

(1) NPC Approves...

police headquarters and border police in Kunar, Kunduz, Nagarhar and Kapisa provinces were approved for a quarters, the statement said. On reports from the ministries of finance and education about printing of text books, President Ghani said the government should support local printing houses and domestic products and domestic companies should maintain quality.

The meeting was attended by 2nd Vice President Mohammad Sarwar Danish, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah, finance, justice, commerce ministers and other senior officials, the statement said. (Pajhwok)

(2) ICRC to ...

percent this year, according to Maurer. "We have increased our budget for Afghanistan for 2016, recognizing the scale of the problem. We will explore the possibilities of further expanding our activities, including the evacuation of wounded people," he said.

Maurer arrived in Kabul on Monday. During his visit he met with Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah besides making field trips to provinces to meet displaced people, detainees and visit orthopedic centers. He also met with some representatives of armed opposition groups, according to ICRC.

Maurer also expressed concerns over the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the conflict-ridden country.

"Every indicator shows that the humanitarian situation is in a downward spiral," he said while drawing attention to the recent increase in attacks on health facilities in Afghanistan.

Violence has been on the rise since the drawdown of U.S. and NATO forces over the past two years as the Afghan security forces struggle against a surge in attacks by Taliban and other anti-government fighters. More than 3,540 civilians were killed and over 7,450 injured in across the country last year, according to a report released by the UN mission in the country last month.

The report has attributed 62 percent of the casualties to the Taliban and other insurgent groups, 17 percent were attributed to security forces while the rest 21 percent of civilian casualties were unattributed or caused by explosive remnants of war. "In the last year, attacks against health facilities and personnel have gone up by 50 percent. Every bombed out hospital and every doctor or nurse who is forced to flee, means thousands of people cannot get immediate medical treatment when necessary," Maurer noted while calling on parties of the conflict to respect and protect civilians and medical missions.

"Afghans are the second largest group of arriving in Europe today. This shows that the chronic violence and insecurity, and the permanent unpredictability of the war, has pushed people beyond their limits," Maurer added. The ICRC has had a permanent presence in Afghanistan since 1987, which is the aid agency's largest operation in the world in terms of staff numbers. (Xinhua)

(3) India-Afghanistan ...

The Indian cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the reconstruction and completion of Salma dam at a revised cost of INR 1,775.69 crore which is equivalent to around \$268,050,296.

The revised cost was approved shortly after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Kabul late last year for the inauguration of the India-built parliament building in Afghanistan. Built on Harirod river, the dam is expected to produce 42 megawatt of electricity and will irrigate around 75,000 hectares of agricultural land. India has played a crucial role by participating in the rebuilding of Afghanistan following the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001.

Since 2002, the Government of India has committed USD 2 billion dollars to the socio-economic rebuilding of the Afghan state and society in accordance with the development priorities of the Government and the people of Afghanistan. (KP)

(4) US Congress ...

actually be encouraging its growth and the heroin it later becomes.

In July 2015 the US Centers for Disease Control warned that heroin use had more than doubled among young adults ages 18-25 in the past decade. Opium production in Afghanistan has been surging for years despite all efforts to eradicate it, but this year mysterious high-yielding super seeds could create an even bigger crop - and more heroin on the market. It was also reported that opi-

um production in Afghanistan was stronger than ever before.

This rise would have been impossible prior to the US-led invasion, and it comes despite some \$8.4 billion spent to wipe out opium production in Afghanistan.

In fact, it appears that, under the watchful eye of the US, opium use has expanded to new parts of Afghanistan and growers now make use of modern, advanced agricultural technologies.

According to US media reports, numerous photos featuring American soldiers patrolling opium fields in Afghanistan indicate that America may really be involved in the opium trade. Indeed, while the Taliban had all but eradicated opium, it began to thrive just months after American forces ousted the Taliban regime in 2001.

Rudy Ayala (2nd L) Law Enforcement Professional embedded with the Marine corps questions opium poppy farmers at Maranj village in Helmand province on April 25, 2011 as US Marines from Border Adviser Team (BAT) and Explosive Ordnance Disposal 1st and 2nd Marine Division (Forward) and Afghanistan National Police take patrol in the area

Many observers believe that the CIA has long been tied to the global drug trade, putting more effort into controlling rather than eradicating illicit substances.

