

### (1) Ghani Speaks ...

we are determined to pursue broad-based politics and not to deprive a party [of inclusion]" added Ghani. In addition, Ghani called for investment and said: "Anyone who invests 50 million dollars will be able to have a private discussion with me. Anyone who is willing to put 200 million dollars will get to stay in our ancient palace... And will have direct interaction with all the ministers." Meanwhile, a number of analysts have said that the government's peace strategy must not be in the form of begging. "Peace and war are two related phenomena, but weakness must not decide the conditions for war and peace. It is better for the government of Afghanistan to have a clear policy and the peace process must continue no matter what," says Nasrullah Stanekzai a political analyst. The Taliban has however ignored calls for peace and instead officially launched their spring fighting offensive last Friday - taking their battle to the northern parts of the country. (Tolnews)

### (2) Modi May ...

Parliament building will be functional by October for their last session. The only work left is carpeting and sound system, the rest has been completed," the source told The Hindu. The new parliament building is being built with the financial support of India in western part of capital Kabul. The construction of the new Afghan parliament started in 2009 and was initially scheduled for a December 2012 completion. (KP)

### (3) Taliban ...

murder of 132 school children in Peshwar by the Pakistani Taliban earlier this year. "The open discussions are based on peace in Afghanistan. There will be representatives from Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Taliban and some other organisations," Ludin said. He added that members of the High Peace Council would be meeting the Taliban in Qatar and also two representatives of Hizb-i-Islami, another militant group fighting Afghanistan's U.S.-backed government that also has a political wing. The New York Times reported this week that even months after US President Barack Obama had formally declared that the US war against the Taliban was over, the American military was regularly carrying out air strikes and that special forces troops were still operating in the country. It reported that American and Nato forces carried out over 50 air strikes in March, bringing the total number in 2014 to 128.

Obama and Ghani announced in March that the number of US troops in Afghanistan would be reduced to just under 10,000 with an exit strategy for a full withdrawal by 2017. (Reuters)

### (4) USAID Launches ...

partnership with the Afghan Ministry of Public Health (MoPH). Focused on Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif, Kandahar City, Herat City and Jalalabad, rural communities in 13 provinces would also benefit from the programme that would improve TB control services for over 50 percent of Afghanistan's populations. Part of USAID's investment in health services for Afghans, the five-year programme would assist the MoPH in controlling the disease in Afghanistan, the USAID statement said. (Pajhwok)

### (5) People's Say ...

"Budgets prepared in Kabul lack transparency and can't be called national budgets," he elaborated. Afzali said "public should point out projects and the government should invest whatever deemed possible." The government should educate people and their representatives on budget preparations.

He said the government could avoid under-spending only when people were effectively involved in budget preparation.

Ali Yazdan, a member of the provincial council member of Kabul, claimed the government planned to allocate meager amounts for some regions and people would regret not partaking in the budget's preparation.

The Finance Ministry has long been insisting it prepares annual budgets in line with immediate priorities. (Pajhwok)

### (6) ICRC Concerned ...

than 100 injured and no group has so far claimed responsibility for it. President Ashraf Ghani had blamed the Jalalabad attack on the self-styled Islamic State group, but the group later denied its involvement. "Humanitarian needs in Afghani-

stan are not diminishing, but growing. We see the fighting is increasing in intensity," Stillhart said.

The ICRC said in a statement it helped 345 wounded people reach health facilities in the first three months of this year, up 19 percent on the same period last year. Stillhart insisted continued flow of humanitarian aid to the war-torn country. "It is simply vital, at this time, that donors maintain their commitment to the most vulnerable in Afghanistan."

During his visit, Stillhart met senior Afghan officials and discussed a number of issues relating to detention, health and assistance provided to displaced people, added the statement. (Pajhwok)

### (7) Interior Minister...

Olomi said on Wednesday while visiting northern Kunduz province. "Some people within the system deliberately or reluctantly pave the way for insecurity because of this or that mine or because of this or that post, which could dismantle the system," the Interior Minister added. "You can see the prevailing situations in Faryab, nothing is there except those serving in the system, this paves the way for the enemies to undertake a number of movements."

