

(1) Ghani Grants...

constitution of the country. Ghani recalled the late martyr's emphasis on bolstering the women's role considering the then situation of the country and his demand has turned into a reality today. President Ghani also added that Mazari had a firm belief on peace and stability in the country who was believing that war is not an option to resolve the issues of the country.

Vice President Mohammad Sarwar Danish also participated in the event and briefed the different angles of the personality of Mazari and his activities. (KP)

(2) Protestors Want...

wanted the release of their key leader Salahuddin Ayubi, a shadow governor who was captured by security forces and was still in detention.

Meanwhile, the Taliban were being the captive soldiers were said kept in a safe place and the group had not presented any condition for their release. But the Ministry of Defence (MoD) insisted it had been striving to pave the way for their release. Brig. Gen. Dawlat Waziri, MoD's deputy spokesman, said it was the ministry's responsibility to make possible the release of the soldiers.

He added the ministry did not want a single soldier to be in insurgents' captivity. In the past, he recalled, the some soldiers held by the Taliban had been freed as a result of MoD efforts. (Pajhwok)

(3) Zahir Qadir ...

Nazir Ahmad Ahmadzai, Abdul Qayum Sajjadi, Farida Hamidi, Ahmad Behzad, Farhad Siddiqui and Akbar Stanikzai were candidates for the position of second deputy speaker in previous elections, but none was able to secure more than 50 percent of votes.

Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahim said the top two candidates -- Niamatullah Ghafari with 105 votes and Haji Nazir Ahmad Ahmadzai with 89 votes-- would compete in the second round of voting on Sunday. (Pajhwok)

(4) Based on New....

been under Taliban's rule. Fifteen more interpreters are, facing death threats from the militants, are reportedly trying to enter to enter Britain after desperately fleeing Afghanistan. While overturning the ban on deportations, the Court of Appeal said its verdict was driven legal reasons. (Pajhwok)

(5) AAF to

security agreement signed between the two allies. The Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) is an agreement which allows the U.S forces to stay in Afghanistan post-2014 but in a train, advise and assist capacity.

"Activities, and operational and security plans of international forces have been explained in the security agreement and it explains that work needs to be done by them (foreign forces). So we support the activities which are carried out in line with the agreement," said Najibullah Danish, a deputy Mol spokesman.

Referring to the security threats facing the Afghan forces, some Afghan military experts have also asked the nation's international partners to accelerate efforts and ensure a well-equipped and powerful air force is realized.

"We still need fighter and bomber jets including air defense systems and helicopters, transportation and surveillance planes which can supply our forces in remote regions and border posts. Afghanistan also needs radar systems and other air equipment," military analyst Jawed Kohistani said.

Currently, 9,800 US troops are already in Afghanistan with their main focus being on assisting, training and advising Afghan security forces. (Tolnews)

(6) 'No Concessions' ...

Officials have also expressed concern over the potential need for compromise with Ankara, as fears grow over freedom of expression and rights abuses under the rule of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. (AFP)

(7) Decree on ...

provide legal cover for the proposals approved. Some of the major suggestions include registration of voters, making the election bodies accountable, the presence of two foreigners on the Independent

Election Complaints Commission (IECC), reservation of one seat at the Wolesi Jirga for Hindu minority, identification and shrinking of the constituencies.

Other proposals include distribution of the computerised identity cards, a 25 percent representation of women in provincial and district councils and invalidation of the current voter cards. (Pajhwok)

(8) Afghanistan ...

match for us. People in Afghanistan are crazy about cricket. They love the game, so (winning it) was very important for us," victorious captain Asghar Stanikzai said.

With a place in the main draw at stake, Stanikzai opted to bat and was vindicated as Shahzad set alight Nagpur's VCA Stadium with his swashbuckling batting. The portly 28-year-old hit Tendai Chatara for four successive boundaries after a quiet opening over, forcing the pacer off attack. Donald Tiripano was pressed into service but there was no respite from Shahzad who hit him for three successive fours.

