

(1) ARG Commemorates...

on the demands of the Afghan citizens." He also said, "the biggest Consultative Jirga that symbolizes the will of the Afghans will be held on 29 April, 2019".

President Ghani called the elections as a national process and told he hoped all Afghans get ready for this vital national process.

Sarwar Danesh the Second Vice President thanked the president granting the title of "the Martyr of the National Unity", to Martyr mazari and he thanked Ghani for honoring the national Afghan personalities. Danesh said, "State building was the base of the political thought of Martyr Mazari". According to the Second Vice President, justice and equality, citizen based state and elections were the core foundations of Mazari's political struggles.

Danesh said, "Citizen based state means that citizenship and individuality is the criteria for everything, regardless of ethnicity, religion, race, gender, language, political and social orientations of an individual". In terms of social injustice, the vice president said, "Mazari questioned why people are classified to the poor and rich in the society and why some politicians wanted to sideline others". Danesh said, "Justice was the main strategy of Mazari; individual and social justice".

Abdullah the Chief Executive said, "Mazari talked of citizenship rights, elections as the symbol of the people's will, and peace. Today, peace and putting an end to the war are the main concerns of the Afghans yet".

Abdullah said, "Peace does not mean keeping on hold the elections". He added that we hear that Taliban has agreed to cut ties with the terrorist groups, and it is good news. However, Taliban shall not say the something they kept telling one decade ago that, "Al-Qaeda is not present in Afghanistan."

Abdul Rauf Ibrahim the speaker of Wolesi Jirga said, "Martyr Mazari was center of Unity of some political parties in his time and he tried to create an environment that All Afghans to live in unity and harmony." (DOA)

(2) Berlin, Islamabad...

Prime Minister Khan told Maas Pakistan attached high importance to its relations with Germany, characterised by shared democratic values and multifaceted cooperation.

Both Islamabad and Berlin had a crucial part to play, Mass said, explaining Germany was the second largest contributor of troops to Afghanistan and Pakistan was its immediate neighbour.

About 1,300 German soldiers are part of NATO's Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, training and assisting the local security forces. (Pajhwok)

(3) U.S., Taliban...

negotiations on a political settlement and comprehensive ceasefire," Khalilzad said.

SOME PROGRESS

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the sides made progress on the issues of withdrawing foreign forces and preventing future attacks on other countries from Afghanistan. But, in a statement, he stressed that no agreement was reached on a ceasefire or talks with the Afghan government. A spokesman for Afghan President Ashraf Ghani tweeted that he hoped to see a long-term ceasefire agreement and the start of direct talks between the government and Taliban soon.

The talks were held in a closed-off banquet hall at the five-star Ritz-Carlton seaside hotel on the southern end of Doha.

Qatar has hosted the Taliban's political office since 2013 and has looked to position itself as an important regional player for conflict resolution. "We appreciate how difficult it is to end 18 years of war. Qatar looks forward to resumption of the talks in the coming weeks," said Qatar's lead mediator Mutlaq Bin Majid Al-Qahtani. No date has been set for the next round.

Khalilzad said he would return to Washington to brief U.S. and international officials.

Talks ended on a day in which Taliban insurgents stepped up pressure on the battlefield, killing 20 Afghan

soldiers and capturing another 20 in western Afghanistan. In another province, officials said an air strike killed both Taliban fighters and civilians.

About 14,000 U.S. troops are based in Afghanistan as part of a U.S.-led NATO mission to train, assist and advise Afghan forces. Some U.S. forces carry out counter-terrorism operations.

The United States has been pushing the Taliban to agree to a ceasefire and to talk with Afghanistan's government, which the militant group considers a U.S. puppet regime.

"The U.S. officials were pressing the Taliban to declare a ceasefire, but our leaders were clear that a ceasefire can only be announced after the foreign force withdrawal announcement (is) made," said a senior Taliban commander privy to the tal

Another Taliban source said on condition of anonymity there was frustration on some issues during the peace talks and that a senior member of the Islamist group told U.S. officials at one point that the Taliban are "not their servants" and need no U.S. approval for any future decisions.

Washington intervened in Afghanistan in 2001 to help overthrow a Taliban government that had sheltered Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda group, responsible for the Sept. 11 attacks that killed nearly 3,000 people in the United States.

A U.S.-led international force has fought since then against a Taliban insurgency. The foreign presence peaked in 2010 at more than 130,000 troops including 100,000 Americans, but was sharply cut back after 2014.

Nearly 3,500 foreign troops including 2,300 Americans have died in Afghanistan. The United Nations has tallied the deaths of more than 30,000 Afghan civilians since 2009, most killed by insurgent attacks. Tens of thousands of members of the Afghan security forces and an unknown number of insurgents have also been killed. (Reuters)

(4) Mullah Omar...

National Directorate of Security released the news about Omar's death three months later.

"At first, four people from Taliban leadership knew about Mullah Omar's death. One of them was Akhtar Mansour and he did not want Omar's death to spread among the Taliban and wanted to preserve their power," said Nabil.

Nabil's remarks come after a Dutch journalist Bette Dam in a book "Search for an Enemy" has said that Mullah Omar lived within walking distance from US a base in the southern Zabul Afghanistan for years.

