

### (1) Govt. Ready....

some weak youth were fleeing from the country.

"Last year was the year of survival and this year is the year of action," he said, adding the international community was going to leave the country, but the government convinced them to continue cooperation in different spheres with the country.

He said the war had been imposed on Afghanistan which passed through seven phases of the war in the past one year.

The enemy wanted to capture some provinces during the past year but Afghan security and defence forces bravely fought against them, he said. "We are ready for basic reforms and fight this year," he said.

"We would reach an agreement with Pakistan on peace and we are talking with the country on the transit direction," he said. (Pajhwok)

### (2) Resigning Officials ...

challenges. He said it should be investigated whether the resigning officials were honest or the leaders of the government were unable to enforce laws.

Senate chairman Fzal Hadi Muslimyar said the Meshrano Jirga could not force the resigning officials into disclosing the reasons behind their resignations because they were no longer government officials. "But if they wish to share the reasons, the Meshrano Jirga will take action if there is any wrongdoing."

A lawmaker from southern Ghazni province, Mohammad Rahim, condemned Monday's rocket attack on the parliament building, saying such attacks represented a weak management of security forces and the weak management was a result of running ministries by acting ministers.

MP Mohammad Asif Siddiqui from Logar called performing duty by acting ministers and departmental heads beyond two months against the law.

He asked leaders of the country to introduce ministers-designate and departmental heads to the parliament for a vote of confidence as soon as possible.

Muslimyar also asked the president to replace the acting minister and send his nominees for a vote of confidence to the Wolesi Jirga or lower house.

Peace process

The Afghan government wasted six months on the peace process, providing militants the opportunity to get equipped and ready for the spring offensive, Senator Rona Tarin from southern Kandahar province, said, adding the government should not be misled by "fake promises" of Pakistan regarding peace.

The government should support security and defence forces against militants with full power because peace could not come with begging, he said.

Anarkali Hunaryar also criticised the peace process, saying Pakistan was playing a double-game --- raising voice for peace and equipping and supporting militants.

Muslimyar also called Monday's attack on the parliament building as a "coward act." "We have to tolerate such a situation until there is peace in the country... Pakistani intelligence shamelessly interferes in Afghanistan affairs and wants to have a puppet government in Afghanistan."

He said Pakistan had never been honest in maintaining peace in Afghanistan, so Kabul should be ready for the war. "It is our religious duty to support our security and defence forces." (Pajhwok)

### (3) Key HPC...

a television channel in order for them to broadcast HPC related news.

He went on to say that "2,400 projects have been approved by the council for provinces, but the funding was embezzled".

He said that there are people in the council who don't have the expertise to work there and they rarely appear at sessions of the council.

Abdul Khaliq Watandost, a member of Kabul provincial council, meanwhile criticized the activities of the HPC and the peace process in general.

"The council spent hundreds of millions of dollars, but it didn't yield results that people of Afghanistan expected," he said. (Tolnews)

### (4) Detained in ...

of passengers and trucks stranded on both sides of the frontier. How-

ever, the border reopened after negotiations between the two sides. (Pajhwok)

### (5) AAF Receive....

Office-Afghanistan's Training Branch has sent 21 military students from Afghanistan to training in the United States," according to an online statement by Resolute Support mission.

The statement released on Saturday further added "One will be trained at the Ordnance Basic Officer Leadership Course, three will be trained as A-29 aviators for the Afghan Air Force, eight as A-29 mechanics and nine as C-130 mechanics." (KP)

### (6) Afghanistan....

hundred thousand dollars ended up costing \$43m.

He said many problems were spawned by the way the US administration did business, and the biggest issue was that individuals were never held accountable for their mistakes. "Too much has been wasted and it's in the billions..."

Investigating and auditing US-funded projects in Afghanistan had become an increasingly risky task because of insecurity. In February he came to the country, but did not get out of military bases due to security threats.

In the past, Sopko recalled, he would meet governors, visit poppy fields and police. He was then driving in an unarmoured car along with a couple of agents in Kabul. "You can't do that anymore."

The SIGAR identified security, corruption and narcotics as the biggest challenges facing Afghanistan. Asked if Afghanistan is a narco-criminal state, Sopko replied: "I can't say, I don't really know, I just know it's a serious threat..."

In the past 13 years, the newspaper said, \$113 billion had been spent by the US government on reconstruction in Afghanistan -- more than the £103bn it spent on helping to rebuild Europe after the Second World War.

Figures from the US Commission on War Time Contracting, for each dollar spent in Afghanistan, 29 cents disappears in fraud or waste. Even that was a conservative estimate, the panel said in its final report in 2011.

Since Sopko's appointment in 2012, SIGAR investigations have led to saving more than \$946 million and over 100 arrests and criminal charges. (Pajhwok)

### (7) CJ's Father ...

detained in connection with the incident but police were looking for the kidnappers.