Another reason for the thriving opium production in Afghanistan is that it is the only means of subsistence for the country's impoverished peasants. (Monitoring Desk)

(5) HRW ...

life is dangerous," said Mohammad Wali Azami, an Afghan migrant stuck on the Greece-Macedonia border.

"I hope, I wish from Europe, please open the Macedonia border," he added.

Tens of thousands of people are stranded on the Greek border with Macedonia while the main Balkan route into northern Europe remains shut.

"I was travelling with my mother and my three sisters. But my mother was not able to accompany us from the Iran-Turkey border as she was not able to walk, I went on to Turkey, but I don't know where my mother is," Afghan refugee Iqlima said.

Although, the EU has decided to settle more than 60,000 of these refugees in various member countries, Afghan migrants, that make up 25 percent of the total, have been excluded from the list, an issue which raised deep concerns amongst Afghan asylum seekers. "Believe me the Afghans are facing severe security challenges, you are witnessing that what the Taliban are doing and now Daesh has also emerged in our country," Afghan migrant Homayoun Haidari said. (Tolnews)

(6) Outgoing Solar...

had registered 191 cases of violence against journalists in 1394 solar year that ends on March 21, compared 103 cases in 1393.

Quraishi said 10 journalists, including women, and seven workers of Tolo private television had been killed during the outgoing solar year. Three officials of a local private radio were killed in a US airstrike on the MSF-run hospital in the capital of northern Kunduz province, when they were covering security incidents, he said.

The editor-in-chief of Asia television and a reporter with the state-run Radio Television Afghanistan (RTA) were also among those killed in 1394, he added. Only six journalists and media workers had been killed in 1393 solar year, according to the AJC. Quraishi continued the situation of journalists would get worse if security was not improved in the country. He stressed the Afghan government and the international community should take serious threats the journalists faced.

After the press conference, awards were distributed among journalists in recognition of their services. Marufa Zaki, a journalist with Aryana private television, won the award of "journalist of the year" while nine other reporters including Storai Karimi, a Pajhwok Afghan News reporter, were given appreciation letters as top reporters of the year. (Pajhwok)

(7) US Military...

who was the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan at the time, but has since relinquished command, has said the attack on the hospital was "directly the result of avoidable human error." He called the strike "a tragic mistake." The medical charity Doctors Without Borders, also known by its French acronym MSF, has called for an outside, independent investigation of the airstrike, but that has not happened. American forces misidentified a target in Kunduz on October 3

that resulted in the attack on the MSF hospital, according to a U.S. military investigation conducted last year.

In this photograph released by Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) on Oct. 3, 2015, fires burn in part of the MSF hospital in the Afghan city of Kunduz after it was hit by an air strike.

In this photograph released by Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) on Oct. 3, 2015, fires burn in part of the MSF hospital in the Afghan city of Kunduz after it was hit by an air strike.

Afghan forces asked for U.S. air support to strike a National Directorate of Security building believed to be occupied by Taliban fighters. According to the report, the AC-130 air crew instead fired 211 shells at a hospital operated by MSF that was 450 meters away.

Several factors contributed to the mistake. The air crew launched more than an hour earlier than planned, missing out on a crucial brief that would normally include identifying no-strike areas such as the MSF hospital. Once in flight, the aircraft's electronic systems malfunctioned, eliminating the crew's ability to transmit video, send and receive email, or send and receive electronic messages.

The crew then believed it was the target of a missile, so they moved out of the aircraft's normal strike range, degrading the accuracy of the targeting system. That loss of accuracy appeared to cause the coordinates of the Taliban target to land on an open field. The crew visually located the "closest, largest" building to that field and, thinking that was the target, fired on it. MSF said the errors pinpointed in the U.S. report showed "gross negligence" on the part of U.S. forces. The barrage on the hospital lasted 29 minutes before commanders realized the mistake, even as hospital staff members made 18 attempts to call or text U.S. and Afghan authorities about the attack as it was occurring.

Many of the doctors and nurses at the hospital were killed instantly, and some patients who could not be moved to safety died in the ensuing flames from the attack.

