, reported ICC.

Mujeeb Zadran struck as early as in the fourth over, sending back Anil Sah, but the experienced firm of Gyanendra Malla, the opener, and Khadka then kept the Afghan bowlers at bay for 22 overs, adding 92 runs for the second wicket. Khadka was by far the more aggressive of the two, and Malla had contributed only 23 in 69 balls when he became Rashid's first victim.

One wicket brought two for Afghanistan, as Khadka was dismissed soon after by Nabi, his wonderful innings studded with 10 fours and a six, and Nabi quickly accounted for Rohit Paudel too to leave Nepal at 123/4.

That Nepal still managed to bat for 49.5 overs and add some decent meat to their total was down to Dipendra Airee, who scored a 41-ball 32, and Aarif Sheikh, who contributed 23 from 36 balls, even as Nabi added the scalps of Sheikh and Sompal Kami to his kitty. (Tolo news)

### (9) Terrorists Have...

is that tourism is back in Pakistan. Last year after many many years our tourism figure reached two million," Saleem said.

At the same event, former prime minister of Britain Gordon Brown stressed the need to continue the international community's support to Afghanistan in order to improve security and economy in the country. "We need international cooperation to build prosperity and growth. You will not have the levels of growth and prosperity and jobs and world economy if you do not have international economic cooperation," he said.

At this event, Afghanistan envoys asked the international community to pressure countries against state-sponsorship of terrorism in a bid to

improve security and the economy in Afghanistan and the region.

"Our demand from the officials of the conference was that the countries which are involved in Afghanistan issues and those who create instability in Afghanistan and in the region should be reminded that the best way to improve the economy and expand cooperation is (by strengthening) relations between countries," Mohammad Ishaq, a university lecturer and a delegate at the conference, told TOLO news. Representatives of more than 30 Asian and European countries attended the conference at the Academy for Cultural Diplomacy in Berlin to assess economic challenges in countries and to find ways to overcome the hurdles.

TOLO news reporter Sharif Amiri, who reported from the event, said part of the conference has focused on crucial issues including security, and fighting insurgency and corruption in Afghanistan. He says that delegates at the event stressed the need to continue supporting Afghanistan to remove the challenges. The remarks by the Pakistani envoy comes amid increasing pressure by the United States to stop Pakistan from harboring terrorists. The pressure is part of the US's new strategy for South Asia and Afghanistan.

In a recent military operation by Afghan security forces in Helmand province, in the south of Afghanistan, three Pakistani militants were among 10 terrorists killed in the operation. The operation was conducted by National Directorate of Security (NDS) operatives in Helmand province, the NDS said in a statement on Friday. (Tolo news)

### (10) Elections for...

Irfan as deputy secretary of the lower house.

The administrative board poll for Meshrano Jirga was held on March 7. The upper house re-elected Mohammad Alam Ezdyar as first deputy chairman, Mohammad Asif Seddiqi as second deputy chairman, Taib Atta as secretary and Mohamad Faisal Samay as deputy secretary. (Pajhwok)

### Ayatollah Khamenei Slams Double Standards on Use of Chemicals

TEHRAN - Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has blasted certain countries for applying a double-standard approach to the use of chemical weapons.

At a Saturday meeting with a group of teenagers and youths in Tehran, the Leader pointed to the use of chemical weapons by the regime of the former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein against Iranian people during the eight-year war in 1980s. In the course of that war, Ayatollah Khamenei said, France gave its most advanced planes and helicopters to the Saddam regime, while Germany supplied it with toxic chemical materials.

"Those who are today attacking a certain group over the accusation of using chemicals, openly gave Saddam such materials for making bombs," the Leader said.

Ayatollah Khamenei said there are still Iranian soldiers who continue to suffer from the aftereffects of Saddam's chemical attacks, and many others have been martyred. Hundreds of thousands of Iranians were killed in the Iraqi-imposed war and many more were affected by the chemical weapons like mustard gas that were used by the Saddam regime.

Iraq once possessed a huge arsenal of chemical weapons, the production of which was facilitated by exports of chemicals as well as financial and technological support from the United States and other Western countries.

According to reports, the US spy agency CIA knew about Iraq's use of chemical weapons as early as 1983, but the US took no action against the violations of international law, and even failed to alert

the UN.

Ayatollah Khamenei's remarks came at a time when the US and its allies are accusing the Syrian government of using chemical weapons during its fight against terrorist groups. Damascus has rejected the accusations, saying they are meant to protect the foreign-backed terrorists in the face of army gains.

The Leader further said International powers imposed the eight-year war Iran with the aim of destroying the Islamic Revolution, but they failed to achieve this goal thanks to the Iranian youth's bravery, prudence and sacrifices. (Press TV)

### Trump Says North Korea Deal Would Be 'Very Good'

SEOUL, South Korea - President Donald Trump says a deal with North Korea, "if completed," will be very good for the world. Trump appears to be referring to North Korea agreeing to give up its nuclear weapons arsenal. That has been a key demand of the United States and other world powers.

Trump tweets Friday night: "The deal with North Korea is very much in the making and will be, if completed, a very good one for the World. Time and place to be determined." The president has agreed to meet North Korean leader Kim Jong Un for a historic face-to-face summit. South Korean officials who recently met with Kim told their White House counterparts Thursday that Kim was eager to meet with Trump. The White House says President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping have discussed North Korea. The leaders spoke Friday, the day after Trump agreed to meet North Korean leader Kim Jong Un at a date and time still to be determined. The White House says Trump and Xi "welcomed the prospect" of dialogue between the U.S. and North Korea. They also committed to keep pressure and sanctions in place until North Korea takes "tangible steps" toward "complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization." Trump expressed hope that Kim will choose a brighter path for his country.

China is North Korea's main benefactor. Trump has urged his Chinese counterpart to help pressure North Korea into abandoning its nuclear program. The White House says the president won't hold a highly-anticipated meeting with North Korea's leader unless he takes "concrete steps" that match promises made ahead of the talks. Spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders says North Korea has made promises to denuclearize, stop its nuclear and missile testing and allow joint U.S.-South Korean military exercises. Sanders says President Donald Trump won't have the meeting "until we see concrete actions that match the words and the rhetoric of North Korea." No time or place has been chosen. No sitting U.S. president has ever met with a North Korean leader. (AP)

### Turkmen President to Visit Kuwait, UAE

ASHGABAT - Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov is slated to visit Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, the Turkmen State News Agency (TDH) reported March 10. The visits were discussed at a government meeting.

"The head of state, noting with satisfaction [at the meeting] the constructive nature of relations with Kuwait and the UAE, pointed to an impressive potential and prospects for building up bilateral economic and trade ties, intensifying investment activities and business contacts, and deepening the traditional dialogue in the humanitarian and cultural areas aimed at strengthening ties of friendship between our countries and peoples," the report reads. (Trend)