

(1) Ghani Asks ...

that we would pave the ground for peace, we took a great step today," he added.

Ghani said the Afghans were certain that violence and hostility could not help realize goals of national interest. The Afghan government and the HIA showed they strongly believed in peace. Ghani said, "Our conversation should bring trust, not opposition. On the other hand, reaching power through elections is one of the important basics of the current political life," he added, while stressing more productive negotiations.

The president said the new generation of Afghanistan expected their political leaders would lay down the foundation of stable peace in the country.

"We support peace in the framework of Islamic, national and humanitarian values, an issue that has a clear mention in the Constitution," Ghani said.

The president said: "We are ready for peace and pay the cost in achieving this goal based on the ability of this nation."

"I ask the Taliban, do you have the capacity of negotiation with the people and government of Afghanistan. We seriously ask you, who and where your leader is? What is your program for this nation except killing, fighting and destructions? I request you to follow Hekmatyar's way and join the peace process," he added.

Ghani thanked Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, the High Peace Council (HPC), jihadi leaders, Islamic scholars, civil society institutes and media for supporting the intra-Afghan negotiations. Afghans sacrificed their lives for long years to break down cruelty and despotism, and now the Afghan forces stood against those cruelties and international terrorism," said the president. He said the ongoing war in Afghanistan was not an internal war and the Afghans were victim of international terrorism. (Pajhwok)

(2) 'US Pushes ...

have this kind of relationship and it has to change.

The Trump Administration is currently conducting a comprehensive review of its policy on Afghanistan, the White House said Thursday without indicating a time line for this.

"I think we are in the middle of a comprehensive review on our policy in Afghanistan," the White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer said earlier when asked about the President's assessment of the current situation in Afghanistan.

Spicer said the Trump Administration was working with its Afghan partners and the Department of Defense and our key military leaders to "create an approach to address Afghanistan to defeat ISIS." (Pajhwok)

(3) Massive ...

of the ministry being administered by the acting ministers has paved the way for the embezzlement and misuse as the government has not introduced the ministers on the right time. He said the information regarding the contracts awarded by the ministry should become available with the civil society, insisting that the mines and natural resources belong to the Afghan people and not to the government.

Afzali also added that the government has not provided information regarding the contracts to the civil society and the international community during the past two years.

In other parts of his speech, Afzali said the mines and natural resources are being controlled by the influential figures and called on the government to hand over the mines and natural resources management to the international community or parliament if it can not administer it. (KP)

(4) NATO Chief ...

in the coming years. "We have ended our combat operations in Afghanistan, but we continue to train and assist and advise the Afghan forces to enable them to stabilize their own country, enable them to fight terrorism themselves. And I think that if there's one lesson we've learned, both from Afghanistan, but also in a different way, but at least the same lesson, we have learned from Bosnia-Herzegovina and from Kosovo, is that in the long-run it's much better if we are able to train the local forces to stabilize their own country, to fight terrorism themselves, instead of NATO deploying a big number of combat troops, and big combat operations.

"So building local capacity, training local forces is the key when it comes to NATO's contribution to fighting terrorism. We have to make decisions on our presence in Afghanistan in the coming years," he said.

This comes just days after Stoltenberg told a German daily Die Welt that NATO is considering sending additional military personnel to Afghanistan and increasing the timeframe of

the deployment in view of the "challenging security situation."

Meanwhile, also on Wednesday, in the first address to his employees - in three months - U.S Secretary of State Rex Tillerson offered broad policy outlines on North Korea, Russia and the Middle East, as well as a guarded, vague explanation of the administration's plans to overhaul the organization. He also only vaguely touched on Afghanistan.

All he really said was: "How do we advance our interest in Afghanistan to a legitimate peace process is what we're pursuing in Afghanistan, and then keeping this terrorism network (Daesh) confined as it wants to spread itself through North Africa and Central Africa. So a lot of work ahead of us, and many of you are directly engaged in it already; many more of you are going to become engaged in it, I think you can expect." (Tolnews)

(5) UNICEF Warns...

