

### (1) Corruption...

plan for the reconstruction of old Kabul City.

Ghani asked public representatives to provide their suggestions for resolving Kabul municipality problems.

"We begin series of our meetings with Kabul people's representatives, we will provide proper solutions to the current issues after hearing suggestions of the representatives," he assured participants of the meeting. Regarding Kabul cleanliness Ghani said, "We are taking actions for a permanent garbage management in Kabul City; we have talked with several private companies for resolving the issue." (Pajhwok)

### (2) Kabul is...

from Hirmand River to Hamoun Lake.

In 1973, the two countries signed a treaty in which Afghanistan agreed to allow 26 cubic meters of water flow per second into Iranian territory.

Water from the river, known as Helmand in Afghanistan, rises from Hindu Kush Mountain and flows into Kajaki Dam in Afghanistan, before reaching Iran's southern province of Sistan-Baluchestan.

The river water flow is vital to the existence of Iran's eastern Hamoun Lake, which serves as a major water resource for the country's eastern province.

During the Taliban's seven-year rule of Afghanistan, from 1994 to 2001, the water flow to Iran was halted.

As a result, Lake Hamoun dried up, leading to the death of fauna and flora in the area. (IRNA)

### (3) We Defeat ...

in Helmand," he said.

While responding to a query, he said that the numbers of security personnel have been increased, so Taliban could not carry out their spring attacks in the province.

However, a member of provincial council, Atullah Afghan, said that similar delegations had already come to the province with no positive result.

Another member of the council, Baralay Nazari, said increasing numbers of soldiers could not improve security of the province, if there is week management.

There were still ghost soldiers of security forces, so the problem has to be addressed and the key officials of security forces should be transferred from the province. (Pajhwok)

### (4) Electoral Reform...

regarding peace talks with militants, saying "peaceful and stable Afghanistan is in the interest of all countries in the region." He said terrorism was a common challenge and needed a joint struggle to be combated. (Pajhwok)

### (5) Red Cross ...

to assisting and protecting the people affected by the ongoing armed conflict.

Upon his arrival to Kabul, he is expected to meet with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah to exchange ideas on the humanitarian aid in the war-plagued nation.

He will also make field trips to provinces to see the displaced people and visit local orthopedic centers. (Xinhua)

### (6) Kabul, Berlin ...

after spending three months in Germany, he felt that his dream was not going to become a reality and decided to return to Kabul.

He said he had been lured by human traffickers to flee the country. "The human traffickers are playing with people's lives. Europe and Germany is not a good place to live," he said.

Aryan said government has pledged to provide them with jobs and housing. "We haven't received any help so far," he added.

According to statistics provided by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), more than one million people, including Afghans, have entered Europe illegally in the past year. (Tolonews)

### (7) India Plans ...

has welcomed the move and called for the implementation of the project in the near future.

"Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries warmly welcomes the developments on the establishment of Chabahar port and believes the port is in the interests of Afghanistan," deputy financial head of ACCI Tawfiq Dawari said. "Government of Afghanistan looks forward to finalizing the agreement on the establishment of Chabahar port, countries involved in the agreement are also willing that the

agreement is finalized soon," Musafir Qoqandi spokesman for the ministry of commerce and industries said. (Tolonews)

### (8) Despite Taliban...

for their preconditions but they will likely not win any support for this approach as it is seen as a major obstacle blocking the political process. As the Taliban has kept its political option open and appointed a political commission, their rejection of peace negotiations could be contrary to their own policy.

The Afghan government has shown flexibility and has not attached any precondition to the face-to-face talks with the Taliban groups and the insurgents are also expected to follow suit to push for the political resolution. Afghan deputy foreign minister Khalil Hekmat

Karzai told members of a Pakistani security delegation in Kabul last week that his government is ready to discuss any of the Taliban demands if the group first come to the negotiation table.

