

### (1) WJ Approves ...

He said a tax related law had existed but the new draft would replace the old one after it got approval from Mesharano Jirga and endorsement from the president.

Finally, the bill was passed with the majority of vote. As many as 125 lawmakers were present in today's session. (Pajhwok)

### (2) CEO Defends...

the country. "Some people have said that the national unity government and international forces are involved in recent insecurity, but these statements are wrong, even by analysts," Abdullah said. "The national unity government and international security forces are busy maintaining security for Afghanistan; we don't have a specific definition of our enemy and the roots of these insecurities are in the past."

In recent months, Afghanistan has seen major clashes between Taliban militants and the Afghan government across the country. New threats such as the Daesh group have also emerged, resulting in a number of deadly attacks, including a suicide bombing in Jalalabad recently that injured over 100 civilians.

"Security cannot be maintained overnight, it needs time," Abdullah said on Saturday.

And yet instability has grown in northern provinces, which have traditionally been less restive parts of Afghanistan, since the Taliban is historically based in the south and east. The recent changes in the north have led to calls for the government to empower mujahideen groups, which have a strong presence in the north, with the authority to combat militants and support the Afghan security forces. Meanwhile, Muhammad Mohaqeq, Abdullah's Second Deputy, spoke on Saturday about his optimism for the peace process despite the rocky start to this year's fighting season.

While introducing Baryalai Arsalay as the next Secretary of the Office Of Administrative Affairs and the Council of Ministers Secretariat, Mohaqeq said that the government was taken off guard by the Taliban's offensive this year, but is still optimistic for peace talks. He also acknowledged the importance of mujahideen support.

"We believed in peace, neighboring and ally countries had even assured us, and we believed that during this fighting season, battles would end," Mohaqeq said. "That is why we were caught off guard and anti-government armed groups were able to harm us, but soon, they will be defeated by the security forces and mujahidin," he added. (Tolonews)

### (3) WJ Wants ...

people voted president to eliminate poverty, generate jobs and ensure law and order across the country.

But security situation continued to deteriorate after the new government sworn-in, she said, adding that the nation was experiencing more poverty and violence.

She said asked the government to introduce cabinet pick for Defence Ministry for a vote of confidence to the house. She warned security situation would further deteriorate if armed forces remained without leadership.

The federal cabinet was completed and ministers had started discharging duties but leaders were still at logger heads to introduce a suitable person to head the Defence Ministry.

Abdullah Mohammadi, a lawmaker from Samangan, said insecurity was arrived to those provinces, which were once peaceful for years.

Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahim said security was prerequisite for development of the country and asked President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah to introduce an efficient individual for the slot. (Pajhwok)

### (4) EU Celebrates ...

Federica Mogherini added that Schuman's appeal to overcome age-old divisions just five years after the Second World War laid the foundations of what has become the European Union. Over the years our Union has grown from six to twenty eight to become the world's largest peace project. The dreams of our founding fathers have become a reality. But peace and prosperity - based on a deep commitment to fundamental rights, democracy and the rule of law - cannot be taken for granted. It is a constant work in progress, something that must be nurtured and protected. As the specter of war has returned to our continent, our unity continues to be our greatest strength. When international law is broken and human dignity is treated with contempt, we have a responsibility to stand up to protect the fundamental values and interests that we share with peoples around the world.

This is the first Europe Day we celebrate with a new leadership at the helm of our Union. From our very first day in office we have been dedicated to working as a team and to spreading the message of unity in Europe and around the world, Mogherini said.

Mogherini further added that the European Union is an everyday peace project. Every member, big and small, old and new has a seat at the table and an equal voice. Building unity from diversity can be cumbersome, but constant cooperation and patient negotiations lead us to a consensus that is rock solid. Today this is what we need to achieve globally. We created the European External Action Service to work with partners around the world - in Africa and the Arab world, in the Americas and in Asia - towards that aim.

Mogherini said that Ending war is about overcoming divisions and uniting former enemies. It is also about giving young generations a stake in their future. This is why we are united in fighting extremism and organised crime; tackling the negative impact of climate change and securing our energy future.

