

(1) Afghanistan...

Aryubi was quoted as saying Afghanistan wanted to purchase cheaper internet from Iran and reduce rates of telecommunication services between the two countries and transform Afghanistan into a regional hub for Internet.

According to the statement, Afghanistan is connected with all neighboring countries via the internet and desires to generate revenue through transit fees. (Pajhwok)

(2) Afghanistan Enacts...

of Security (NDS) and Fin TRACA. Its mandate is to ensure the implementation of legal frameworks to prevent money laundering, and any other un-regulated currency flow that helps terrorists to finance their activities.

"Progress in this area has led to our compliance with international standards. This was recognized by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), which removed Afghanistan from its compliance watch-list. In the broader context, our efforts are also in line with commitments under the International Convention on Suppression of Acts of Terrorism and the UN Convention against Corruption," said Raz.

Afghanistan was engaged in efforts to disrupt the links between terrorism and organized crimes. Afghanistan had long been engaged in fight against narcotics, with a special focus to prevent the Taliban and other affiliate groups, from the illicit drug proceeds. "Under our national counter narcotic strategy, we are taking actions across multiple fronts such as eradication; public awareness and alternative livelihoods," she said.

Last year alone, approximately 3,000 operations were conducted. From which, close to 3,500 individuals, including foreign nationals, were apprehended and prosecuted. Similarly, drug-processing laboratories and storage facilities were destroyed through joint military operations. This had disrupted the Taliban's ability to benefit from narcotics revenue. In addition, more than 200 tons of illicit drugs confiscated in the course of one year, she said.

"We have improved the security at national airports and border-crossings to detect, deter and prevent trafficking. This shows our strong commitment to root-out the illicit drug economy, and address the linkages between terrorism financing and narcotics. These measures led to decrease drug production last year, as reflected in UNODC's most recent Survey as well," the Afghan envoy to the UN Security Council said.

She stressed the problem of narcotics in Afghanistan must be seen in the context of a complex issue. "We must recognize that only a robust and comprehensive effort, with international and regional partners - entailing all components of the problem: production; trafficking and consumption - can achieve the shared objective, which is completely eliminating the narcotics production and trade," she said.

To ensure our success, Raz called for a more cohesive & unified regional approach. "Especially our immediate neighbors can play an effective & strong role to confront the nexus of transnational criminal activities. The inflow of resources that finance and support the terrorist activities, such as trafficking of weapons and chemical precursors do arrive from outside of Afghanistan, and that

is where we need to have a regional comprehensive approach in combating this menace," she believed. (Pajhwok)

(3) Angelina Jolie Pushes...

obstacle to peace, said the U.S. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction on Thursday.

Jolie also touted the importance of a United States that is "part of an international community," after a retreat by U.S. President Donald Trump from U.N. agencies and global agreements that has some countries concerned about his commitment to multilateralism.

"I'm a patriot, I love my country and I want to see it thrive. I also believe in an America that is part of an international community. Countries working together on equal footing is how we reduce the risk of conflict," she said.

"A country that believes that all men and women are born free and equal cannot be true to itself if it doesn't defend those principles for all people, wherever they live," she said. (Reuters)

(4) CSO Head Insults...

so they review the AGC documents, but Rasouli responded by saying Mr. minister don't waste your time in meetings because you (Aryubi) would be fired soon," the official said.

He said Rasouli did not stop here and ending the telephone call said, "I will kick you out of the ministry like a dog as I did Hamayon Mohtat and Wais Payab."

The MCIT official said they were ready to provide all evidence regarding the telephonic call to prove the claim.

On the other hand, Javid Rasouli denied insulting the IT minister. "It is right I was part of the team to review documents of the AGC but I did not insult anyone, these allegations are baseless," he said. In response to a question, Rasouli said, "I did not attend the meeting because we had already done enough discussion on the issue in HEC meeting and there was no need for further talks." He said they sent their views about AGC (to the ministry) through email. (Pajhwok)

(5) Rashid Khan...

the BBL leaderboard after winning just six of 14 games.

"I am very happy to have been named the Adelaide Strikers' Most Valuable Player in the Big Bash League for the second year in a row.

Thank you, Adelaide Strikers and fans in Australia and around the world," Rashid said in a tweet. (Tolo news)

(6) Residents Report...