Meanwhile, representatives from northern provinces in which militant violence has increased have indicated that Taliban and Daesh affiliates are responsible. "According to our information, those who are playing a key role in insecurity are affiliates of the Taliban and Daesh," Kunduz MP Shaista Baz Naseri said on Wednesday.

Some denounced the Interior Minister's allegations. "I strongly oppose the statement of the Minister of Interior," Kunduz Senator Abdullah Qarloq said. "The majority of those operating in northern provinces, particularly Kunduz, are associates of Daesh and Taliban," he added.

Other lawmakers have urged top security officials like Olomi to empower Mujahideen groups to assist in reestablishing security to the traditionally stable northern provinces. "I believe that we must assess the roots of security threats in Kunduz, and a chance should be given to the Mujahideen and some Jihadi leaders to suppress the groups that operate, whether in Kunduz or other provinces," said MP Mirdad Khan Nejrabi, the head of Parliament's Internal Security Commission. (Tolnews)

### (8) U.S. Dumps ...

Like so many U.S. taxpayer funded projects in Afghanistan, the anti-drug effort has been troubled, but the new numbers on spending and drug production show that the eradication effort has failed at a huge cost.

Much of the money has been spent to help troops eradicate drugs and also to provide farmers with alternative crops. The money has even been used to buy new tractors.

But there are about 560,000 acres involved in opium cultivation that produces over 13 million tons of the drug, according to page 117 of the report. Production jumped 14.5 percent in 2014. (Agencies)

### (9) Analysts Support...

as you know, are very complex things," General Campbell said on Thursday. "For me, it's not black and white," he added.

The U.S. suppressive attacks have reportedly increased as Taliban and other militant group violence has picked up in various parts of the country in recent months. A number of Afghan political commentators have said that, based on the BSA, the U.S. forces are actually obligated to conduct such strikes, given the mounting threat insurgents have posed to the country's stability.

"Based on the agreement, the U.S. is obliged to contribute in the battles alongside providing equipment and training for the security forces, and based on needs, they must support the security forces of the country," military expert Atiqullah Amarkhail said.

Some western officials have maintained that the ongoing strikes are necessary for keeping the thousands of NATO advisors still on the ground in Afghanistan safe. Yet Afghan MP Iqbal Kohistani also pointed out on Thursday that, as has been the case over the past decade, western countries see security in Afghanistan as being interrelated with security in the region and abroad. Thus, the strikes are seen as an obvious extension of the U.S. continued War on Terrorism, regardless of the status of its troops in Afghanistan.

"Global security is interrelated with stability in Afghanistan," MP Kohistani said. "If the terror hideouts aren't eliminated in Afghanistan, international security will still be at

risk, and based on the agreement, these forces are responsible to support the Afghan troops in battle." (Tolnews)

### (10) US Military...

yesterday. He said Taliban cannot win the ground from Afghan forces because thousands of troops with air support have been deployed while on the other hand Taliban are only in hundreds. (KP)

### (11) Kabul Labours

international workers' day to appreciate efforts of labours for their rights. (Pajhwok)

### (12) Religious Scholars...

public condemnation of the Taliban is a major blow to the militant group's claim to legitimacy. Al-Ghamedi had said that both Daesh and Taliban have killed people in the name of Islam, but in fact have no connection to the true religion.

The Afghan scholars spoke while gathered in the Abdul Rahman mosque on Thursday in Kabul. "We have all gathered here to support our government and the recent statements of Sheikh Khaled Al-Ghamedi," Kabul Islamic Scholars representative Attaullah Faizani said. "Islamic scholars must always speak the truth, wherever they are," he added.

Another scholar, Mawlawi Sahebuddin, stressed that the militant groups in Afghanistan have proven themselves untrustworthy and dishonest. "As soon as we made peace, anti-government armed groups beheaded us from behind; today, our youth are working for peace, and they are being beheaded by these people," he said.

While they expressed support for the Afghan security forces, the Mullahs gathered on Thursday focused their energy more on condemning and exposing insurgents' claims of religious piety and service as fraudulent.

