

**(1) UN Security...**

lead peace efforts to end violence in the country. The Kabul Process must lead to the renunciation of violence and breaking of all ties to international terrorism, as well as the respect for the equal rights of all Afghans, said the press statement. (Xinhua)

**(2) 4 ANA Soldiers..**

Taliban yet to comment on the issue.

Azra is one of remote districts of Logar and shares border with Paktia province. (Pajhwok)

**(3) Polio Cases Reach...**

campaign across the country which will wrap up later Friday. Polio virus could be rapidly transferred and the only preventable way was vaccination, the report added.

The latest anti-polio campaign launched by 70,000 dedicated polio workers has delivered oral polio vaccines to over 9.9 million children.

The ongoing insurgency and conflicts have been hindering the efforts to stamp the infectious disease out in the mountainous country. (Xinhua)

**(4) Peace Possible...**

once again voiced on the Taliban to spurn violence and accept the government's peace offer as did by the Hezb-i-Islami Afghanistan (HIA).

Abdul Khaliq Hussaini, head of the coordination center for tribal councils, said that now the Taliban had no excuse to refuse peace talks after the government's new peace offer. "We want the Taliban to accept this peace offer as soon as possible," he said.

Fridon Barakzai, head of Wahdati Milli Barak Foundation, talking on behalf of tribal councils, said that the recent Afghan government peace offer to Taliban proved the government had a strong will for peace talks.

He asked all tribal elders to stand united and work for peace in their provinces and districts so the Afghans could be relieved from the conflict.

The Taliban should positively respond to the unprecedented offer and arrive at the negotiating table, Barakzai said, asking politicians to support the peace proposal instead of creating tribal divisions.

Two weeks back, President Ashraf Ghani explained his new roadmap for the peace process and said the government wanted to reach a ceasefire with the Taliban without any preconditions. He had said that the government would negotiate with the Taliban wherever they wanted.

"If they promise shunning the insurgency, Taliban prisoners may be freed and their names struck off from international blacklists. Former fighters and refugees could be reintegrated and provided with job opportunities." However, Taliban have not yet formally responded to the offer. (Pajhwok)

**(5) 25,000 Books...**

Amani, the owner of the library, said that four stationary stores, 25,000 books and several grocery shops were lost in the fire.

He said that the fire caused millions of Afghani losses. (Pajhwok)

**(6) Women Showcase...**

women's products.

Over 130 women from around the country have put their products on display, said MRRD. Meanwhile a number of businesswomen have said that government should outline new economic and business policies for women so that they can market and export their products.

"We are determined to resolve the problems facing rural women or at least help them with

marketing at these expos," said Mujiburrahman Karimi.

Nazia is one businesswoman who has a stall at the expo.

I have brought handcrafts from 40 women in Nangarhar province to the expo, she said.

"We face a lot of difficulties in our area. Because many women want proper marketing (channels) for their products," said Nazia.

In addition, Nabeela Musleh, deputy minister of women affairs has called on government to take more steps towards empowering women.

"Some programs have been implemented for women, these programs have proved effective. But we need to create an infrastructure for the women and this will bring major changes to the development of businesswomen," said Musleh.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) has said that currently Afghan women have the capacity to participate in the bidding process for government tenders. They also suggested that women could contribute substantially to the economic sector if government is open to working with businesswomen on a national level. (Tolo news)

**(7) Security Forces...**

of insurgents including Baloch village of Sherentagab district of Faryab province.

The Baloch village residents said that Taliban burned their houses and killed their relatives.

"Taliban killed my two sons and we want security in the district," said a resident.

"It has been five months that we are displaced, and we have witnessed Taliban's oppression," said another resident.

Meanwhile, local uprising forces warn Taliban if they do not surrender, they will be eliminated.

"So far, 73 of our people have been killed and therefore we have decided to stop this tragedy," said Mullah Akram the local uprising forces commander.

Faryab residents have called on the security forces to establish security check posts in cleared areas in order to prevent Taliban from returning to the areas. (Tolo news)

**(8) US Looks to...**

with elements of the Taliban, the military is also making long-term preparations for an extended conflict, including in the capital.

Nicholson said Kabul's exponential growth from about 500,000 people in 2001 to five million today created a haphazard sprawl that was hard to secure. US intelligence agencies were helping Afghanistan map the city so police and soldiers can better design barriers and checkpoints.