The Ministry of Interior's spokesman Nusrat Rahimi said the Afghan forces left the area in Arghanj Khwa district in a tactical move to prevent casualties. He said no casualty was inflicted to government forces in the clash.

Arghanj Khwa district connects at least 10 districts of Badakhshan to Faizabad city.

"The district has been evacuated. The forces are fighting on its outskirts. At least 15 people including civilians and military men have been martyred," said Mirza Mohammad Yarmand, a retired military officer. (Tolo news)

(7) Afghans Have...

Uzbekistan, Jordan and Qatar from March 25 to April 10, according to the US Department of State.

Khalilzad, meanwhile, said that he had "excellent meetings" with his counterparts at the European Union where they discussed their shared values.

"We talked about our countries' shared values, and about the meaningful political and social gains in Afghanistan over the last 18 years, especially for women and children, which must be prioritized in the peace process," Khalilzad said.

On March 26, Federica Maria Mogherini, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, visited Kabul where he met Afghan leaders and vowed the EU's full support to the peace process as well as the upcoming elections.

Khalilzad said in a tweet on Friday that he appreciates Mogherini's thoughts for Afghans concerned about potential overlap in timing of elections and the Afghan peace process. =

"Enter negotiations as if there were no elections, united as a country, and do elections as if there were no negotiations," Mogherini said at a press conference with President Ghani in Kabul on March 26.

In his meeting with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg on Thursday, Khalilzad briefed the NATO allies on the Afghan peace talks.

"NATO and US forces serve shoulder-to-shoulder in Afghanistan. Our shared goal is to reach a peace agreement worthy of the sacrifices made over decades of war. Together we're committed to achieving genuine intra-Afghan dialogue on a political settlement that ends the conflict," Khalilzad said.

According to the US Department of State, the Special Representative will consult with the Afghan government and other Afghans about the status of US talks with the Taliban, encourage efforts to form an inclusive negotiating team, and discuss next steps in intra-Afghan discussions and negotiations. (Tolo news)

(8) Afghanistan Floods...

"My house and my farmland have been destroyed by floods. If you go and see the destruction it makes you cry," said Shir Ahmad, who lives in a village in Herat province, which borders Iran.

Children waded through muddy, knee-deep floodwaters that flowed through tent camps for displaced people after the rain stopped. Some families strung salvageable clothes and bedding to dry.

Floods have destroyed hundreds of homes, some historic sites, thousands of acres of farmland, bridges and highways, said Jilani Farhad, a spokesman for the province.

Floods are a common occurrence in Afghanistan, although not usually this severe. The country has little infrastructure, such as ditches and sewers, to manage water run-off from rain or melting snow.

"There is huge destruction caused by floods," said Ahmad Jawed Nadem, head of refugees and repatriation for Herat. In one area, he said he saw more than 200 destroyed houses.

In Herat alone, eight people were killed, said Dr. Abdul Hakim Tamana, head of public health for the province.

"They had the drought problem, and the floods and the conflict. They are very poor people and they lose all they have," the Afghan Red Crescent Society's secretary general Nilab Mobarez said.

"It's not as simple as they will go on with their lives."

World Vision said it appeared tens of thousands of Afghans

were affected. Some residents of Badghis province were calling it the worst storm in 20 years, it said. (Reuters) -

(9) 9 Police Personnel...

rank had gunned down eight policemen manning the check post and seven others surrendered to the rebels with weapons and ammunition. (Pajhwok)

(10) Ghani, Abdullah...

biggest security challenges in a generation and I look forward to continue working with all allies to adapt and modernise NATO." "My focus right now is our meeting with Foreign Ministers in Washington DC next week to mark 70 years of our successful transatlantic partnership and to look to the future."

"Allies expressed their support for the secretary general's work to adapt and modernize NATO and ensure it remains fit for the future," NATO's 29 government said in a statement.

If he completes his term as the alliance's top civilian, Stoltenberg will be the second longest-serving NATO chief, after former Dutch Foreign Affairs Minister Joseph Luns was in the job from October 1971 to May 1984. (Pajhwok)

(11) Militant Attacks on...

set alight in Dand-i-Ghori alone in the past 10 days.