A day earlier, the governor's spokesman, Attaullah Khogyani, said Hassan was kidnapped on his way from home to a mosque early in the morning on March 17.

The Chief Justice, a resident of Rodat district, owns two houses in Kabul and Jalalabad. The Chief Justice's family has not yet commented on the incident. (Pajhwok)

### (8) Cut in Imports ...

report says Afghanistan exported goods worth \$450 million in 2012 when imports stood at \$9.6 billion. The exports in 2015 valued at \$584 million when imports accounted for \$7.9 billion, the report said.

Most of Afghanistan exports went to Pakistan, India, Turkey, Belgium, the US, Germany, Finland, Russia, England, UAE, Iran, Uzbekistan, China, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and some other countries.

ACCI deputy head, Khan Jan Alokzay, while opening a conference "Second National Export Conference" and Introduction of Top Exporters," said statistics mentioned above showed there was a huge difference between Afghanistan exports and imports, calling it a matter of concern. "This situation shows our economy is in unconscious condition," he said.

"Afghanistan still exports traditional goods which lack standard quality, thus Afghan exporters cannot compete in world's major markets," he said.

Alokzay said government's negligence about investment and exports had resulted in lower quality and quantity of Afghanistan exports to foreign countries.

The government should pay serious attention to quality of local products, particularly agriculture products, he said.

A standard laboratory to determine quality of export materials should also be established, Alokzay said. Despite the important role the private sector has been playing to improve packaging of export goods, the government does not discharge its responsibility in this regard and thus problems remain in the area,

he said.

Exporters also still have problems in transit area and it is responsibility of the government to resolve them, the ACCI deputy head added.

He said the Pakistan government has increased its tax on Afghanistan fruit exports from 2,500 Pakistani rupees to Rs7,500, calling it a brutal decision against Afghan traders.

"The Afghan government is not benefitting from its commercial rights, while our neighbours get that benefit, that is why we are still in problems," he said.

The private sector is also still forced into paying illegal taxes, an issue the government should pay attention, he said, adding Afghan airports that lack equipment for exports is another major problem.

"Until the government doesn't benefit from its rights and doesn't prevent illegal taxes taken by other people, the president could not fulfill his wish of increased exports instead of imports. It can't be achieved by words but there is need for practical steps and honest heart and hands to prevent corruption," he said.

The president had said ministries should use 15 percent of domestic products, but the order could not be enforced.

He asked the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency (AISA) to take urgent steps for facilitating entrepreneurs and reduce taxes on them, provide them land, electricity and other infrastructure in industrial parks.

Meanwhile, AISA chief Mohammad Qurban Haqju told the conference that the statistics on exports and imports were not accurate because there was smuggling involved in export and import of goods.

If the smuggled goods are considered, figures of exports and imports might double, he said, while expressing his concern over the difference between exports and imports.

The government had no programmes for increasing exports and decreasing imports over the past 14 years when billions of dollars arrived in Afghanistan in foreign aid, he said.

"Currently, foreign assistance has declined, joblessness has increased and the government of Afghanistan is facing economics challenges and the poverty level has jumped and investment has been withdrawn from Afghanistan," he said. "If we don't take urgent steps for improvement of the economic condition, the economy would collapse by a further cut in aid to Afghanistan," he said, adding encouraging entrepreneurship and increasing exports was important to get rid of the crisis. "So the government should pay attention."

Haqju said the current techniques would not help increase exports and attention should be paid to quality, quantity and reducing prices. He said AISA would take urgent measures to resolve problems investors faced ranging from land to power, taxes and credits.

Due to a lack of land for investors in Kabul, they were willing to invest in provinces, he said, claiming to have contacted the Kabul governor to purchase land for investors in Kabul.

Commerce and Industries Minister Abdul Bari Rahman said his ministry would resolve traders' lower problems especially of exporters in accordance with the recently established four-year strategy.

At the end of the gathering, nearly 30 exporters were awarded appreciation certificates for exporting highest level of goods. Abdul Raziq Sultanzada, the director of Sultanzada Ltd, was declared the best exporter of the country. (Pajhwok)

### (9) TB Treatment ...

centers across the country increased and the access of people to TB treatment services risen and now Afghanistan is not included among those 22 countries suffering from highest rate of TB cases," the minister said at a ceremony marking world bdcTB Day here. While Thanking from health partners of Afghanistan Dr. Feroz said he was proud of the continued hard work of the National TB Program staff and grateful for the support of international and national partners in improving Afghanistan's prevention and treatment of TB.