In the past year, insurgents have staged massive bombings in the Afghan capital, including one in January that killed more than 100 people and another in May 2017 near the German embassy.

No group claimed the May 2017 attack but Afghan and US officials blamed the Haqqani network, a violent militant group affiliated to the Taliban.

The Taliban claimed the second attack but many officials say it bore the hallmarks of the Haqqanis, who the United States says enjoy safe haven in neighboring Pakistan.

US President Donald Trump approved a more aggressive strategy last year that included more US combat advisers and air strikes, and fighting is expected to pick up in the coming weeks.

A group of newly arriving US Army advisers would partner with some of the Afghan troops securing Kabul. Commandos would carry out intelligence-driven raids throughout the city, something Nicholson said was

already ongoing.

The goal would be to eliminate Taliban strongholds as well as Taliban facilitators, which included criminal enterprises that, for a price, gave the insurgents shelter or weapons.

Nicholson's comments came during a trip to Afghanistan by US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, whose delegation navigated some of Kabul's checkpoints and blast walls while moving between US military and Afghan government compounds on Tuesday, helicopters buzzing overhead. (Tolo news)

**(9) ACJC Probes...**

Jamshid Rasooli said.

Habibzai however said he has not done anything wrong and that the accusations are made by some circles to put him under pressure.

"Those circles that work against us and government, everyday try to accuse us. I say that I have not done anything illegal and that these accusations are baseless," said Habibzai.

Integrity Watch Afghanistan (IWA) officials meanwhile claimed Habibzai gave development contracts to companies he has close ties with.

Nasir Timori, a member of IWA said there is some corruption in the recruitment process in the department and urged the relevant departments to probe Habibzai's case transparently.

"There is (corruption) in recruitment and giving of contracts to those who Kabul's acting mayor used to work with. This issue should be probed transparently," said Timori.

IWA urged the ACJC to investigate Habibzai's case and share the results with the public. (Tolo news)

**(10) 'Ghor Disables...**

Disabled Association in Ghor, told Pajhwok Afghan News the disables in Ghor had been living in abject poverty.

"We have educated disabled individuals in Ghor but they are refused jobs for being disabled, there are no schools and health facilities for the disabled, government officials use their name to promote themselves," he said.

Two disabled persons Najla and Faridon, who could not see, told Pajhwok Afghan News the government had never facilitated them. "There are no jobs for us, no plot or other privileges."

They added the government had failed to support organizations established for the welfare of disabled people.

Some disables complain about what they call a discriminatory behavior of other people with them in the society, which is painful for them.

Work and Social Affairs Director Ghaus Mohammad Sohail acknowledged problems the disabled people faced and said "a disabled rehabilitation centre" would be established in Ghor this spring.

He added 20 percent disabled people have been employed in different government organizations and some 2,500 disabled registered with his department have been receiving monthly stipends and other privileges. (Pajhwok)

**(11) Increasing...**

should prevent kidnappings and injustices. A young man was kidnapped and killed after his family failed to arrange the ransom money," he said.

Haji Mansour, a businessman, warned if kidnapping incidents did not stop, trade activities would come to a standstill. He asked the government to pay attention to the situation in Kunduz.

Kunduz police chief Abdul Hameed Hameedi confirmed kidnapping incidents had increased

and said a new strategy was being evolved to address the issue. "Special arrangements have been adopted to arrest those involved in kidnappings," he said. Hameedi termed the situation in Kunduz as 'normal' and added there was no major security threat. (Pajhwok)

**(12) EU Envoy Urges...**

options, including new elections involving the militants, and a constitutional review for a pact with the Taliban to end their conflict.

The Taliban have not yet given any formal answer to the offer. China has worked with Pakistan and the United States to broker peace talks to end the Taliban insurgency that last year alone, killed or wounded more than 10,000 Afghan civilians, reported Reuters.

On Wednesday, the High Peace Council chairman Mohammad Karim Khalili said practical steps will be taken on peace within the next few months.

Khalili said renewed efforts by the council will result in official talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban.

"We will take (practical) steps in the next (solar) year towards ending the war, or reducing the war and towards peace," Khalili said.

In a trip to Herat province on Saturday, Khalili said Taliban has not shown any indication that it will accept government's peace offer.