In this regard, Lt. Col. Ghulam Abbas Tawkali, Shaheen Military Corps public order eighth battalion commander, acknowledged the concerns of businessmen and said the security situation on the Baghlan highway had deteriorated.

He, however, said a search operation had been launched to improve security on all vital roads in Baghlan. (Pajhwok)

(12) Afghan Schoolchildren...

militants took control of the Arghanj Khwa district center in the northeastern province of Badakhshan after two days of fighting in which at least 12 security force members were reported to have died. Two other districts in Badakhshan, Warduj and Yumgan, have also fallen into Taliban hands over the past three years. (DW)

(13) Pope's Trip...

common mission to promote peace.

The "Human Fraternity" document outlines a shared set of values and principles common to Christians and Muslims, focusing on the dignity of every person and a rejection of violence committed in God's name.

Muslims, Christians and Jews have long lived peacefully in Morocco, even though Catholics are a tiny minority of about 23,000.

"As Christians and Muslims, we believe in God the creator and merciful one, who has created men and women and placed them on earth so that they might live together as brothers and sisters, respecting each other's diversity and helping each other in their need," Francis said in a video message to Moroccans released on the eve of the trip.

The pope is travelling to Morocco 34 years after St. John Paul II became the first pope to visit.

Later Saturday, Francis will visit a migrant center run by the Caritas charity organization.

Morocco last year became the main departure point for sub-Saharan African migrants seeking to reach Europe via Spain, after Italy essentially closed its borders to migrants leaving from Libya.

The rising numbers of migrants have put pressures on the kingdom, and become a hot political

issue in Spain ahead of that country's April 28 general election. (Fox News)

(14) A Look at Sunday...

1400 GMT) in the west.

The last local elections were held in 2014 and since then Turkey has held five other votes.

THE PARTIES

Political parties have continued alliances forged for last year's historic presidential and parliamentary elections, opting to support each other's candidates in metropolitan cities and provincial capitals.

Erdogan's Justice and Development Party is joined by the Nationalist Movement Party in the "People's Alliance" along with the small, far-right Great Unity Party. Erdogan's party is running for top mayor seats in 27 metropolitan cities and the nationalists in three, while allying in 21 other provinces.

The main opposition is the "Nation Alliance," consisting of the secular Republican People's Party and the nationalist Good Party. They are coordinating in 50 provinces.

The pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party, or HDP, the second largest opposition group in parliament, is leading a "Kurdish election alliance" with candidates for municipalities in Turkey's southeast. It is strategically sitting out critical races in Turkey's major cities, including Istanbul and Ankara, aiming to send HDP votes to the Republican People's Party to help challenge Erdogan.

THE ECONOMY

The elections are being held as Turkey enters a recession, along with rising food prices and high unemployment. Erdogan has been campaigning by stirring nationalist and religious sentiments at multiple rallies every day, in what critics say is an attempt to distract attention away from economic woes.

THE CAPITAL CITY

The biggest race is for the capital, Ankara. Opinion polls suggest the city could be won by Mansur Yavas, the candidate of the People's Alliance, after being held by Erdogan's party and its predecessor Islam-oriented party for a quarter of a century. As the race has heated up, the ruling party has accused the 63-year old lawyer of forgery and tax evasion. Yavas says he is the victim of a smear campaign by the Nation Alliance desperate to hold on to Ankara.

UNFAIR CAMPAIGNING

Like previous elections, the campaign has been unbalanced in favor of Erdogan. Turkish broadcasters carry all Erdogan speeches live but leave little to no room to the opposition. In the first two weeks of March, state broadcaster TRT aired the People's Alliance campaign for some 55 hours, the Nation Alliance for some 10 hours and covered the pro-Kurdish party critically for 98 minutes, according to research by an opposition member of Turkey's media watchdog. (Fox News)

(15) Do The Right...

tweeted in a statement in which he also "cautioned" "actors external to the Western Hemisphere" - i.e. Russia, mostly - to cease their "provocative actions" lest the US be forced to "defend and protect" its interests.

Padrino does not seem interested in Bolton's love letters, however, denouncing Guaido as "a self-proclaimed outlaw."

"We, the soldiers of the Motherland, do not accept the president imposed in the shadow of dark interests," he said. (RT)