According to the UN, in many cases of refugees, adult males are the first family members to make the trip to Europe, with the rest of the family following later.

However, other family members are being held up in transit countries where they must apply for family reunification as a result of an EU-Turkey agreement in 2016 and border closures in some European countries.

The deal intended to stop the flow of refugees and other migrants into Europe. The process of reunification typically takes between 10 months and two years. (Xinhua)

(6) Hekmatyar ...

HIA leader once gain extended a hand of brotherhood to all the Afghans, including the Taliban, and said those wanted peace were his brothers. "We are ready to work with everyone for reaching the sacred goal of peace." Hekmatyar announced pardoning those who had killed HIA fighters and said he wanted to bury the past.

He said the Afghans should realize the fact that there were good and bad people in every party and group. The Afghan war was directed from outside and the victims were Afghans, he said.

"We extend a hand of brotherhood to the Jamiat-i-Islami and we also call the Taliban as brothers."

Hekmatyar said the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan was a result of disunity and not respecting national values. Hekmatyar reiterated his opposition to reaching power by force, saying the nation should select their leader through election.

"No one has a justification for the stay of foreign forces here, I ask the Taliban to come and end this war. Let's establish an Islamic government together."

Hekmatyar said since entering peace talks with the government until now many senior HIA workers were either killed or attempt made on their lives. He said the Taliban had proudly accepted responsibility for some of the coward attacks, but no one claimed credit for similar acts in the northern provinces. (Pajhwok)

(7) DABS to...

As per the new plan, there will be changes to the way bills are paid and the price of electricity may change as well.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE) said they had approached the power exporters to reduce the overall cost of electricity coming in to Afghanistan. (Wadsam)

(8) Pentagon ...

" said Theresa Whelan, Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations, in a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing.

The intent is "to move beyond the stalemate and also to recognize that Afghanistan is a very important partner for the United States in a very tricky region."

NATO officially ended its combat operations against the Taliban at the end of 2014, and its current mission is to support Afghan troops in training and advice.

Last year, with the Kabul government struggling to hold ground against the Taliban, former president Barack Obama authorized US air strikes against the Taliban in limited cases, to ensure Afghan forces on the ground would have a "strategic advantage." The new Trump administration could go beyond that to permit more direct engagement between US forces and the Taliban, General Raymond Thomas, commander of the US Special Operations Command, told the same hearing Thursday.

"Changes to the rules of engagement are being considered," he said. (AFP)

(9) Maternal, ...

Child mortality has decreased by 50 percent and neonatal mortality (within the first 28 days of life) has declined by 32 percent.

But the World Health Organization

(WHO) said despite these achievements, Afghan mothers' and children's mortality remains among the highest in the region.

Several factors affect the health system's capacity to reduce the risks that pregnant women face - access to and use of maternal and reproductive health services is still limited and the quality of services is low as a result of service delivery capacity, particularly in difficult-to-reach rural areas, the WHO reported.

The organization stated in a study that pregnancy-related causes remain the leading risk of death for women in their childbearing years (41 percent).

Hemorrhage is by far the leading cause of maternal deaths (56 percent), followed by eclampsia (20 percent), obstructed labor (11 percent), sepsis and infections (five percent). (Tolnews)

(10) Only Afghans...

wish former High Peace Council chief Pir Syed Ahmad Gilani was alive today. He would have seen that his dream of peace has come true today." He said it was high time to work together for peace and stability of the country and rescue the Afghans from decades of sufferings.

He asked foreign countries who saw their interest in a prolonged conflict in Afghanistan to stop interfering in internal affairs of the war-torn country and let the Afghans decide their fate themselves.

Hekmatyar also asked Iran not to exploit poverty and helplessness of Afghan refugees by sending them to the war in Syria and Iraq.

He said they recognized the Afghanistan Constitution for the sake of peace and they had some reservations about the article second and would put them before a loya jirga. He explained his party did not believe in parliamentary system, keeping in view the country's current situation.

He said coalition governments in a country like Afghanistan could not deliver and it did not mean the HIA supported one leader and opposed the other in the unity government.