Shahzad greeted left-arm spinner Sean Williams by hitting his first delivery for a six but fell in the same over after a 23-ball blitz attempting a reverse sweep.

His dismissal triggered a mini-collapse as Afghanistan, cruising at 49 for no loss in the fifth over, slumped to 63-4 in the eighth. Nabi then joined forces with Shewari to first steady the innings before accelerating.

Beneficiary of a missed stumping opportunity, Nabi hit Wellington Masakadza for two sixes in the same over and brought up his maiden fifty in 30 balls before falling in the final over.

Zimbabwe's erratic bowlers conceded 25 extras, including 17 wides, to make things difficult for themselves.

Chasing a daunting target, Zimbabwe lost their top half for 65 inside 12 overs. Tinashe Panyangara's unbeaten 17 was the top score in the Zimbabwe innings which ended with two balls left.

Leg-spinner Rashid Khan was the pick of the Afghan bowlers, claiming three for 11 in his tidy four overs but Nabi, who also got a wicket with the ball, was adjudged man-of-the-match. (Reuters)

(9) 41 Taliban ...

parts of Zirkoh village, Farhad said.

The infighting between two rival Taliban factions had resulted in the killing of 200 militants on both sides and dozens others were injured.

Tor Mohammad Zarifi, a former member of the provincial council and tribal elder in Shindand, told Pajhwok that after the defeat of Mullah Nangyalai in the infighting, masked gunmen loyal to Mullah Samad carrying black flags took control of villages which had been under Nangyalai and beheaded and gunned down 80 civilians.

Expressing his concern over possible fall of Shindand district to insurgents, Zarifi said security forces were in control of the only district administration building while insurgents ruled the rest of the town.

He said security forces were concerned about their own safety and they could not provide security to civilians. "If the situation continues, Shindand district will fall to the insurgents."

The gubernatorial spokesman said after Mullah Nangyalai fled, his rival Mullah Samad's fighters started killing civilians in the district.

However, Najibullah Najibi, the 207th Zafar military corps spokesman, told Pajhwok that Nangyalai had surrendered to the national army along with his 100 fighters. (Pajhwok)

(10) Irish Defence ...

Irish Defense Forces held the senior Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) appointment in the NATO mission," the statement said.

Lt. Gen. Timothy Radford, deputy commander of RS, praised the Irish contingent's hard work, commitment, good humour and characteristic warmth it brought to Kabul.

The Irish national flag was lowered for the last time at RS headquarters and handed over to Lt. Col. RossaMulcahy, senior Irish officer in Resolute Support. (Pajhwok)

(11) Pakistan Exploits ...

peace track outline of the previous government, suggesting a shift in

Afghanistan's Pakistan policy.

Looking for peace from the address of Pakistan is quite a complicated issue and questionable, he said.

Speaking at a gathering to mark this week's International Women's Day, Daudzai suggested the Afghan government should not build up hopes of peace talks "from the address of Pakistan".

"Why did Pakistan not support yesterday, was she ill?" Daudzai asked. "If today Pakistan supports [the talks], it means that Pakistan's recent stance regarding the issue is to protect its national interests. I can say it with confidence that neither the present government nor a future government will be able to meet the expectations of Pakistan."

While the hopes for the resumption of direct peace negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban have come to a standstill, a number of women's rights activists have questioned the delicate presence of women within the structure of the Afghanistan High Peace Council (HPC).

"Women's presence in the High Peace Council is quite delicate," said Salima Sediqqi, a member of a civil society institution.

"If we explain the role of women on an individual basis, this could be taken as an anti-women move," civil society activist Humaira Saqib said.

Daudzai concluded that Pakistan by meddling in Afghanistan's internal affairs sees to change the game for its own benefit.