The Taliban should not miss this opportunity and should show flexibility like the Afghan government has to start the process. It is not only Afghanistan, but Pakistan and other members of the quadrilateral process of Pakistan including Afghanistan, China and the United States are unanimous in believing that there should be no preconditions for the dialogue.

The Taliban have long been calling for talks first with the U.S. to discuss certain issues related to the U.S. and its western allies, like discussions on a time-frame for the withdrawal of the foreign troops and de-listing the Taliban leaders from the UN sanctions list.

The Taliban do not have any support for their demand to hold talks with the U.S. and bypass the Afghan government. The Taliban currently have a good chance to join the four-nation peace process as they can convey their demands in the presence of the U.S. officials.

The quadrilateral grouping in its meeting last month in Kabul, had invited the Taliban to join the talks by the first week of March. But the Taliban came up with a negative response that has disappointed members of the four-way mechanism. Despite negative signals from the Taliban at this stage, the quadrilateral is still looking into options of how to encourage the Taliban to change their stubborn behavior about the negotiations.

The quadrilateral process, in a series of meetings, has reached an understanding to take action against the irreconcilable elements, but Pakistan insisted that all available options must be exhausted before any action.

This is a logical approach as the use of force over the past 15 years could not solve the Afghan problem.

The Taliban top negotiator, Sher Abbas Stanekzai, had listed certain measures ahead of joining the peace talks when he spoke at a non-government conference in Qatar in January that included the opening of their political office in Qatar, the release of prisoners, and the removal of international travel curbs on their leaders.

As peace and reconciliation is urgently required in Afghanistan to end the years of conflict, the Afghan government and all stakeholders should work on some confidence building measures to bring the Taliban to the table. (Xinhua)

### (9) Sherpao Calls...

near the Durand Line.

Strenuous efforts were needed to bring the tribal population into national mainstream, he said, acknowledging tribes-people had rendered unprecedented sacrifices in the past decade.

"The internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Khyber, Orakzai, North Waziristan and South Waziristan agencies are still waiting to be sent back home. The government has no comprehensive plan to compensate them," Sherpao added. (Pajhwok)

### (10) Salang Corridor ...

the year round north-south passages of good and people across the Hindu Kush Mountain. Given the lack of alternative routes, the vast majority of goods shipped to Kabul from the north traverse the Salang Corridor. However, after more than 50 years of service the road has fallen into a state of deterioration.

"Considering the importance of rehabilitation of this corridor, which will provide safe and quick access for goods and people linking the south with the north, Japan and ADB decided to continue the Feasibility Study and Geotechnical Analysis, as well as detailed engineering study and procurement assistance,"

read the statement.

It went on to state: "The Japanese contribution will be allocated to the feasibility study, such as geotechnical survey and preparation of technical designs, safeguard studies and economic analysis."

"ADB will achieve the project preparation work in close cooperation with the Ministry of Public Works of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan."

Japan has assisted Afghanistan's nation-building efforts in various fields including security, education, health, agriculture, culture, humanitarian aid and infrastructure and capacity development. (Tolonews)

### (11) MoFA Foresees ...

dialogue with government. We hope the negotiations start in the near future," said Khairullah Azad, a deputy spokesman for MoFA.

The statements come a few weeks after the Taliban stated it would not hold direct talks with the government unless the group's preconditions are met, a move that overshadowed recent hopes for peace with the hardline movement that is engaging in an armed struggle against government forces - 15 years after being ousted from power.

Meanwhile, Hekmatyar's green light for peace dialogue has been widely welcomed by members of the Afghan High Peace Council.

"Taliban and Hekmatyar have shown readiness for peace, therefore we suggest the government responds positively. If these talks are held with Hekmatyar, the Taliban likely will be encouraged as well," HPC member Qazi Mohammad Amin Weqad said.

This comes days after senior officials from Afghanistan, US, China and Pakistan, at the last Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG) meeting, announced that the first round of talks will begin with the Taliban in the first week of March, something later rejected by the Taliban. When asked about the Taliban's refusal to join the peace process, MoFA said that their recent refusal cannot be assessed as the group's resolute stance on peace talks.