The findings by Dam, on Mullah Omar's whereabouts, was rejected by the Afghan government as well as by the former NDS chief Amrullah Saleh. Talking to TOLONews, Dam, insisted on accuracy of her report and said she repeatedly spoke with almost 150 sources on this matter.

"I tried to talk to as many people as possible. In total, I spoke to 150 people, but many of them I spoke many times, not once. I came back again and again to speak more about the issue of Mullah Omar," said Dam. She said the American soldiers were making mistakes in fighting the Taliban and that by doing the research she wanted to provide a bigger and accurate picture of the enemy to help the West know their enemy which will then help them suppress the militants.

"The main reason why I wanted to write this is to understand why the western forces going to Afghanistan and do so many mistakes and basically don't know how to deal with the enemy. So my goal was to provide the information about the enemy so there would be a better discussion about who the Americans is fighting," Dam added.

Dam's remarks were the first ever claim made about the presence of Mullah Omar in Afghanistan.

Taliban has confirmed the information and has released footages of a house that according to the group Mullah Omar was living there. The group said Mullah Omar had never left Afghanistan. (Tolo news)

(5) Afghan Forces...

in the war-ravaged country.

Abdul Aziz Baik, chairman for the

Badghes provincial assembly, told Anadolu Agency that the Taliban stormed the Afghan National Army check posts in the Ludinha area of the Badghes province bordering Turkmenistan in the wee hours on Monday.

He said 20 soldiers were killed, ten others injured and 20 more were taken away as captives by the rebels.

The Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid has asserted that a total of 57 soldiers have been killed, 12 wounded and eight more taken into custody in different provinces.

It came in the backdrop of an ongoing marathon talks between the U.S. and the Taliban in Doha, Qatar over the proposed peace process in Afghanistan. (AA)

(6) Ghani Orders...

organization has documented 3,804 civilian deaths, including 927 children, in 2018.

In total, UNAMA documented 10,993 civilian casualties (3,804 deaths and 7,189) wounded), representing a five percent increase in overall civilian casualties and an 11 percent increase in civilian deaths compared with 2017.

In this report, UNAMA attributes the majority of civilian casualties - 63 percent - to anti-government elements (37 percent to Taliban, 20 percent to Daesh, and 6 percent to undetermined anti-government elements).

According to the report, pro-government forces caused 24 percent civilian deaths (14 percent by Afghan national security forces, six percent by international military forces, and four percent by other pro-government armed groups and forces).

The report says that key factors contributing to the significant increase in civilian casualties were a spike in suicide attacks by anti-government elements, mainly Daesh, as well as increased harm to civilians from aerial and search operations by pro-government forces.

The report says that 2018 witnessed the highest number of civilian casualties ever recorded from suicide attacks and aerial operations. (Tolo news)

(7) Ghani Leaves...

forces in changing global politics", "Sustainable Development Challenges", "Middle Eastern cooperation for security", "Role of science and culture in making modern decisions" and other topics will be held during the forum.

One of the main meetings of the forum will be devoted to the role of young leaders in global politics.

Besides well-known statesmen, politicians, reputable public figures, the incumbent heads of state and government will attend the event. (Pajhwok)

(8) India Receives...

multi-modal transportation route like Chabahar and International North-South Transport (INSTC) Corridor", Dilip Chenoy, secretary general, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, told the media after receiving the shipment.

In May 2016, India, Iran, and Afghanistan signed an agreement on the establishment of a Transit and Transport Corridor among the three countries using Chabahar port as the regional hub for sea transportation. The agreement aimed at developing the southern Iranian port into a regional trade hub.

Chabahar port, inaugurated in 2017, has been built largely by India and provides a key supply route for Afghanistan while allowing India to bypass rival Pakistan to trade with Central Asia. Most of Afghanistan's imports and exports currently go through Pakistan, which Kabul accuses of harbouring the Afghan Taliban. The US State Department in November 2018 exempted the Chabahar port project from its sanctions on Iran in recognition of its importance to war-torn Afghanistan.

Afghanistan's exports to India reported an increase of 40 percent after the launch of an air corridor between Kabul and New Delhi in 2017. On 11 March 2019, India and Afghanistan operationalised another air corridor between Herat and New Delhi that is expected to further boost the bilateral trade. (Sputnik)

(9) Customs Revenue...

for FY-1397, prevention of merchants

smuggling and standardization of customs performances.

In addition, they also talked about regulated customs clearance and enforcement of customs law, procedures and tariffs.

At the end, the provincial customs authorities, in order to meet the goals, signed a commitment letter.

The commitment letter is considered as main criteria of provincial authorities, based on which the Director General of Revenue will evaluate the customs performance at the end of every three months (quarter) and report it to the minister for necessary decision. (Pajhwok)

(10) Meaningful...

Also on Tuesday, Qatar announced the US and Taliban had made progress in their longest round of negotiations in Doha to end the 17-year-old war in Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(11) TAPI Pipeline...

a plan to make a transport and energy corridor between Pakistan and Turkmenistan via Afghanistan and to lay an optic-fibre network parallel to the route of the pipeline. (Pajhwok)

(12) 513 Cadets...

training at the NMAA is high, and I have full confidence that these young officers graduating today are ready to take the fight to the enemy" said Pughe-Morgan.