He said the group does not want to start negotiations with government. (Tolo news)

**(13) Afghan Traders...**

were on display for international buyers.

The statement further added that Gulfood is the world's largest annual food and hospitality show. Now in its 23rd year, the event showcased 5,000 exhibitors from the food, drink, food services, and hospitality industries. This year's exhibition welcomed more than 97,000 visitors in the course of the five-day event.

"USAID-supported exporters have yielded tens of millions of dollars in deals since Afghan participation began in 2010. This year, India was the lead buyer of Afghan produce, with 48 percent of the US\$12 million in confirmed deals signed at the event, followed by Saudi Arabia, which came in at 17 percent. Potential deals totaled US\$8.5 million. The 2,500 metric tons of produce negotiated included raisins, figs, pistachios, saffron, and pine nuts," the statement added.

"As a result of our participation in Gulfood, we signed the largest contract our company has ever received to export Kandahar pomegranates," said Mr. Mahmood, the owner of Afghan Red Pomegranate.

Agriculture is backbone of Afghanistan's economy. Up to 80 percent of Afghans are dependent on farming and livestock, and agriculture comprises 25 percent of the country's gross domestic product.

Afghanistan's participation at this year's Gulfood comes on the heels of a successful USAID-supported event in New Delhi, the 2017 Afghanistan-India Trade and Investment Show, where Afghan exhibitors signed contracts valued at US\$70 million. (KP)

**(14) Journalist's...**

up despite showing his press card to the officers.

"The police officers stopped hitting me and escaped after local people mediated," he added.

Meanwhile, Abdul Ahad Walizada, Herat police spokesman, told Pajhwok Afghan News that public order police forces were working under the MoI but they would seriously investigate about the journalist's beating

case. (Pajhwok)

**(15) Afghanistan...**

create a run chasing momentum. Rahmat Shah scored 68 runs while Shinwari scored 27 runs to help lift the Afghan team as other batsmen in the middle order also contributed well to chase the target.

The Afghan team chased the given target by losing 7 wickets with 14 balls remaining. (KP)

### Early Voting At Parliamentary Election Starts In Turkmenistan

ASHGABAT - Early voting on the election of members of parliament, as well as local authorities, has started in Turkmenistan, the Turkmen Central Election Commission said in a message March 16.

The voting is conducted daily from 08:00 (GMT +5) till 18:00 and will end on March 24, 2018 at 18:00.

This procedure is primarily intended for citizens leaving Turkmenistan for long business trips or holidays, as well as for those who for some reason won't be able come to their polling station and vote on the election day, March 25.

A total of 284 candidates have been nominated for the election of members of parliament, and local authorities: regional - 489 candidates, district and city - 2,570 candidates, and local self-government bodies - 13,215 candidates.

A total of 2,963 observers were registered from the Democratic Party of Turkmenistan, the Party of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, the Agrarian Party, public organizations and associations, as well as groups of citizens of the country.

Representatives of the CIS, the UN, the OSCE, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) stated that their representatives will participate as observers in the election. (Trend)

### OGDCL Makes Five Discoveries in 2016-17, Working To Drill 28 Wells This Year

ISLAMABAD - Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) has drilled 22 wells including 12 exploratory/appraisal and ten developmental during the last fiscal year, besides injecting approximately 1,337,395 barrels crude oil and 9,348 mmcf gas in its pool from 18 new wells.

"This year, the company has set a target to drill around 28 wells, out of which 17 are exploratory and 10 are developmental including a Shale gas and oil. The company is confident to meet the target," official sources told APP.

Besides, it has set a target to drill around 28 oil and gas wells during the current fiscal year, and in the first quarter it has injected five new wells producing 4,133 barrels crude oil and 891 mmcf-gas in its production gathering system, they said.

The company, the sources said, being cognizant of the country's increasing energy demand, in the first quarter of year 2017-18 has added production of five newly operated wells namely Pakhro-I, Dachrapur-3, Chanda-4 and Qadirpur-58 and HRL-12 in the system. They said the OGDCL's crude oil production had reached 42,529 barrels per day (bpd) in first quarter as compared to the same period of the corresponding year 2016-17, showing 6 percent growth.

Similarly, production of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) witnessed 73 percent surge during the period under review. (Monitoring Desk)