"A true Islamic scholar would never do this, people who take advantage of Islam and do not have any understanding of the foundations of Islam do it - those who just wear the clothes of a religious scholar," Islamic scholar Muhammad Yaqub said regarding the Taliban.

Others expressed doubts that the militant groups would ever agree to peace. "Peace with who? As far I remember, we have been pleading and begging to anti-government armed groups since the time of Ustad Rabbani and now Ashraf Ghani," a participant named Amanullah said. "The anti-government armed groups must be given a deadline of one day, one week or two weeks, otherwise, they must be fought against." (Tolnews)

### (13) Security Forces ...

(NDS) members are involved in the operation. He said in one area about 100 Taliban fighters had grouped at the base of the Alborz Mountains in Chamtal district.

"Definitely, the enemy could not defeat our forces and retreated from the area," Qaderi said.

However, there were other, insecure areas that still had to be tackled - including Sheeram.

"We also intend to launch a major operation in Sar-e Pul in the future. In future, when we launch operations in Alborz regions, a Sar-e-Pul operation should be started at the same time so that the insurgents do not find a way to escape toward Sar-e Pul," Qaderi further said.

Meanwhile, deputy acting governor of Balkh Mohammad Zahir Wahdat has called on the people in the province to cooperate with security forces to ensure a complete elimination of militants.

"We should try to foil the plots of the enemy in the face of Daesh," Zahir said.

Currently militants threaten north-eastern provinces of Kunduz, Badakhshan, Baghlan and northern provinces of Faryab, Sar-e Pul and Jawozjan. Well planned and strategic military operations are however now being launched to combat the threat and escalation of incidents in the country. (Tolnews)

### (14) Farkhund...

Farkhunda murder case and those whose names had been omitted would also be exposed.

He had also claimed prosecutors at the Attorney General's Office had dropped names of some individuals involved in the murder.

Three days back, the Attorney General's Office said it had completed its investigation into the case and sent it to the primary court for proceeding. Abdul Baseer Azizi, the AGO spokesman said the case had thoroughly been investigated from their side. He said 49 people including 19 police officers had been arrested in connec-

tion with the murder.

Furkhunda's murder caused a national outcry, with civil society activists holding gatherings to call for the perpetrators to be awarded an exemplary punishment. (Pajhwok)

### (15) Analysts Criticize

to trade through Pakistan, allowing greater commercial connectivity between India and Afghanistan. Analysts have chided Ghani for not focusing on getting the Chabahar port deal finalized while on his trip to India.

In particular, commentators have criticized the president for not bringing the Minister of Mines and Petroleum with him on the trip. Allegedly the president went to India without much of an agenda.

"The president should have gone to India with a comprehensive plan, in order to attract India's investment interest in different areas, but it did not happen," Kabul Economics Professor Haseebullah Mowhed told TOLnews. "The government has so far not been able to draft its economic structure, and the main reason is the lack of government plans in this regard." Mowhed went on to emphasize that the national unity government leaders must stop their disputes over the distribution of power between them and focus on developing the national economy, which went through a recession last year.

"Afghanistan has multiple resources and opportunities for investment, but on the condition that government must have a specific plan for using the resources," economic analyst Az-rakhsh Hafezi said. "The president must work for attracting investments during this trips abroad, which would be the only way toward development in Afghanistan." (Tolnews)

### (16) Afghan Director...

briefed about the progress made in Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process since the last Ministerial Conference held in Beijing in October 2014.

She stressed the need for initiative on part of co-chairs to carry forward the Process to next level.

She also emphasized that building trust and confidence among regional partners was imperative for resolving the issues faced by the region.

Pakistan side reaffirmed commitment at the leadership level for further improving excellent bilateral relations.

After the visits of the Prime Minister of Pakistan to Afghanistan and the President of Afghanistan to Pakistan in 2014, bilateral relations were on an upward trajectory.

The conviction on part of Pakistan to closely coordinate with Afghanistan to lead the participating and supporting countries in achieving tangible results from the Process, was reiterated.

The two sides reached an agreement regarding Fifth Ministerial Conference to be held later this year in Islamabad. The theme of the conference will be "Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process: Enhanced Cooperation for Countering Security Threats and Promoting Economic Connectivity."