"I have come with the hope and will to bring back all refugee families. I have come with my family to send the message to all that Afghanistan is our home and graveyard."

In a reference to the Taliban, Hekmatyar said they would not let anyone rule Afghanistan by force. "Come to end the conflict."

He said they would accept every positive suggestion from the Taliban. He asked the Taliban to appoint their peace envoys and he would protect their legal rights.

Hekmatyar said former president Hamid Karzai had been calling the Taliban as brothers and he should not have walked back from the stance. "Those who lack courage to admit facts, cannot do big things," said Hekmatyar, who asked the Taliban to take the path of peace in order to leave foreign forces with no excuse to stay.

He said 95 per cent American forces had exited Afghanistan and the US president had announced a timeline for the rest, but foreign intelligence agencies intensified in the conflict to keep the US engaged here. Kunduz was handed over to the Taliban and the incident prompted the US and its allies to keep forces in the country.

The HIA leader also said Afghans who enjoyed good relations with Pakistan would be sent to the neighbouring country to ask Islamabad to review its policy on Afghanistan.

He said they wanted a system in Afghanistan which had people's backing, where justice prevailed and people were satisfied with its continuation.. (Pajhwok)

(11) Hekmatyar...

actions should be forgotten. "We should commit to open a new door and forget the past," said Hekmatyar.

Hekmatyar returned to Kabul city on Thursday after 20 years, the city was partly destroyed by Hekmatyar during the civil war.

Kabul residents meanwhile said people are worried as Hekmatyar's supporters were heavily armed when they welcomed him back to Kabul.

"It was worrying, all the people were surprised that this could happen in the city," said Mohammad Gulab, a resident of Kabul.

"Before coming to Kabul, they should have agreed with government and should have handed in their weapons. Because they have come with the message of peace," said Sayed Yusuf, another Kabul resident.

"They entered the city with lots of weapons and it shouldn't have been like that. They should have submitted their weapons to government," said Tajmir, another resident of Kabul.

On Thursday, a special ceremony was held at the Presidential Palace for Hekmatyar. High-ranking officials along with ex-jihadi leaders as well as President Ashraf Ghani and CEO

Abdullah Abdullah were present. However, the leaders of two parties - Jamiat-e Islami Party and the Islamic Movement of Afghanistan - were noticeably absent. (Tolnews)

(12) Samar Be

to consider personal crimes and ensure those being release had not committed war crimes.

She had said Hekmatyar could not reverse the strides the Afghans had taken towards rebuilding their country and reviving their civilization, in which the women had a special role.

Attaullah Heran, a civil society activist, said Samar's comments were against the national interest. "In the past 15 years, many crimes have been committed but AIHRC was silent."

He accused the rights commission head of undermining the national interest for her personal political advantage.

He demanded of the government to show Samar the door and said: "There is no dearth of individuals to head the AIHRC, nor the commission is inherited by her."

Mujeeb Lezah, another civil society activist, said the AIHRC was not an independent body and its head Samar had shown her opposition to the peace process with her comments.

Some other civil activists held similar views at the gathering and demanded the AIHRC head to be dismissed. (Pajhwok)

(13) President

President Ghani thanked all those who participated in organizing the Prof. Dr. Sayeed Bahauddin Majroh Seminar.

He called Majroh a strong academic character and said the scholar left behind a long-term message for his people so discussions on him should not remain limited to a seminar.

Ghani said Majroh's thoughts should be developed and placed in the education curriculum.

"The thoughts of Majroh have many dimensions, he analyzed intellectual, social and political crisis very well. Majroh was able to serve as a prime minister, but he preferred to teach in university," he said.

The president added a faculty in Kunar University and some squares in Nangarhar and Kunar provinces should be named after Majroh.

The state, society and people could not live without a culture the development of which needed comprehensive efforts, he said. The president assured a cultural council would be created in near future. (Pajhwok)

(14) Masterminds

Thursday said government needs to identify the main perpetrators behind the attack and answer to the nation about the carnage.

"If this case is not clarified, this would lower the morale of all those whose sons are serving in the ranks of the army," said a civil society activist in Balkh, Mir Roen.