"Whenever the peace process reaches a decision point, Pakistan again starts rocket shelling, border invasions and tries to indicate that we have a major problem with Afghanistan and until the issue is resolved, we will not allow Afghanistan to reach peace. This is the message we are getting from Pakistan, but we have also our own message to them, my message to Pakistan is that do not test the limit of our patience, we will mobilize, we will reach you and will make you Muslims," he said.

Hopes had been pinned on Pakistan to bring the Taliban to the negotiation tables in the first week of March, however, the timeline set by Afghan President Ashraf Ghani has not been met. (Tolnews)

(12) \$4bln Spent....

"The roads are in a very bad condition. It is also creating complications for our vehicles and we have no alternatives except to increase our rates," said Mohammad Sadeq, an Afghan bus driver on the Kabul-Torkham highway. "No maintenance work has been done on roads over the past several years and the roads continue to deteriorate," another driver Wais added.

Amid public criticism, the Afghan Ministry of Public Works (MoPW) however confirms roads are damaged and cracked, but says that the lack of sufficient budget has undermined the maintenance process.

"Programs were outlined to undertake the renovation and maintenance of roads, however these programs were not enough to meet the challenge, said Mahdi Rohani, a spokesman for the MoPW.

He said this year's budget was far less than in the past and that it was not enough to fix all damaged roads.

The Afghan government in co-operation with its international partners managed to build about 24,000 kilometers of roads across the country in the past 15 years but most are now in dire need of repair work.

According to field analysts, large scale corruption also increased the construction costs as today \$4 million USD is needed for the construction of only one kilometer of road. (Tolnews)

(13) 6 Specialist...

The graduates, three each in paediatric medicine and paediatric surgery, underwent four years of rigorous specialized training through a programme accredited by Afghanistan's Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) and the Aga Khan University's Postgraduate Medical Education Department.

Dr Ferozuddin Feroz applauded the initiative: "Afghanistan has just 2 doctors for every 10,000 people and a serious shortage of medical specialists," he said. "We support initiatives that can help us increase the number of medi-

cal and surgical specialists in the country and appreciate the assistance provided by the Aga Khan University for this programme." Mr Lee Hilling Chairman Provisional Operating Committee welcomed the guests to the graduation ceremony and congratulated the graduates on their remarkable achievement.

FMIC began providing advanced education to doctors in April 2012 as a way of building and strengthening the local healthcare system. Besides clinical training in Kabul, residents had to go through a three-month rotation at the Aga Khan University Hospital in Karachi, with exposure to advanced techniques and complex cases with multiple complications.

In commending the graduates for their hard work, Mrs Nurjehan Mawani, the AKDN Diplomatic Representative acknowledged the important support for the PGME Programme provided by the Government of Canada, and indeed of all the partners of FMIC. She also thanked the Ministry of Public Health for its ongoing support and collaboration.

She added: "As the Programme expands, its reach will expand. We hope to see more and more women residents joining the programme; the geographical reach will enlarge bringing in residents from more provinces; and the number of disciplines will increase. On average, the Programme expects to graduate 20-25 residents each year - across 10 disciplines."

Mr Philippe Merlin Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of France congratulated the graduating residents and assured continued support of the Government of France in improving healthcare and health human resource development in Afghanistan.

For paediatric surgery graduate Dr Ahmad Jawed Salimi, from the Maidan wardak Province, this was a novel experience. "I feel we received far better training at FMIC than at other residency programmes in the country. During these four years, we also benefited from exposure to international trainers."

Dr Jalil Ahmad Sistani, a paediatric medicine resident from Nimroz Province, felt that as a resident he "gained lots of experience from the faculty, other FMIC doctors and staff. Over the past four years, I have grown both professionally as well as in other aspects of life." PGME residencies are now offered in five more disciplines - anaesthesiology, cardiology, orthopaedics, pathology and radiology - with 49 doctors including five women under training. By 2020, the Programme is expected to have 96 residents on board at any given time and to graduate 20 specialists annually.