"The announcement cannot demonstrate the group's resolute position, setting up preconditions for talks itself shows their inclination for peace," MoFA deputy spokesman Khairullah Azad said.

While an exact timeframe and venue for direct talks between Taliban and government are yet to be finalized, MoFA feels the group will eventually endorse the process, adding that Pakistan has committed itself to get the Taliban to hold direct talks with the government to end the ongoing war in the country. (Tolonews)

### (12) Afghanzoy ...

supporters of President Ghani during the presidential election.

The appointment comes a day after a farewell ceremony for Anwar Ishaqzai, former governor of Zabul, during which people urged government to send an able man to their province. (KP)

### (13) Only Way ...

the insurgents to end the war in Afghanistan," Raziq said.

Raziq meanwhile, called on government to continue military operations while working on the peace process. "Our leaders should continue their efforts for negotiations but our security forces should continue their military operations to provide security for the people," he said.

Officials at the Presidential Palace have however said military operations will be carried out against any group that fails to renounce violence in the country.

Officials said the peace talks door is open to all insurgent groups and that government will welcome groups that want to renounce violence.

Deputy spokesman for President Ashraf Ghani, Sayed Zafar Hashemi said "our position is very clear with holding of peace talks with all insurgent groups who renounce violence and who stop working for foreign interests and that talks are under the constitution of Afghanistan. But those groups who continue with violence will have military action taken against them."

These comments come shortly after a number of U.S officials warned of a tough fighting season this year - which is due to launch within the next few weeks. (Tolonews)

### (14) Ghafari Elected ...

lawmakers was also necessary. Of the 131 members present, 127 raised their green cards to repose confidence in Ghafari. On Saturday, Zahir Qadir, former first deputy speaker of the lower house, was re-elected to the position. Earlier, Abdul Rauf Inami, a

lawmaker from Badakhshan, was elected as secretary and Erfanullah Erfan as deputy secretary. (Pajhwok)

### (15) IEC Warns ...

according to the timeline and under the management of the new IEC members.

The IEC chief meanwhile has urged President Ashraf Ghani to ensure there is no outside interference in the process.

"Prominent figures within government, foreign embassies and UN-AMA are attempting to interfere in the election [process] under different pretexts, such a move could delay the election timeline," Nuristani said.

We suggested the government approve half of the election budget by February 4 so that the IEC could conduct parliamentary elections, but no response came from the government's side on the issue yet, he said.

According to Nuristani, despite the UN having pledged the timely approval of the election budget, government feels reluctant to ask the UN for the money.

"Government must approve part of the budget to us, more delays could be the reason for postponing the elections. If half of the budget is not approved by the end of the week, we will not be able to conduct the poll," he added.

Bringing about the necessary reforms in Afghanistan's election law and structure of the election bodies was an important element of the political agreement signed between President Ashraf Ghani and his CEO Abdullah Abdullah during the formation of the National Unity Government. (Tolonews)

### (16) Mafia Groups...

afghanis by March 19.

There are some mafia groups who create problems for my work, he said adding "whenever we remove carts from the city or carry out other activities, there are some people who threaten us and create problems for our work." (Pajhwok)

### (17) Decree to ...

conflict with the country's laws, he said, insisting the order ran counter to labour law.

Article 138 says a government servant retires at the age of 65 but his service could be extended for another five years. The retirement of educational institutes' staff and academics is decided under special regulations. Safi warned the country's universities could collapse if the presidential decree was enforced in totality. In line with the new law, the promotion of a teacher with bachelor degree is linked with master's degree.

No bachelor degree-holder could go for post-graduate studies if he she is more than 40 years old.

And if the same teacher does not get six promotions, he/she will be fired, according to the ex-professor, who said if the legislative decree was enforced, most of universities would be without teachers in the near future.