Within days of the October 3 incident, President Barack Obama called Joanne Liu, the president of Doctors Without Borders, to apologize for the mistaken attack. (VoA)

(8) MoD

of innocent civilians. "I want to say that we will keep our national flag hoisted in every corner of the country," he said, adding that Afghan forces will not allow anyone to commit atrocities against Afghans.

S. K. Narayan, an Indian military general, who was also present at event, said: "The flag is India's present for Nawroz to the people of Afghanistan."

Nawroz will be celebrated across the country on Sunday - 20 March. (Tolnews)

(9) Peace Talks ...

negotiations by Hekmatyar is not pleasant for the Taliban but can encourage those Taliban who are interested in peace," said Hassan Haqyar, a former Taliban regime deputy minister.

However, Pakistan's Foreign Ministry said that they will try to convince the Taliban to come to the peace talks table with Afghan government. This comes after the group recently issued a statement rejecting calls for them to join the peace talks process. (Tolnews)

(10) HRW Slams

investigation was carried out under Gen. John Campbell, a US commander in Afghanistan at the time, who blamed a series of errors, "human, technical, and procedural" for the airstrike, the statement stated.

The organization has analyzed information from the US military, MSF, and other sources and found a strong basis for determining that criminal liability exists. Under the laws of war, hospitals have special protection from attack, and attacks on them can be war crimes, the organization argued in the statement. HRW had called on the US Department of Defense to create a special high-level and independent Consolidated Disposition Authority and an independent convening authority to control referrals of criminal charges and the convening of courts martial, the statement added. Following the Kunduz attack, Defense Secretary Ashton Carter vowed to conduct a "full and transparent" investigation and hold people accountable, but it did not happen, the statement added. "The failure to criminally investigate senior officials criminally liable for the attack is not only an affront to the lives lost at the MSF hospital, but a blow against the rule of law in Afghanistan and elsewhere around the world," HRW concluded. (Pajhwok)

(11) Afghan ...

including a TV channel, an airline, and a supplier of fuel and boots to the Afghan National Army.

Meanwhile, Hassina has been recognized for her role in as one of the most successful entrepreneurs in Afghanistan who found the Afghan National Women's Organization.

"She is the only female member of the 3,000-strong Afghan Chamber of Commerce and she runs her business despite threats made against her and time spent in a crowded Kabul jail for failing to pay protection money to the police," according to a brief introduction of Hassina listed by World Economic Forum among the 11 Young Global Leaders.

The Geneva-based foundation introduced the 2016 class of the Young Global Leaders in a release on Wednesday, saying "As global industry, government and civil society evolve to confront a world defined by the Fourth Industrial Revolution, these new members of the Young Global Leaders (YGL) include scientists opening up their data to the world, a member of parliament fighting for gender equality in Afghanistan, an entrepreneur who is redefining nuclear energy production with circular economy models, pioneers from the sharing economy, and an actor who gives a damn and puts his money behind it."

Women represent a majority in this year's class, and with over half the intake coming from emerging economies, the world's future leadership is becoming more broad-based in terms of both gender and geography. Alongside 28 selected from North America and 26 from Europe, the YGL class of 2016 includes 15 YGLs from East Asia, 10 from South Asia, 10 from Greater China, 10 from Sub-Saharan Africa, 12 from the Middle East and North Africa, eight from Latin America, and four from Eurasia. (KP)

(12) Kunar Province....

suppressed in Nangarhar and limited to Achin and Haska Mena districts. Up to 250 Daesh fighters are seen in Kunar, so I think the province would be their next hideout after Nangarhar," he said.

Up to 572 fighters have been arrested over the past one year and their cases sent to the departments concerned, he added.

Meanwhile, Nangarhar police chief Maj. Gen. Fazal Ahmad Sherzad said the IS fighters still existed in Owghaz and Gorgori areas of Haska Mena district and some areas of Achin, but they had been weakened enough to strike back. (Pajhwok)

(13) NUG Leaders ...

The government was unable to conduct Loya Jirga which would decide on the formation of the government system, he said adding the government would not be legitimate if the Jirga was not organized. (Pajhwok)

(14) Pakistani ...

Shagi area, Zarif Khan, said: "During the Mujhdeen era, the house of Gulbuddin Hikmatyar was located five kilometers from the area where Pakistani forces have currently constructed military facilities. The Durand Line is located beyond Hikmatyar's house."