The theme will guide the activities in the run up to the Ministerial Conference, including the first Senior Officials Meeting to be hosted by Pakistan at Islamabad on 25 May 2015. (AAP)

### (17) Kabul Residents ...

to donate blood to the soldiers injured in Kunduz fighting.

"The large crowd that have gathered here belongs to all tribes and sects of Afghanistan to support our security forces, and this is a sign of unity," a participant Ibrahim Besharat said.

"We support our powerful Army, Police and NDS [intelligence] forces and we want them to eliminate the enemies of Afghanistan," female participant Farzana Farahmand said.

The residents stated that all the groups fighting with the security forces and targeting civilians were the enemies of Islam.

They called on all political parties to stand united against armed oppositions and prevent progress of newly-emerged Daesh and other militant groups in the country.

"If it is a matter of Islam, then what is Daesh doing?" MP from Kandahar Abdul Rahim Ayoubi said. "This group [Daesh] is just created to increase cruelty in Afghanistan."

Analysts, meanwhile, accuse some foreign spy agencies of attempting to break up the unity among Afghan tribes. The Kunduz battle started a week ago when scores of militants, who Kunduz officials said were comprised of Daesh and other Central Asian militants, converged on the province.

The fighting began last Friday in Imam Sahib, Qalai Zal, Ali Abad and some other districts.

Nearly 200 insurgents have been killed so far during the ground battle

and air strikes by ANSF.

The security forces are said to have been able to bring the battle under control and clear the areas of Taliban. (Tolnews)

### (18) 13 Militants ...

Since the launch of the peace process, Jalala said, around 378 militants, who had been fighting against the government over the past 13 years, had joined the peace process in Kunar.

Arab Khan, the group leader, said they had been fighting against American forces and decided to shun violence after the Americans had left. (Pajhwok)

### (19) 3 Wounded ...

police vehicle. He had no information about casualties.

No group, including the Taliban, has asserted responsibility for the twin explosions that come after seven people were killed and wounded in two back-to-back explosions in Khost City last week. (Pajhwok)

### (20) Blaze Destroys...

But the investigation team said the incident could have taken place due to carelessness of shopkeepers.

"We have suffered nearly a million dollar loss," a shop owner Ahmadullah said.

The shops owners called on government to arrest the elements behind the incident and compensate their loss.

"It was possibly caused by electrical short circuit. The government needs to arrest perpetrators because we suffered huge losses," another shop owner Farid said.

Kabul Police said firefighters managed to extinguish the fire and their investigations have been started.

Mandawi, Kabul's main trade area, caught fire in December 2012, leaving more than 600 shops completely destroyed. (Tolnews)

### (21) 25 Rebels ...

governor's office in a statement confirmed the clashes and the casualties. A doctor in the provincial civil hospital in Khost City, requesting anonymity, said five wounded policemen were admitted to the hospital.

Zabihullah Mujahid, a Taliban spokesman, said the fighters captured two check posts during the attack.

Mujahid said half a dozen guerrillas were killed and seven more wounded when the security forces retaliated. (Pajhwok)

### (22) Internet Outage...

Beyond Kabul, the damaged 300 meter cable, which was reportedly downed by a roadside bomb explosion, has also left other provinces with limited online access. "The Internet blackout has created major problems for us, because fiber optics is the cheapest source of getting access to the Internet, but now we are facing serious issues," a resident of Kunduz province named Mohammad Afzal said.

Meanwhile, officials from the Telecom Regulatory Authority of Afghanistan (ATRA) have maintained that only Kabul has been affected by the outage, adding that insecurity in Bati Kot district is what has presented them from attending to the cable damages. "With the downing of the Internet cable in Nangarhar province, only the capital Kabul faces Internet issues," ATRA member Khair Mohammad Faizi said. "Therefore, we are trying to renovate the cables as soon as possible, once the necessary arrangements are made for our security."

However, local officials in Nangarhar have assured that security is not an issue, and that the technicians would be kept safe. "Security threats aren't so bad as to prevent the repair of the cable; we are prepared to ensure the safety of the technicians whenever they are ready to repair it," the Nangarhar governor's spokesman Ahmadzia Abdulzai said. (Tolnews)

### (23) New Orchards...

extended to Dolina, Lal-aw-Sarjantal and other districts.