We work to raise global standards so that everybody can drink clear water and breathe clean air; enjoying the high standard of life and quality products we have in Europe. We also work with partners around the globe to invest in education and innovation to open a world of opportunities even to those who are born into poverty and conflict, Mogherini added. EU High Representative & Vice President Federica Mogherini said that the European Union is a project for the future. So today we celebrate Europe day to remember, but also to look ahead. I hope you will join us around the globe to work with us for a world where people, no matter who they are or where they live, are free to shape their existence and strive for their dreams. (PR)

### (5) NATO FM's to ...

Minister Salahuddin Rabbani, representatives of UNAMA, foreign representatives of European Union, and foreign minister of Korea and Japan are also among the attendees. The first day of the meeting is specifically reserved for Afghanistan in which Afghan foreign minister would brief the participants about recent situation of the country, Aramaz added. Latest situation regarding role of national unity government and RS would also be discussed during the course of meeting. The peace process and Pakistan support were also included in the meeting's agenda, another official wishing anonymity said. The meeting has its significance since the Afghan security forces successfully accomplished military operations in several areas in recent past, the NATO representative for Afghanistan noted. (Pajhwok)

### (6) Watchdogs...

The delay, according to electoral watchdogs, show the government still did not have strong will for reforms.

Mohammad Yusuf Rashid, executive director of Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan (FEFA), voiced concerns about the delay, saying seven months after formation of the unity government the leaders were prolonging the process.

He told Pajhwok Afghan News there was no clear roadmap for electoral reforms and the unity government's leaders were divided on the vital issue.

Rashid said political will was important at this moment and the more the leaders delayed the reforms the more they would lose time and opportunity.

He added it was important that the leaders did not interfere in the commission's affairs and did not treat it as a symbolic entity. He warned without proper reforms the upcoming parliamentary elections would be marred by fraud, corruption and behind-the-curtain dealings which wouldn't be acceptable to majority of the people.

Naeem Ayubzada, FEFA head, said lack of proper definition of reforms and differences over appointing the panel's members were major impediments on the road ahead.

"We want them to work not to kill time. We want them to take up reforms so that we have a fair election in Afghanistan," he said adding, "but if the situation continues like this without reforms, without confidence-building measures, and without due preparations then it would be difficult to hold fair ballot."

Gul Ahmad Madadzai, a member of electoral reforms commission, said the unity government leaders had violated the law when it came to reforms and conducting of upcoming parliamentary elections. (Pajhwok)

### (7) Foreign Fighters ...

the battlefield, found to be from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tur-

key and Chechnya.

Safi said the foreign fighters provided technical and financial support to the Taliban fighters who he believed were fresh graduates from madrassas in Afghanistan and neighboring Pakistan with little battlefield experience.

"Our forces have seen well-dressed forces with covered faces. We can't ignore the presence of Daesh here, but we also heard that there were differences among insurgents themselves," said provincial police chief Gen. Abdul Sabor Nasrati, using an Arabic acronym for the Islamic State group. At least 100,000 people have fled their homes around Kunduz amid the assault, said Mans Nyberg, a spokesman for the U.N.'s High Commissioner for Refugees in Kabul.

The Taliban's spring offensive has seen the militants take their anti-government fight to most regions of the country, with eastern areas near the Pakistan border, like Paktia province. On Thursday, gunmen there killed a police officer and a civilian at a cricket match and kidnapped 36 people, said Gen. Zelmani Orykhalil, the province's police chief.

All but three of the abductees had been freed, he said. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack, though officials suspect the Taliban carried it out. (AP)

### (8) 'Senate chairman's...

were allowed to enter the house. He said two suspects having hands in recent incidents of violence in Nangarhar were living in the house of Muslimyār's brother Younis who is the commander of 02 brigade of Public Order Police.

He accused Muslimyār of his involvement in suicide and other kinds of attacks, adding that chairman senate was blacklisted by the US.

Earlier, Mohammad Naeem Lalai Hameedzai, a lawmaker from southern Kandahar province had said that security officials surrounded the house of Younis to conduct a search but then the officials were allowed after three hours.