He said Pakistani militia forces also sometimes entered their area and cut down forests.

Mirajan, a tribal elder from Dand-i-Patan district, said a large number of Pakistani forces had entered from across the border into Afghanistan territory and had built military facilities.

"The Afghan forces and Taliban militants have been engaged in clashes in our district and the Pakistani forces using the opportunity have advanced into Afghanistan," he said, asking the government to prevent Pakistani forces advance into Afghan land. (Pajhwok)

(15) Justice Yet...

case and handed down "a symbolic verdict" after delays in the three-tier courts and clear violations of law.

Fatima Gilani, a member of the network, told Pajhwok Afghan News that defending women now-a-days depended on projects. She said today's gathering also showed a symbolic and project-run movement. "We should be always united and coordinated in defending the rights of our sisters like Farkhanda who always face violence," she said.

She said the Supreme Court ruling last week that upheld reduced sentences for the men convicted of her murder was unacceptable.

The court vacated the death penalty in four cases, reduced prison terms to 20 years in three others and 10 years in the fourth. It also cut the sentences of nine other defendants. Gilani called for the killers of Farkhanda to be hanged in public. President Ashraf Ghani last Friday

released a decree, calling on the acting Supreme Court chief justice to carefully follow up Farkhanda case and of those involved in her lynching. (Pajhwok)

(16) Ashqabad,...

TAPI project could be emerge as a trade and transit corridor involving gas pipelines, roads, electricity transmission and fibre optic lines, he said, stressing strenuous efforts for its implementation at the earliest.

While hailing Turkmenistan's offer to export 1,000MW of electricity to Pakistan, the prime minister said bilateral trade needed to be boosted. He also called for facilitating business visas to achieve that objective.

The two nations signed eight accords on bilateral cooperation, including a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on financial intelligence to curb money-laundering and terror financing. Sharif and Berdimuhammadov witnessed the signing of the accords. Pakistan shared the concern that terrorism and extremism were the root cause of insecurity and instability in the region. "This menace also undermines our endeavours for socio-economic development. We have to work collectively to eradicate the scourge of terrorism and extremism," Sharif said. Berdimuhammadov, who was accorded a warm welcome on his arrival at the Prime Minister's House, said both the countries were faced with common challenges. "Combating common threats is our shared goal," he added.

The visiting president hoped: "The gas line would bring warmth and cordiality, and generate economic activity, create job opportunities and improve the living standards of our peoples." It would boost socio-economic cooperation, he believed. (Pajhwok)

(17) Mullah Mansoor ...

heartland of Helmand province and elsewhere. Separately, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani had been hoping to revive a stalled peace process with face-to-face talks earlier this month with Taliban representatives. The Taliban issued a statement last week saying they would not participate.

Referring to Afghanistan as the Islamic Emirate, Mansoor said that all efforts must be made to reunite the Taliban, split since last summer when they admitted that their founder and leader, Mullah Mohammad Omar, had been dead for more than two years. (AP)

(18) Drought

told Pajhwok Afghan News the people of Daikundi were poor. He said droughts and other natural disasters brought them more miseries.

He said 90 percent of Daikundi inhabitants were dependent on agriculture and livestock. A drought would affect all of them, the public representative feared.

Rahimzada added the government should have made contingency plans to deal with the situations and keep people from suffering losses in the event of a drought.

Given the precarious situation, he suggested, the government provide food items to the people on an emergency basis. If farmers were not supported, most of the people would migrate to Neili, the provincial capital. Salman, a grower from Neili, confirmed all small rivers passing through the province might not provide enough water to irrigate lands. He said the drought prospects had worried all farmers.

Salman said farmers had offered special prayer for snowfall, but the province had received snow only once this season. Insufficient snowfall meant lack of irrigation water in the province, he continued.

Agriculture Director Mehdi Mowahidi said the province produced 47,000 tonnes of wheat, 5,600 tonnes of corn, 7,100 tonnes of almond, 11,000 tonnes of apricot and 3,500 tonnes of apple in the outgoing solar year. (Pajhwok)

(19) 8th-Century ...