One of the beneficiaries, Ghulam Yahya, who owned a garden under the programme, told Pajhwok Afghan News: "Agriculture officials established these orchards in two years. I hope to start earning in a few years." Maryam, a 35-year-old resident, said: "The agriculture department established a garden for me this year and planted eight types of vegetables, which we now use at home."

She said now she was able to support her family, which had been until recently in economic constraints. (Pajhwok)

### (24) Bodies from ...

in Jiro Bala village, Khowahan district of Badakhshan. But the acting governor Shah Waliullah Adebek confirmed 52 dead in the incident.

A week passes but the bodies are yet to be pulled out, and assistances have not reached yet the affected areas.

"Where are my children?" a man said breaking into tears. "We have lost everything."

According to local officials, 25 women and 22 children were among those killed in the landslide caused by melting snow.

The landslide engulfed more 200 houses, locals said, adding that they had received only 15 tents.

Roads to Khowahan districts have reportedly remained close, putting the aid agencies to trouble.

"No one has come to listen to their plight," a villager Mawlawi Saifulah said who has come with dozens of other villagers to help the affected families.

The villagers strongly criticized the government for what they said failure to send assistance to the area.

"They [affected families] need to be transferred to a safe place. They need shelter," Hamidullah, a local said.

Female MP from Badakhshan, Fawzia Kofi, who visited the affected families, said the aid provided to the families was inadequate.

She asked the aid agencies to provide shelter to landslide-hit families.

"The village is totally destroyed," Kofi said, explaining two to three families were living in a single small house.

Meanwhile, Adebek admitted the assistance provided to affected families was not sufficient.

He acknowledged the slow delivery of assistance to the area. "Roads between the center and the affected village are blocked."

"Three million worth of assistances have been dispatched to the area but still they are not sufficient," Adebek said, asking the domestic and foreign aid agencies to dispatch its assistance.

But residents and geologists criticize the government for not taking preventive measures to prevent such fatal incidents.

Located high above sea level, Badakhshan is a mountainous province where landslides caused by melting snow have been regular occurrences over the past few years.

More than 2,000 people were killed last year in a landslide in Argo district of the province. (Tolnews)

### (25) UN is Warned...

for procurement in the recent past." She said the U.S. has ongoing discussions with the U.N. about the issue.

The Washington-based Institute for Science and International Security has described the Tehran-based Kaley Electric Company as being "Iran's primary centrifuge research and development site in the late 1990s and early 2000s, until Iran moved operations to the Natanz site in 2002." It has said the company was private until being bought by the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran. (AP)

### (26) Yemen Rebels

intensive efforts by the legitimate Yemeni government to hold a conference under the umbrella of the GCC secretariat in Riyadh."

The conference would be attended by "all Yemeni parties and components supporting legitimacy as well as Yemen's security and stability," said GCC secretary general Abdullah al-Zayani. Thursday's meeting aimed to lay the groundwork for a GCC leaders' summit on Tuesday, which will also be attended by French President Francois Hollande.

The GCC groups regional heavyweight Saudi Arabia along with Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. (AFP)

### (27) NATO to Hold...

hunted unsuccessfully for a week for what they believed to be a foreign submarine in waters close to Stockholm after several observations were made. "There is no link between the exercise, planned for a long time, and what happened in Sweden and Finland," Brynjar Stordal, a spokesman for the Norwegian army, told AFP.

"But what happened in those countries further demonstrates the relevance of such an exercise," he added.

Norway, the northernmost NATO member to share a border with Russia, last year noted an increase in Russian military activity as Moscow grows its military presence in the Arctic. (AFP)

### (28) Israel Blames...

Russia, which otherwise have descended into a Cold War-like gloom. Both countries this week urged progress, with Russia expressing its "grave dissatisfaction" at the delay and Secretary of State John Kerry calling the proposed zone an "ambitious goal and fraught with challenges" but worth pursuing.

And Iran, which Israel has loudly protested over its nuclear program, this week has used the stalled zone as a chance to fire back. (AP)