He said the perpetrators behind recent attacks in Nangarhar had fled the house of Younis before the security officials entered his house.

But Chairman Senate Fazal Hadi Muslimyār rejected the allegations leveled against him as baseless and untrue. He said he would present himself for trial if the allegations were proved.

He asked the government to take action against baseless allegations otherwise the Wolesi Jirga, its members, and leadership would face the consequences.

He demanded the lower house leadership to present evidence in support of the allegations against him. Haji Qader said he had enough evidence and security institutions were collecting more proofs in this regard.

Earlier, Hasib Sadiqui, spokesman of the National Directorate of Security (NDS), rejected chairman senate and his family members had any links to terror. (Pajhwok)

### (9) Health Ministry...

Ali, Shinozada, Sadaat, Kawzar, Alemi, Aria City, Kishah, Afghan Shafa and Bilasem hospitals to improve their services otherwise they would be stopped from functioning.

On other hand, private hospitals representatives welcomed this decision of health ministry.

Samiullah Wahaj, Wahaj hospital official expressed concern over the health ministry's move by saying that his hospital was offering good health services.

Dr. Anqa Amin deputy of private hospitals association told Pajhwok Afghan News: "We want reform but this decision of health ministry is not fair. Ali Sena hospital is offering excellent services but closing the facility is injustice."

A number of inhabitants of capital Kabul complained of high fee of private hospitals amid low quality health services of governmental hospitals.

They said that spending huge money on patients they had to shift their patients to Pakistan and India for treatment. (Pajhwok)

### (10) Noor Threatens...

consulate's 70th anniversary celebration of Soviet Union victory over Nazi Germany. Noor also criticized the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) - signed with the United States and its allies - saying that the accord was not in Afghanistan's favor. Noor said that the Afghanistan government has been careless in maintaining security in the north. He said that the increasing influence of anti-government forces will endanger the lives of men and women in the province. During the event, Noor warned that if the government does not do something to curb the issue, he will be forced to defend his people. "If close attention is not paid, and I mean very close attention, I will be forced to defend my people, defend my values and stand together with

our people for our defense. My life, my children's lives, lives of my nation, lives of the children of my nation, lives of the men and women of the nation require me to stand against a movement that has been rapidly spreading and neutralize it," says Noor.

In addition, Noor criticized the United States and its allies, saying that Afghanistan's National Security Forces have not been properly equipped, and that the BSA has not proved beneficial to the people of Afghanistan.

"What happened to the strategic agreement that was signed? What does the strategic agreement mean? Former president Hamed Karzai signed strategic agreements with every European, Western and regional country for the sake of defending national interests. They promised to equip our forces in order to defend our sovereignty and interests. What kind of an agreement is it, when our forces don't have fuel?" added Noor. He also questioned the performance of the National Unity Government (NUG) and said that there is no coordination between words and actions of the two leaders. Noor believes that the challenges and problems of the country can be resolved, accusing government of delivering only slogans with no action.

"Management is weak. There is no motivation, no honesty and no guidance. We cannot rely on words, there are many spoken statements, we will do this, we will do that... The nation needs action. One day many are killed in Jalalabad, the other day in Mazar-e-Sharif, another day in Badakhshan and so on in other places," says Noor. Noor was however a staunch supporter of CEO Abdullah Abdullah during last year's presidential elections but is now known for his harsh statements against the government - especially over the past seven months. Noor is however considered one of the most influential figures in the north.

Last week, General Abdul Raziq, police commander of Kandahar, met with Abdullah Abdullah, and asked him to prevent further bloodshed in the country. He also indicated that among the demands by anti-government armed groups to join peace talks was the killing of Raziq, Atta Muhammad Noor and a few other influential figures. (Tolonews)

### (11) Khost Residents...

of schools and hospitals," he demanded.

Wahidzai specifically referred to Shaikh Zaid Medical Teaching university building and said: "The new building has been constructed three years ago but has not opened yet and the building has been started to damage."