"You are doctors, surgeons in Kabul, I am a surgeon in Paris, we are all bound by the same oath of Hippocrates, in the same respect we have to our patients. This universality that knows no frontiers, make the beauty of our profession," added Dr Eric Cheysson, President of the French NGO La Chaine de l'Espoir, in the concluding address.

The event was attended by government officials, representatives of Canadian and French Embassy, AKDN agency heads, civil society and media. (KP)

(14) Government ...

political leadership is weak." Maulvi Qalamuddin, an ally of the opposition party and head of his own party Harkat-i-Intiqalab Afghanistan, also lashed out at the unity government over differences between its top leaders.

"The unity government leaders are in a tussle and as a result, top government posts remain vacant and economic and security problems have increased," he said, claiming people had lost faith in the government.

"Don't let the people lose faith in government because they will not participate in future elections." Other speakers hoped the government would take crucial steps towards reforms and improved security in the country. (Pajhwok)

(15) Work on...

have 350 shops, 80 washrooms, a 17-metre long hall for fruit sales, a parking lot and other allied facilities.

An orchard owner in Zheri district, Haji Abdul Qayum, happy over the project, said it would enable orchard owners to sell their fruits in-time and export to other countries from the same venue. A fruit trader, Haji Naimatullah,

said they faced problems in packing and storing fruits, but these problems would be resolved with construction of the market, which would standardize their trade. He said fruit production would enhance in Kandahar, Helmand, Uruzgan and Zabul provinces with the market where marketing facilities would be available for traders. (Pajhwok)

(16) 19 Taliban ...

a tactical retreat from certain posts in the volatile districts of Helmand recently, a move that the defense officials said was aimed at bolstering the security of central military bases.

Meanwhile, the Taliban militants launched a coordinated attack on a number of governmental compounds in Greshk district on Wednesday which lasted until early Friday before all 10 suicide bombers were shot dead by the security personnel. (KP)

(17) 11 Kidnapped...

vehicle en route to Sar-i-Pul City, the provincial capital, from the Mirza Aw Lang village of Qafal-ton area and abducted 11 passengers.

Meanwhile, a Taliban commander in Kohistanat district told Pajhwok over the telephone the abducted men were supporters of the government and took part in clashes with the Taliban. (Pajhwok)

(18) Militant ...

and three other civilians were wounded during a clash in Sarboli locality, the gubernatorial spokesman said. The injured were evacuated to the emergency centre at the Panjsher Hospital.

Meanwhile, Ghulam Nabi, a resident of Charkalaarea, said they had evacuated their homes and shifted to safer places as heavy clashes were underway in the area. (Pajhwok)

(19) Taliban...

another provincial council member, said roads connecting Mangor, Pir Shahbaz, Ziway, Qalaghach and several other areas with Ghazni City had been blocked by militants.

He asked security forces to launch clearing operations and reopen the roads as soon as possible.

Local security officials also confirmed roads of several areas in Andar district and some villages on the outskirts of Ghazni City had been planted with bombs by Taliban.

Ghazni police chief Aminullah Amarkhil said they would launch clearing operation in the mentioned areas soon.

A Taliban spokesman, Qari Yousuf Ahmadi, said the roads were blocked only for one day for a specific goal. He said the roads were currently open. (Pajhwok)

(20) Police Foil ...

given regarding the exact timing of the operation that led to the failure of the attack plot but the Taliban-led insurgency has been rampant during the recent months with the militants of the group staging deadly attacks across the country, including capital Kabul.

In the latest attempt to disrupt the security of the capital, a suicide bomber attempted to enter a government compound near the Presidential Palace but his explosives went off prematurely leaving only himself dead.

The Taliban militants carried out a deadly attack on the Ministry of Defense personnel late last month, leaving at least 15 dead and 31 others wounded.