Safi said 1,707 teachers with masters and 205 with PhDs were presently serving across the country. Of them, 782 have reached the retirement age and control the grading system and handle curriculum issues at 37 universities.

He said if some of the teachers retired on attaining the superannuation age, the country's universities would be faced with an immediate shortage of staff. There would be a vacuum in the administration of universities as well, he explained.

Currently 21 percent of Kabul university lecturers are doctors, professors and associate professors, while 30 percent staff of a higher education institute with six faculties should be academics. He added provincial universities could not meet this condition.

He remarked the MoHE could implement the decree if it wanted to destroy universities. About the non-employment of bachelors and removing the assistant professor's rank, he said, "There are 5,291 lecturers in all universities of the country. Only 728 of them are professors and associate professors and 4,563 others are assistant professors. At least 814 are on probation."

The academics were waiting to obtain master degrees to get promotions, the ex-teacher noted. Only 2,856 lecturers will be teaching if 1,707 master degree-holders are excluded from the total of 4,563.

Based on the decree of the 2,856 lecturers, only those under 40 could pursue higher studies, Safi maintained. The professors under 65 are not affected by the decree. Article 69 of the decree says all bachelors under 40 should obtain master degrees. And bachelors above 40 are

not allowed to pursue higher education.

Safi said a university should have at least six faculties and be located in a proper place. Thirty percent of its teaching staff should be doctors, professors and associate professor.

It should follow a standard curriculum and research activities. Similarly, a university should have a scientific research management centre, a scientific magazine, a library, Internet, a well-equipped laboratory, hostels, sports facilities, an information technology department and a programme for master's or higher degrees.

A university lacking above these standards is called an institute, so the implementation of the decree will convert universities into institutes. Safi added the draft created by lecturers contained 79 articles while the presidential decree contained 72 articles.

The presidential decree has removed Articles 77 and 78 of draft prepared by lecturers. It also threatened articles 3, 20, 24, 34 and 36 of the higher education law, he said.

The suggestions given below were important to make the higher education law effective and improve the quality of higher education in Afghanistan, Safi said.

Universities that do not meet the conditions as spelled out in the legislative decree be given three years' time to fulfill the requirements.

The branches that do not have master-level education facility be allowed to recruit teachers with lower qualifications if they could not find doctors. (Pajhwok)

### (18) Woman Staff ...

was no immediate claim of responsibility, but government officials often blame Taliban for such attacks. (Pajhwok)

### (19) Garziwal Court ...

scattered all documents. However, they did not take away the papers, the official explained.

The intruders might be drug addicts who only took away five chairs and desks from the court, he said, adding they had launched investigation into the incident. (Pajhwok)

### (20) CEO's Office ...

the aid would be distributed over the IDPs in Jalalabad, capital city of Nangarhar, and other areas.

Pacha assured that the aid distribution would be transparent and vulnerable people would receive it. Mullah Jan Shinwarai, former member of the provincial council of Nangarhar and a community elder appreciated for the assistance. (KP)

### (21) Logar Districts...

least 3,000 afghanis in hotel and travel expenses. The residents of Kharwar cannot afford to pay this much money," Qayyum continued. Ahmad Shabbir, who belongs to the Bahadarkhel area of the district, said that he spent two nights in Pul-I-Alam city for taking his ID card.

"Three members of my family and I have come here to receive our cards. The road from our district to Pul-I-Alam is in bad condition, each of us paid 250 afghanis in fare. So far I have spent 7,000 afghanis," he said. Kharwar people have to travel 50 kilometres to get their ID cards.

A resident of the Pangram area of Charkh district, Syed Baryalai, said the census office in the district had also been closed. The residents are left with no option but to visit Pul-I-Alam to get their identity cards.