Nasir Ahmed Rokhan, a civil society activist, demanded the government to start work on building the industrial zone and import electricity to this strategically important province. (Pajhwok)

### (12) Paktika Governor...

by Interior Minister Noor-ul-Haq Ulumi, with others members included justice minister, refugee minister, deputy speakers of senate and lower house, head of the defence affairs commission, Director National Directorate of security (NDS), Deputy Attorney General and head of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG).

The committee during their investigation did not find solid evidence to support allegations leveled by of Abdul Karim Matin. Presidential Spokesman Ajmal Abidi said NSC in its recent meeting decided that Paktika governor should be made on the go over his irresponsible remarks against the NSC advisor. (Pajhwok)

### (13) Pakistan ...

brought to Chaman by the Levies personnel. Meanwhile, the Frontier Corps personnel have arrested 96 suspects, including 28 Afghan nationals, in the port city of Gwadar late on Thursday night. An FC spokesman said that acting on a tip-off an FC team raided a house in Gwadar and arrested 96 people who were planning to cross into Iran.

"The arrested people wanted to reach Europe through Iran and Turkey," he said, adding that they had been handed over to Federal Investigation Agency. (Pajhwok)

### (14) Thousands of Girls...

but less than 1,000 of them will graduate from Grade 12.

"Girl students are being taken out of school early - which is not acceptable to us. We want people, and families, to cooperate with us and allow these girls to finish school," said Kandahar's Head of education Abdul Qader Paywastoon. Girls corroborate this and say that many families refuse to allow their girls to continue past Grade 7 or 8. "Some families even take their daughters out of school in Grade 5," Latifa, a girl student from Nazo Ana High School said.

Rehana, who is Latifa's classmate said her sister was one example. She said her family had removed her sister from school at a young age.

"My sister was in fifth class and she was very intelligent, but the residents of Kandahar thought it brought shame on the family that their eldest daughter was in school. Because of this my father pulled my sister out of school," she said.

Freba, another student, has called on Kandahar residents "to let their daughters finish school and become teachers or doctors."

Sher Mohammad, the manager of Nazo Ana High Schools has said that every year his school loses dozens of girls.

"Every year we witness older girls leaving school. We know it is because families withdraw them," he said.

Mohammad Younus Yousufi, Provincial Head of Kandahar has also expressed his concern about the issue and has asked parents to let their daughters finish school.

"Some girls only come until 5th and 6th classes and after this the families say their daughters are now literate. The families then make their daughters leave school," he said.

Officials say that currently 76,000 girls are at schools in the province but that 144 schools have closed due to security issues. (Tolonews)

### (15) Body Formed...

spike in insecurity in recent years. People complain insurgents extort money and food from residents and sometimes kidnap passengers on Shiberghan-Sar-i-Pul highway for working with the government.

The advisory council has 500 members and has been launched by border and tribal affairs department in Shiberghan, the provincial capital. The council comprises representatives from Shiberghan City and 50 surrounding villages.

Mirwais Abdali, director border and tribal affairs, said the council would help in resolving tribal issues and persuading insurgents to join peace. "The council will focus more on rural problems. apart from that I will also work towards establishing better relations between residents and the government," he said.

Abdali added they were also looking to expand the council to districts. Mohammad Yousuf, a local elder, said such councils would decrease pressure on government and could be effective in providing immediate counseling to people.

"If people stand united in such councils, they will stay away from conflict," he added. (Pajhwok)

### (16) Baghlan Residents...

He insisted security forces were capable of fighting the enemy.

Safdar Mohsini, provincial council head, welcomed people's stance against Taliban, saying if the security forces did not secure the troubled areas people had no choice but to stand against them. Brig. Gen. Asadullah Sherzad, Ministry of Interior special unity commander, assured residents that Taliban would not remain a threat to people anymore. (Pajhwok)

### (17) Paktia Police...

over their appointments. He said that no official had the courage to take any action against those corrupt officials.

Zazai warned people would launch series of protest if both the officials were not transferred immediately from the areas.

Dr Allah Mir, provincial council member, said a special delegation was sent to the area to ascertain facts and the result was awaited.