"The government is directly responsible to answer about it to citizens particularly to those who send their sons to serve in the army for the sake of security and prosperity of the people," said another activist Abdul Qadir Misbah.

Referring to the Taliban's recently launched summer offensive, Mobin said that in announcing their spring offensive, insurgents will attempt to destabilize the country, adding that the army has taken preemptive measures to thwart their plots.

"We will not give the enemies and terrorists the chance to operate in the area. We will eliminate the insurgents who try to create security threats for the people," added Mobin.

He said that the war is ongoing in some northern and northeastern provinces and that the corps has defined a new strategy aimed at suppressing the insurgents across this region. (Tolnews)

(15) 50th ADB

infrastructure as a critical sector towards achieving sustainable and inclusive development. Discussions on how to address urban challenges and strive for clean and climate-resilient development will be held.

The flagship Governors' Seminar on 5 May would discuss reforms in trade, investment, and finance, as well as lessons learned from the past 50 years of development in the region. A special book launch, as part of ADB's 50th anniversary celebrations, will be held on 4 May to discuss and share ADB's role and future direction.

Key sessions would discuss salient issues central to development including rising inequality, macroeconomic stability, progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, and financial inclusion. The Annual Meeting would highlight the role of the private sector in supporting development programs in Asia and the Pacific through seminars focused on public-private partnerships and financing.

Host country, Japan, will hold several events including discussions on lessons from the Asian financial crisis 20 years later, and a youth event focused on reducing poverty and fostering inclusive economic growth.

The Central and West Asia Department Director General highlighted in a media briefing on ten Asian countries especially on five central Asian countries on some things common interest and landlord countries link Afghanistan and Uzbekistan providing ring road connectivity, on TAPI project on import of electricity power from Uzbekistan through Afghanistan to Pakistan and India which Afghanistan provide a large opportunity for Pakistan and Iran and Afghanistan get every year 100 million dollar for irrigation, Agriculture and urban development and four countries signed the contract of big project of Tope around 600 million dollar which it will not be only energy transaction which local communities get jobs, electricity and roads based on our experience everyone want that.

On partnership affairs the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) today signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to strengthen cooperation between the two institutions in support of members in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea, and Japan.

The MOU was signed by ADB President Takehiko Nakao and AMRO Director Junhong Chang on the sidelines of the 50th Annual Meeting of ADB's Board of Governors in Yokohama, Japan.

Through the partnership, ADB and AMRO will collaborate to support efforts and policies focused on economic growth, greater financial stability, and improved cooperation and integration in the ASEAN+3 regions. The MOU will help enhance the two institutions' support to further strengthen the region's macroeconomic surveillance, as well as its crisis prevention and management capabilities. (Pajhwok)

of Afghan Wireless. "The launch of AWCC's 4G/LTE Network in Kabul—and soon, throughout the nation—is the latest example of AWCC's determination to provide Afghans with the world's best communications services," said Mr. Amin. "Afghan Wireless is a company built by Afghans," Mr. Amin said, "and we're honored to serve Afghans, and support our country's technological development, economic and social progress."

About 4G Technology:

The industry began looking to data-optimized 4th-generation technologies, with the promise of speed improvements up to 10-fold over existing 3G technologies. It is basically the extension in the 3G technology with more bandwidth and services offers in the 3G. The expectation for the 4G technology is basically the high quality audio/video streaming over end to end Internet Protocol. 4G LTE data transfer speed can reach peak download 100 Mbit/s, peak upload 50 Mbit/s.

Honorable Dr. Mohammad Najeeb Azizi Chairman, ATRA board has praised the AWCC's services during his speech and congratulated Afghan Wireless on the 4G launch.

Mr. Najeeb added: "By launching 4G service, I feel we took an important leap forward in the development of infrastructure of Afghanistan also we grew closer with our fellow region countries, in terms of offering latest services to our countrymen."