"It is difficult for women, children and poor people travelling that long distance, because each one has to spend at least three days in the city to get one's card," he said. (Pajhwok)

### (22) Over 70 ...

on the survey, most people are also concerned that human rights and women's rights will be compromised in the talks. The survey shows that people are also concerned about transparency of the talks. "62 percent of the interviewees said that women can play an important role in bringing peace and 60 percent believed the situation would deteriorate for women after peace with the Taliban," said Ali Karimi, another member of the AISS. Interviewees underlined widespread corruption, weak government, presence of the Taliban, poverty, illiteracy and the presence of local warlords and drug mafia as key obstacles in the way of peace in Afghanistan.

The High Peace Council (HPC), however, stressed people's rights would be protected in the talks. (Tolonews)

### (23) Militancy...

12 rebels on the spot and injuring 21 others," said a statement released by Afghan army Corps 201 Salaab based in the eastern region.

The IS militants, according to the statement, had planned to plant the IED in Bazaar-e-Shaddal area of Achin district to target security forces and locals but they became the victim of their own bomb.

In a related incident, Afghan security forces captured seven members of the Taliban outfit in Nangarhar province, National Directorate of Security (NDS) or the country's spy agency said in a statement released Monday.

"A seven-member Taliban terrorist group which was attempting to conduct terrorist attack has been captured and their conspiracy to organize bloody terror offensive has been foiled," NDS said in the statement. (Xinhua)

### (24) ANSF Capture...

try's intelligence agency confirmed in a statement.

The captives tried to conduct a terrorist attack in a crowded area of Jalalabad city, capital of Nangarhar, some 120 km east of Kabul, it said.

One RPG-7 rocket launcher and three AK-47 assault rifles were seized following the raid, the statement noted. (Xinhua)

### (25) Solar Power ...

should begin promptly. Currently, there is total 39 MW of energy in the province with nine MW from Daronta Dam and nearly 30 MW from Naghlu Dam. (Pajhwok)

### (26) Turkey Arrests...

region," President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said late on Sunday. He vowed to continue fighting against terrorism.

It was the third major blast to hit the Turkish capital since last October. (Xinhua)

### (27) European

Alexis Tsipras spoke with his Turkish counterpart Ahmet Davutoglu and expressed condolences, as well as the support of Greek people. (Xinhua)

### (28) Free Trade...

her past support of trade deals, including the TPP pact, a deal she once advocated as secretary of state, and the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) signed in the 1990s, when her husband was president. (Xinhua)

### (29) UN Humanitarian...

people are still living in areas controlled by the Islamic State (IS) militant group, it said.

It also called on all warring parties to stop attacking civilians, schools, markets and hospitals. (Xinhua)

### (30) Russia Opposes ...

Wednesday, were not aimed at developing a nuclear capability.

Britain said it will ask UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to prepare a report on the missile launches to make a determination on whether there was a violation of resolution 2231. (AFP)

### (31) Cambodian,...

leaders, said Julie Chung, Chargé d'affaires of the U.S. Embassy in Cambodia.

"Any country -- including both Cambodia and the United States -- will be a better, safer place to live with military people who are skilled in these functions," she said. (Xinhua)

### (32) EU Suspends

opment, public finances, health and justice reform.

"We always need means to address some challenges but EU aid cut doesn't mean the government will stop functioning. There is a way of living otherwise; the government will continue running," Burundi's Foreign Minister Alain Nyamitwe told Reuters. (Reuters)

### (33) Canada PM ...

a seat on the Security Council.

During his meeting with Ban, the prime minister "will emphasize Canada's commitment to play a positive and constructive role in the world, and to make meaningful contributions to issues that include climate change, respect for diversity and human rights, and support for international peace operations," a statement from Trudeau's office said. (AFP)

### (34) Gen. Raheel ...

in Rawalpindi, called for more effective border management and continued proactive dominance of the cleared areas to maintain writ of the state in Fata, Bajwa tweeted. "The return of temporarily displaced persons must complete according to the decided schedule," the army chief was quoted as saying. Bajwa said that the military commanders present in the meeting dwelt at length on the internal and external security situations among other professional matters. (Agencies)