The addition of these new, young officers is vital for the ANA. "The ANA needs young leaders (platoon and company commanders) in the battlefield," said Lieutenant General. Payenda Mohammad Nazim, commander of the Unified Training, Education and Doctrine Command (UTED-C), the central ANA command responsible for training. "The new leaders are ready with full courage, education, commitment and dedication to serve the nation," said Payenda.

The Army Institutional Advisory Team has worked closely with the ANA in the development of the Unified Training, Education and Doctrine Command. "The UTED-C is a new command that brings together the various education, leadership development, training and doctrine commands under one unified command and training system. It is a major step towards an efficient, self-sustaining and affordable Afghan National Army," said Pughe-Morgan. "The establishment of UTED-C will increase effectiveness in all aspects of training and education within the ANA, with the support of Resolute Support mission," said Payenda. This work has already born fruit. "The UTED-C revised the NMAA curriculum and brought balance between the military and academic studies," said Payenda. "They have the right skills to lead the fight against terrorists in the combat zone."

NATO remains committed to help the Afghan Security Institutions to pave the way towards peace. (Pajhwok)

(13) Kandahar Border...

financial woes of the forces and their families.

He said due to insecurity ground routes were closed and since long they had not received supplies and allowances.

He further complained they used old weapons and lacked advanced weapons and called for attention to this issue as well.

Abdul Rahman, another border policeman in Spin Boldak district, also said they were without salary for the last three months.

He said at the end of every month their families awaited their salary to cover household and other expenses. He urged the government to address the issue on time because it had caused financial issues which impacted on the policemen mind as well.

Meanwhile, Sadiq Esa, deputy spokesman of the 205th Atal Military Corps in Kandahar, told Pajhwok that the Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers were receiving their salary normally every month, but the border police salaries had been delayed.

He also asked the government to pay salaries to the border police through the APSS system as it was convincing and a modern system. (Pajhwok)

(14) Protestors Block...

to the area and savagely thrashed one of the parties while taking sides."

A number of other protestors held similar views and urged the government to address the issue at the earliest possible.

Meanwhile, the Khanjan district police chief did not answer consecutive telephonic calls from Pajhwok.

However, the provincial police spokesman, Javed Basharat, said he was unaware about the protestors' allegations.

He said the provincial police chief and the district police chief had arrived at the protest site to reopen the highway. (Pajhwok)

(15) 2 Suspects...

spokesman Nasrut Rahimi wrote on his Facebook account that Kabul police crime branch investigation officials had arrested the kidnapers of the girl.

According to Rahimi, Mahasa after being kidnapped three days back, was hanged to death by her captors as her family did not provide them \$300,000 in return for her release.

Rahim said after receiving information, security forces conducted searches and found the girl's body and arrested two of her abductors.

Jamshid Rasouli, the AGO's spokesman, told Pajhwok the dead body of Mahasa was found in the limits of 11th police district and those behind her murder would be punished as per the law. (Pajhwok)

(16) China Offers...

Maduro has blamed Washington for organising what he said was a sophisticated cyber attack on Venezuela's hydroelectric power operations. (Reuters)

(17) 'Blatant Extortion'...

The energy route brings Russian natural gas to Europe and is to double its capacity before next year, much to the chagrin of Washington, which labels it as a threat to European energy security.

Berlin's interest is to maintain close relations with Moscow despite what Washington wants, the ex-Chancellor said. "We cannot join Russia-bashing, as the Americans expect us to," he said. He added that the European Union can only stand up to economic giants like the US and China as a whole.

Washington is pressuring its allies to discriminate against Chinese telecommunication companies like Huawei when selecting providers of equipment and software for the next-generation 5G wireless networks. The US claims doing otherwise would pose a security risk, since Chinese companies may share data transmitted through the networks with the Chinese government.

Germany insists it saw no evidence from the US to support the accusation and believes that any company may take part in the upgrade, as long as it agrees to German cybersecurity guidelines. Beijing says the US is using scaremongering tactics to undermine Chinese bids for lucrative projects and that it is nothing but unfair competition. (RT)

(18) 'Tell Us What You...

Belgian MEP who serves as the legislature's representative for Brexit, said such an extension should only be granted if British lawmakers offer a concrete plan for what they could achieve after getting one. He warned Britain against trying to hijack the agenda in the upcoming pan-European election with Brexit problems in late May. He also went on Twitter to crack a joke at the expense of Britons, saying that those who voted to leave with the goal of taking back control of their country now see it spiraling out of control. (RT)

(19) 'Dictator' V 'Tyrant'...

Erdogan attacks Israel's democracy while Turkish journalists and judges fill his prisons. What a joke!"

Erdogan's spokesman responded by calling Israel an apartheid state on Wednesday. His boss also got personally involved in the spat, berating Netanyahu during a rally speech. "Hey Netanyahu, behave yourself. You are a tyrant, you are a tyrant who massacred seven-year-old Palestinian children," Erdogan said. (RT)