Asia Week New York, a 10-day event in which more than 40 galleries and several auction houses show and sell paintings, sculptures, bronzes, ceramics, jewelry, textiles, prints and photographs. Joan Vollero, spokeswoman for the district attorney's office, was quoted as saying: "This item (valued at \$450,000) is part of a serious international criminal investigation." The seizures are part of an operation by Manhattan prosecutors and federal agents to recover objects stolen from temples and other ancient sites in Asia. (Pajhwok)

(20) Kabul Girls ...

Zumba came to Afghanistan and it has attracted many people. I hope Zumba spreads all over the country. When someone (new) comes to this sport we get encouraged, as this brings three or four other people from

the family to this sport," said Zumba trainer Atina Mohammadi.

"I would like the government to help provide security for those who do this sport. I also ask families not to ignore this sport. As I know when people get sick in Afghan society, they go to the doctor and then the doctor advises them to exercise. My suggestion is to come and exercise so you avoid sickness. This sport is the best for your health," she added. (Tolnews)

(21) Protesters Block ...

victim of the policemen, who killed the civilian on Thursday, one of the protesters, Anar Gul, told Pajhwok Afghan News. "Police should protect civilians and should not kill innocent people," he said.

Naimatullah, brother of the victim, said that an insurgent attacked police checkpoint in the Spina Barga area, but security personnel raided on my brother's house and shot him dead. (Pajhwok)

(22) ALP Commander...

He underwent several weeks of treatment in Bagram. "Local policemen captured the suicide bomber and when they wanted to lay him on the ground, he detonated his explosives," Moshtaq said. On the issue of problems in Ghorband valley he said: "The main problem is that all officials in the districts [in Ghorband valley] are being appointed by a single person." He added that government sees Ghorband from this one person's perspective only. (Tolnews)

(23) Prices of Fuel, ...

39afs to 41afs and of diesel from 33afs to 34afs. Mohammad Sharif, a liquefied gas seller in Kolola Pushta neighborhood, sold a kilogram of gas for 40afs, the same rate as of last week's. Mohammad Fawad, a jeweller in Timor Shahi area, said the price of one gram of Arabian gold increased from 2,200afs to 2,300afs and of the same quantity of the Russian variety from 1,800afs to 1,850afs. (Pajhwok)

(24) Turkish President

that killed 29 in the capital in February. Turkish security forces have been fighting against PKK militants in the country's southeast since July last year, where the group is seeking to establish an autonomous region. (Xinhua)

(25) North Korea

projectile disappearing from radar at an altitude of about 17 km, the statement said. South Korea did not confirm the type of the missiles. But 800 km was likely beyond the range of most short-range missiles in North Korea's arsenal. The North's Rodong missile has an estimated maximum range of 1,300 km, according to the South's defense ministry. (Reuters)

(26) EU, Turkey ...

indicated Ankara would accept the proposal if the EU leaders approved it. He was expected to join the EU leaders for a formal session soon. (Reuters)

(27) Jerusalem ...

which started in October, and claimed the lives of 28 Israelis and more than 175 Palestinians.

About 2,400 runners came from more than 60 countries and regions, among them China, Austria, Turkey, the United States and Switzerland. (Xinhua)

(28) U.N. Says ...

al-Asseeri said on Friday major combat operations were less extensive than earlier in the war and there were "good signs" the U.N. might soon restart peace talks between warring Yemeni factions. Houthi officials traveled to Saudi Arabia this month for secret talks on the conflict that led to a pause in fighting on the border, a main battlefield of the war, and a prisoner exchange. (Reuters)

(29) Azerbaijan ...

crisis, with Russia supporting the Syrian government and Turkey backing rebels, some of which are alleged to have links with extremist groups such as the Islamic State. (Xinhua)

(30) Georgian...

and Moldova with the aim of deepening political and economic ties with the three former Soviet republics. (Xinhua)

(31) Singapore Rolls...

adding that there were at least 74 terror-related arrests in Indonesia, and seven terrorist plots foiled in Singapore's neighboring Malaysia last year.

While stating that Singapore's counter-terrorism strategy has been effective, Shanmugam said new tactics are needed for the authorities to cope with possible threats, especially the multiple attacks simultaneously over different locations and targeting vulnerable, crowded venues. (Xinhua)