However, the 402nd Border Police Zone Commander Abdul Basir Khpalwak asked people to contact authorities concerned to register their complaints against any commander. Khpalwak reassured he had shared all complaints with officials concerned and he himself had no authority to take actions on complaints. (Pajhwok)

### (18) Poetry Gatherings ...

ways which can win hearts and minds of people. Noor-ul-Habib Nisar, a writer and critic, appreciated holding of such gatherings and said that poetry related gatherings would contribute to peace and stability and motivate people to take part in country's development. (Pajhwok)

### (19) 12 Daesh Fighters...

fighters have presence in Islamabad and Saji localities and stage attacks from their hideouts. Khak-e-Safid is a relatively unsafe district located 30-kilometres north of the provincial capital. (Pajhwok)

### (20) Taliban Insurgents...

Herat and Kandahar highway had

been closed due to the attack, but military officials said the highway has been reopened. "The military forces are checking the area to ensure insurgents have not placed any roadside mines," Jahid said. The Taliban have not yet commented on the attack. The insurgents recently increased their attacks in the province and frequently target the Afghan security forces. (Tolonews)

### (21) Young Afghan Tea...

"I gathered old metals and wood for four months to design a body of the car. Then I fixed used seats and tires of other cars," Feroz added. He travels in his car to school and his mechanic workshop and always carries his neighbor students in his car.

Mohammad Salim, Feroz's student in Shahid Abdullah Middle school, travels everyday with Feroz in his car. Salim said: "I love travelling in my teacher's car. More than 20 students can travel in the car." (Pajhwok)

### (22) Faryab, Baghlan...

of Baghlan province, Naseer Ahmad Kahzad, director of Afghanistan Natural Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) said.

He said 100 homes and parts of Dahna Ghorri Bridge were badly damaged.

Shamsuddin Sarhadi, the administrative chief of Dushi, said 30 homes, crops on 50 acres of land and 500 livestock had been perished in the deluge.

Separately, heavy flood destroyed some parts of the Faizabad-Takhar road in northeastern Badakhshan province. Public Works Director Fazal Ahmad Amaj, said the flood destroyed road.

He said security personnel had reached the area to clear the road for traffic. (Pajhwok)

### (23) Washington...

moderate opposition in Syria" against the Islamic State group and Bashar al-Assad's regime.

Kerry also reassured the Gulf foreign ministers over nuclear talks with their rival Iran, and Washington's commitment to the region. (AFP)

### (24) Putin Takes...

Vladimir Putin said that the carnage of the war underlined the importance of international cooperation, but "in the past decades we have seen attempts to create a bipolar world." That phrase is often used by Russia to criticize the United States' purported aim to dominate world affairs. (AP)

### (25) Russia, China...

fields in eastern Siberia, adding that specifics are being worked out.

Putin and Xi also talked about the Silk Road Economic Belt, an ambitious Beijing project intended to encourage the infrastructure development in formerly Soviet Central Asia. (AP)

### (26) Turkey Denies...

signs of warming under newly-crowned Saudi King Salman, who Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan visited in March.

Turkey has long argued there can be no solution for the Syria conflict until Assad leaves power. Bilgic also denied as "baseless" and "speculative" claims that a US-led plan to train and arm moderate Syrian rebel forces fighting against Assad might not start in Turkey.. (AFP)

### (27) Cameron Savors...

surpassed his party's most optimistic projections.

"This is the sweetest victory of all," Cameron, 48, told enthusiastic supporters at party headquarters. Smiling beside his wife Samantha, he returned to the prime minister's office in Downing Street after meeting the queen. Staff lined up to applaud when he entered the residence. (Reuters)

### (28) Tashkent Hosted...

from Germany, Denmark, China, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Russia, France, deputies of the Legislative Chamber and Senate of Oliy Majlis, representatives of state and public organizations, mass media. The international conference was held to present the experience of Uzbekistan and foreign countries in the development and implementation of measures to ensure the protection of the rights of citizens decent working conditions and to develop proposals for the further promotion of "Decent work conception", adopted by the International Labour Organization. At the forum, participants got acquainted with the achievements of republic of Uzbekistan in the field of employment, the expansion of social protection of citizens, ensuring effective control at work, improvement of constructive social dialogue between government, employers and trade unions. (PR)