Besides these progresses, Afghanistan still has a high prevalence of TB, an infectious disease that kills roughly 14,000 Afghans every year, he said, adding that Afghans living in crowded urban

settings and in rural areas with limited access to health care are particularly vulnerable to tuberculosis. Therefore, the joint partnership needed to remain united in its fight against disease, Feroz said

The event was also attended by representatives of The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), World Health Organization (WHO), chairperson of Stop TB Partnership and representatives other relevant entities.

The purpose of the event was to accelerate progress toward ending TB by improving the ability of Afghan doctors and healthcare workers to detect and treat Afghans suffering from the disease.

USAID Mission Director Herbie Smith reiterated the American people's commitment to supporting Afghanistan in its fight against TB. "I am proud USAID leads our government's efforts in TB management around the world, that we have committed to reach every person with TB, to cure those in need of treatment, and to prevent new TB infections as part of our new Global TB Strategy," Smith said.

Meanwhile, WHO representative to Afghanistan Dr. Richard Pepperkorn spoke on the issue and expressed his strong support in fighting against TB in Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

### (10) Spanta Warns...

concerns about political instability. He said the nation had rendered sacrifices for liberating the country from Soviet and British occupation. In case of need, he added, the Afghans would defend their motherland and frustrate Islamabad's meddling.

Former energy and water minister Ismail asked the nation to stand united against all threats and protect the government system. He reiterated his resolve to keep Taliban from destabilising the country. (Pajhwok)

### (11) Commander ...

said if the government does not mobilize and support her forces she will take action herself.

Kaftar said she will meet with NUG leaders and security officials and will discuss the mobilization of local forces and the security of Baghlan province.

"I met with [Mohammad] Mohaqiq and I want to meet with [CEO Abdullah] Abdullah and the president and the interior minister in order to mobilize our forces and for them to provide us with weapons so we can defend our area," said Kaftar.

Kaftar said that due to unemployment and the dire economic situation a number of residents in her area have joined opposition militia groups and are fighting against government forces.

She said another reason for Baghlan being insecure was that security forces were not familiar with the terrain.

"In the past we defended our area and people and we paid our forces' expenses and if the government does not help us we still will defend our area," said Baz Mohammad Mohammadi, one of Kaftar's commanders.

Kaftar said that local forces could be effective in ensuring security in the country and said that almost 2,000 people support her. She said she will give government until the end of the month to come forward with help. (Tolnews)

### (12) Afghanistan ...

against Japan Thursday which ended 5-0 in the favor of Japan. Thousands of the Afghans based in Iran visited the stadium to cheer for the Afghan team as they were competing in an important World Cup qualifier match. (KP)

### (13) 23 Welfare ...

schoolteacher in Ghorian district, said: "These projects are very helpful for improving people's living standard as they empower them and are good for our agriculture."

Farhad, a resident of Gulran district, asked MRRD officials to preserve the projects so people could benefit from them for a long time. So far 4,530 projects worth around five billion afghanis have been executed under NSP. (Pajhwok)

### (14) Taliban Execute...

his son were innocent and had no criminal history. He said police had launched their investigation into the two incidents. Mohammad Jan, a resident of Aqcha district, said no one could go a kilometer away from the district center because militants used to ambush and punish suspected people. "No government official

can dare to enter villages," he said. About killing of the father and his son, Jan said: "It is unclear whether they were involved in any crime or not, but militants punish and kill people without trial, there is no one to stop them."

There has been no word from the Taliban about the incidents. Two days earlier, militants shot dead a woman after a kangaroo court's ruling in Faizabad district of Jawzjan. (Pajhwok)

### (15) Tajikistan's ...

were rescued from kidnappers late on Tuesday and handed over to Tajik officials. Deputy police chief Col. Sakhi Dad Haideri said the release of the Tajik citizens had been made possible by help from local elders. (Pajhwok)

### (16) Israeli ...

simply carrying out court rulings against unauthorized building by Palestinians in Area C. Foreign diplomats and rights groups see it as part of a broader move to seize land for potential Jewish settlement expansion. (Reuters)

### (17) Egyptair....

ground and searched him for around two minutes before taking him away. "Its over," Cyprus's foreign ministry said in a tweet. (Agencies)

### (18) Indian PM ...

security summit Thursday and Friday.

On his return, Modi, according to officials, will visit Saudi Arabia. (Xinhua)

### (19) DPRK Fires ...

further DPRK provocations.

The Tuesday launch came just eight days after the DPRK fired off five rounds of its new 300-mm multiple rocket launchers to show off its military force in response to the joint annual war games between Seoul and Washington that kicked off on March 7. (Xinhua)

### (20) 41 IS Militants....

the Iraqi defense ministry said in a statement.