World of 4G - The History:

4G Launched First in December 2009 in Norway. Around 580 operators have commercially launched 4G-LTE networks across 188 countries worldwide as of the end of December 2016. Current estimated number of 4G LTE subscribers worldwide is 2.28 Bn, which is expected to rise to 3.63 Bn by 2020. It is also estimated that by 2020, 75% of the world population will be covered by 4G LTE. (PR)

(17) Af-Pak Border

forces retaliated in self-defence and heavy weapons fire from the Pakistan side continued.

As a result of the skirmish, the police chief said, the Friendship Gate, the border crossing between the two countries, had been closed and about one thousands families had fled homes.

Dr Akhtar, a senior health official in Chaman border town of Pakistan, told the Pakistan media that more than 40 people had been injured, with five critically wounded victims sent to Quetta for medical treatment.

The Pakistan Army's media wing said exchange of firing had stopped and Pakistan and Afghan security officials would be meeting on the

Chaman crossing for a flag meeting. Shopkeepers in Chaman city shuttered their shops and residents evacuated homes in Killi Luqman, Killi Jahangir and Badshah Adda Kahol, Killa Abdullah's district police officer (DPO), Sajid Mohmand was quoted as saying.

Security had also been ramped up in Quetta and other parts of Balochistan following the cross-border attack, and additional contingents of the Army and FC had been dispatched to the Pak-Afghan border in Chaman, DawnNews reported, quoting military sources.

The Foreign Office (FO) also summoned the Afghan chargé d'affaires to lodge a protest against the cross-border attack.

The chargé d'affaires was told that the "unprovoked firing by Afghan forces had led to the loss of lives, disrupted the census in areas on the Pakistan side of the border and caused damage to properties," a statement released by the FO said.

A resident of Luqman village, Abdul Shakoor, said the village was on the Afghan side of the border and many Afghans ran businesses in the area bazaar. He said some families remained indoors but others were able to flee.

Earlier, Kandahar police official Ghorzang Afridi told Pajhwok Afghan News the clash erupted at about 4am and accused the Pakistani militia forces of initiating the gun-battle. He claimed the Pakistani forces fired light and heavy weapons targeting the Afghan forces.

Adridi said additional forces had been sent to the border. He said the Afghan forces captured and torched two armoured vehicles of the Pakistani forces.

One Afghan border police was injured in the clash and he had no information about casualties across the border in Balochistan's Chaman town. (Pajhwok)

(18) Junbish

Hundreds of people, including Junbish supporters, Ahmad Zia Massoud political office members, and members of the Enlightenment Movement, attended the gathering. Junbish leader for Balkh province, Shamsullah Sadat, in a reference to President Ashraf Ghani, said he reached power with votes of people of northern provinces.

He alleged Ashraf Ghani waged conspiracies against Dostum soon after swearing-in. Instead of honouring Dostum, he was insulted and the millions of his supporters. He said the next presidential elections were not far away, the incumbent president would not get a single vote from them. (Pajhwok)

(19) Senior Taliban

said the Taliban had fled from Khwaja Bahauddin to their previous stronghold Qala Bad area. But Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid rejected the claims and said the fighters still controlled Darqad district. He did not go into details about the situation in Khwaja Bahauddin district. (Pajhwok)

(20) Saleh Supporters

martyrs," "we want Hekmatyar on trial," and others. One of the protestors, Abdullah Shekwamand, said they were against concessions granted to Hekmatyar under the pace agreement. "The government has no right to pardon a criminal, this decision rests with the nation." (Pajhwok)

(21) Car Bomb

said the blast caused a huge fire that engulfed many. The resident said he himself saw several people being brought to the local clinic with burn injuries. Four of them died in the clinic.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said a roadside bomb hit the Taliban's vehicle in Doab district, killing two fighters and wounding three others. (Pajhwok)

(22) 'Heavy Clashes'

had managed to retake the city within few days. Military officials have said that they have launched military operations in different parts of Kunduz in order to clear the areas of Taliban. (Tolnews)

(23) Above 60

others wounded in the operations as of Thursday evening. He said the security forces had advanced a kilometer and the clash was still ongoing. The Taliban in a statement claimed a number of government forces were killed and wounded in clashes in Ishkashim district, rejecting casualties to the fighters. (Pajhwok)