According to defense officials, an Army Sergeants, 3 servicemembers, 1 civilian worker, 1 civil engineer, serving with the Ministry of Defense were martyred along with 4 civilians in the attack. (KP)

(21) From Turkey, ...

and his father survived the tragedy.

The family members of six dead bodies denied to talks with media outlets.

More than a million refugees arrived in Europe by sea in 2015, with over 80 percent entering via Greece, according to the UN.

According to the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation, around 250,000 Afghan migrants have traveled to European countries in the past one year. (Pajhwok)

(22) Russia Confident...

Syrian government and the opposition could be possible."

The United States and Russia agreed on a plan for a cease-fire in Syria that began on Feb. 27. The tentative truce deal has been

largely observed, though sporadic violations were reported.

Also on Saturday, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, who is in Saudi Arabia for a visit, reaffirmed that the new round of intra-Syrian talks should go ahead as planned. (Xinhua)

(23) Iraqi Forces...

Khalil, commander of an army regiment, in AlbuDe'ij area in south of the militant-seized city of Fallujah, some 50 km west of Baghdad, the source said.

Separately, U.S.-led coalition and Iraqi aircraft bombed a convoy of four vehicles carrying IS militants near the town of al-Bagh-dadi, some 190 km northwest of Baghdad, destroying the four vehicles and killing at least 14 militants aboard, the source added. (Xinhua)

(24) Iraqi Forces...

security forces and HashdShaabi units, which managed to retake control of key towns of the province from the hands of IS militants who seized large part of it in June 2014.

In northern province of Kirkuk, six IS suicide bombers attacked a military base housing Kurdish forces, known as Peshmerga, in Dibis area in northwest of the city of Kirkuk, some 250 km north of Baghdad. (Xinhua)

(25) UNESCO...

common human evolution, and nobody could feel unattached when watching scenes of their destruction," Bokova said.

He added that a lack of education was not the only, but one of the many drivers behind civil wars and armed conflicts.

"Studies conducted by UNESCO found out that 250 million boys and girls worldwide are illiterate although they had a primary school education of four years.

This is why the UNESCO strategic plan for 2030, the Education Agenda 2030, is to improve the quality of education globally," the 63-year old Bulgarian UNESCO chief said. The broader goal of the agenda is to create "resilient societies" which are able to educate children through promoting tolerance and teachings about the value of cultural heritage," she said. (Xinhua)

(26) Damascus Rules...

talks aim to build on a U.S.-Russian "cessation of hostilities" agreement that has halted much of the fighting between the Syrian government and rebels fighting to topple Assad since it came into effect two weeks ago. (Reuters)

(27) OSCE Calls...

that the participants of the meeting focused on continuing releasing of those who are still being held in captivity, and mentioned search for missing persons. Sajdik believed that allowing the access of the International Committee of the Red Cross to all prisoners in the Donetsk and Lugansk regions would accelerate this process.

The representative reminded that a few days ago the meetings of all four subgroups of the contact group were held in Minsk. Sajdik said the economic subgroup discussed infrastructure reconstruction, water supply and environmental protection, adding the reconstruction of infrastructure was complicated by the ceasefire violations and delays in the work of demining. (Xinhua)

(28) Nigerian...

was no casualty or injury on the part of the troops," he added.

"Operations to clear all known Boko Haram terrorists camps and hideouts are ongoing as troops remain committed to the clearance and apprehension of the Boko Haram terrorists in the country," the military spokesman said. Nigerian forces have recently been carrying out aggressive patrols and surveillance by land and air in Borno State and the entire northeast region where the Boko Haram launched more deadly attacks since 2009. Boko Haram, a local insurgent group seeking an end to Western education, has allegedly killed more than 13,000 people and abducted hundreds since it started its operations in 2009. (Xinhua)

(29) China, Russia ...

and would lead to an arms race. Both Wang and Lavrov stressed the need to beef up coordination on a number of growing challenges in world affairs. (Xinhua)