Meanwhile, 12 IS militants also tried to approach the same army positions in Khirbirdan village, but were all killed by international warplanes before reaching their target, according to the statement. The IS attacks came at the fifth day of an offensive launched by the security forces covered by Iraqi and U.S.-led coalition aircraft aimed at flushing out IS militants from Iraq's northern province of Nineveh and its capital Mosul.

In Iraq's western province of Anbar, the security forces retook control of Albu Diyab area in north of the provincial capital city of Ramadi, some 110 km west of Baghdad, after the IS group was forced to pull out its militants from the area by heavy airstrikes, which left some 24 extremist militants killed and six of their vehicles destroyed, a provincial security source told Xinhua. (Xinhua)

### (21) UNHCR ...

in parts of South Sudan, especially in the north-western States of Northern Bahr El Ghazal and Warrap, have resulted in the flight of some 38, 000 people into East and South Darfur since end of January," UNHCR said.

The two-year conflict in South Sudan has taken a brutal and deadly toll on civilians, producing one of the world's largest humanitarian emergencies with 2.3 million people forced to flee their homes, 678,000 of these across borders as refugees and 1.69 million displaced inside the country.

Recently, fighting has spread to new areas and there continue to be reports of people being raped and killed, and of homes and crops being destroyed and damaged by fighting.

Despite the peace agreement, civilians in the country continue to face destitution, destruction, death and devastation, and the humanitarian needs continue to grow with the UN calling for an end to the fighting, the protection of people caught in the middle, and immediate and unhindered access for humanitarian actors to all those in need. (Xinhua)

### (22) Brussels Airport....

travel purposes with a common visa.

Feist added that he did not think the terror attacks would have a long-term impact on the airport, and it could take several months for the bomb-damaged terminal building to fully return to normal. (Xinhua)

## About 37,000 Protesters Rally Against Japan's Controversial Security Laws

TOKYO - Some 37,000 demonstrators gathered around the Japanese National Diet building on Tuesday protesting the controversial security laws which came into effect on the day and demanding the retraction of the legislation due to its unconstitutional nature.

The protesters held posters that read "War is over," "Retract the security laws immediately" and "Abe administration step down" and shouted they oppose the security laws and protect the country's war-renouncing constitution.

The security legislation was designed by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to enhance Japan's alliance with the United States by exercising the right to collective self-defense, meaning that under the new legislation, Japan could dispatch its Self-Defense Forces (SDF) overseas to engage in armed conflicts for the first time in 70 years even if Japan itself is not attacked.

However, the Japanese Supreme Law, known as the pacifist constitution, bans the SDF from involving in combat outside Japanese territories and from exercising the right to collective defense.

During the rally, Yukio Edano, secretary-general of the newly launched opposition party of the Democratic Party, said that the Abe administration disregarded the constitution so that it has lost its legality, adding that it is the "individual defense right" rather than the "collective defense" that the country needs to protect.

Kikuko Yamaguchi, 66, said the government ignored the public voices over the legislation, adding that Japan vowed to renounce war seven decades ago and it has been enshrined in the country's constitution. (Xinhua)

## Too Early to Talk about Resuming Air Travel with Egypt: Kremlin

MOSCOW - Moscow considers it premature to talk about resuming flights to Egypt until all the circumstances of the hijacking of the Egyptian plane become clear, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Tuesday.

"The incoming information is yet very contradictory, so it would be wrong to make any conclusions about the possibility of resuming air travel until all the circumstances of the incident are clarified," said the spokesman, stressing the priority to ensure the safety of Russian citizens.

Also in the day, the Russian Tourism Industry Union said the hijacking of the plane might delay reopening Egypt to Russian tourists.

"The tourist industry can only assume that if there were plans to reopen Egypt in the near future, now this decision will be postponed," Irina Tyurina, spokeswoman of the association, was quoted as saying by TASS news agency.

An EgyptAir plane heading from Egypt's second-largest city Alexandria to its capital city Cairo with 56 passengers and eight crew members on board was hijacked and diverted to Cyprus, where most hostages had been released before the hijacker was arrested.

Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered a tourist evacuation and a suspension of all the country's flights to Egypt since a Russian A321 Airbus on Oct. 31, 2015 crashed shortly after takeoff from the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, killing all 224 people onboard, mostly Russians. (Xinhua)

## WFP Set to Help Myanmar Fight Food Insecurity

YANGON - The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) has signed an agreement with the Ministry of Border Affairs to reduce food insecurity in 11 regions and states of Myanmar, official media reported Tuesday.

The Letter of Understanding on the project of reducing food insecurity and malnutrition was signed in Nay Pyi Taw Monday. The project, worth about 134.79 million U.S. dollars, is to be undertaken in Rakhine, Kachin, Shan, Kayah, Chin, Mon, Sagaing, Tanintharyi, Magway, Mandalay and Yangon regions and states till next year. (Xinhua)