

### (1) Afghan Mission...

in Afghanistan beyond this year. He expected the leaders would take that decision at Warsaw, but the configuration of that mission was work in progress.

Both on the funding and troop commitment, he said they would communicate to the Afghans that they were not alone in this fight and that NATO would be with them through the current year. "And in the case of funding, all the way out to 2020." Lute believed the financial pledge would keep Afghan security forces in the field and it was to assume that the United States would announce at Warsaw it would remain the single largest funding source for the Afghan forces.

In terms of troops, the diplomat continued, the US had announced its decision. It will start next year with 5,500 US troops in Afghanistan, and then...the next president will decide what to do after that." (Pajhwok)

### (2) Enter Peace ...

support the Afghan government's efforts to end the conflict through a peace and reconciliation process, a process that we have said time and time again must be Afghan-led and Afghan-owned," Kirby said.

The spokesman said the United States welcomed the proposed peace agreement with HIA. "Hekmatyar is still a designated individual, but we welcome steps by the Afghan government to engage in talks with the HIG with respect to trying to end the violence," he said. (Pajhwok)

### (3) No Positive...

their country.

Aziz warned anti-Pakistan statements from Afghanistan were having a negative impact on the peace process. Peace would continue to elude the war-weary nation in the absence of a meaningful reconciliation drive, he said.

He hailed the signing of a draft peace accord between Gulbadin Hekmatyar-led Hezb-i-Islami Afghanistan and the Ghani government. Other militant factions would also ink similar deals soon, he hoped. (Pajhwok)

### (4) Abdullah to...

than 150 world leaders, including heads of state, would participate in the event.

The CEO would shine a light on the humanitarian assistance situation in Afghanistan and ways of making foreign aid delivery more effective, he said. Abdullah would also meet world leaders on issues of common interest. (Pajhwok)

### (5) Pakistan to ...

in the last week of current month. The Ambassador congratulated the successful students and urged them to concentrate upon their studies during their stay in Pakistan and, subsequently, play a positive role in the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan. He also highlighted the contribution made by Pakistan for the development and strengthening of education infrastructure in Afghanistan, particularly the construction of Liaqat Ali Khan Engineering University, Balkh, Sir Syed Post Graduate Faculty of Sciences, Nangarhar University, Allama Iqbal Faculty of Arts, Kabul University, Rahman Baba School, Kabul and Rahman Baba Hostel in Kabul. Ambassador Hussain apprised the participants that more than 35,000 Afghan had graduated from Pakistan over the past three decades and now they are playing active role in the development of their country. (PR)

### (6) NATO to ...

for the Afghan security forces and institutions. Approximately 12,000 personnel from NATO allies and partner countries attended the mission.

In December last year, NATO foreign ministers agreed to maintain the current 12,000 troops in Afghanistan through 2016. (Xinhua)

### (7) 163 Afghan ...

than 500 schools have been closed down in Afghanistan particularly in southern provinces.

Meanwhile, the Afghan government has accused armed opponents of targeting schools, saying that government plans to take steps and reopen these schools to the Afghan pupils to continue their education.

"The people know that who really targets the schools, bridges and hospitals of this country, the armed opponents must stop doing this and stop damaging public utility institutions," deputy presidential spokesman Dawa Khan Menapal said.

In addition, officials of the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) have expressed deep concerns over a rise in attacks against health workers.

"Doctors are the ambassadors of peace and there is no discrimination in treatment of the patients wherever they belong. Therefore we appeal to the armed opponents to avoid harming public assets so that people benefit from the services," advisor to the minister of health, Khawja Qamaruddin Sediqqi said.

UNICEF is set to convene an important meeting in Turkey where the delegates will focus on addressing the challenges facing education and training sectors in the conflict-hit nations.

Abdullah Abdullah, the Chief Executive of Afghanistan will represent Afghanistan at the meeting. (Tolnews)

### (8) NATO Chief ...

their defence capacities by providing them training and advice as part of the new mission, he said, backing a political solution and continued peace efforts by the unity government.

He believed it was important for the global fraternity to support an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process because there was no other solution other than a political settlement in the long run.

"The Afghan government has made very clear that they are open to negotiate with those who renounce violence, cut links to terrorist organisations and respect the constitution, including human rights, and respect for women and children rights.

"So I think this just underlined that we have both continue to support the Afghan armed forces and at the same time continue to support their efforts to find political negotiated solution," he concluded. (Pajhwok)

### (9) Russia Ready ...

repair of the helicopters and extension of the resources of the Afghan Air Force helicopters.

The two sides also held talks on delivery of helicopters by Russia to Afghanistan, including Mi24 and Mi35 gunships.

This comes as reports emerged late last year that Afghanistan and Russia will sign an agreement for the delivery of Mi-35 gunship helicopters.

Russian-made helicopters have a long history in Afghanistan and is preferred better than the helicopters due to their low prices, durability and simplicity. (KP)

### (10) Kabul University ...

started in March 2016 with 30 students, of which 7 are women," the statement said.

The new degree will expand the business professionals' capabilities and prepare them to become leaders in business, USAID said, adding that the students will have a better understanding of business management and be able to further develop their critical thinking, analytical, and problem-solving skills, and contribute to Afghanistan's economic development.

USAID Mission Director Herbert Smith said "this is an excellent opportunity to sharpen your leadership and management skills and to help [Afghanistan] moving forward."

"We are pleased to establish the Master of Business Administration at Kabul University, which creates jobs," said Associate Professor Sayed Mohammad Tingar.

"USAID partners with academic institutions to design new workforce-relevant programs across Afghanistan," the statement added.

A new Master's degree on Education Leadership and Management Program at the Shaheed Rabban Education University was launched last December. Another new Associate Degree on Biomedical Engineering Technology at Kabul Medical University will be launched soon, USAID said. (KP)

### (11) Concerns...

government armed opposition party joins the peace process, it is a serious need that in the first step it must hand over light and heavy weapons - in order to not have access to weapons," said Farooq Majroh a MP. Meanwhile residents also called on government to be cautious regarding the collecting of weapons from Hizb-e-Islami party.

"The people's request to government is if Hizb-e-Islami joins the peace process then on the basis of the constitution the party must hand over its weapons otherwise joining will have no good results," said Mirzad, a Kabul resident.

In response to these concerns the president's deputy spokesman Dawa Khan Menapal said: "Without a doubt, any armed group including Hizb-e-Islami, that joins the peace process, their weapons will be handed over to Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG) process".

According to the High Peace Council (HPC), the draft agreement with Hizb-e-Islami and the NUG has three chapters and 25 articles and in the agreement it states if articles are contravened, both sides will solve the issue through consultation and negotiations. (Tolnews)

### (12) 56 People ...

late Thursday night and so far 13 rebels including three key commanders have been killed and nine others injured," army spokesman in the province Brigadier Mohammad Rasoul Zazai told Xinhua.

The three important commanders killed in the operations identified as Mawlawi Rahmat, the military operational commander of Taliban, Mawlawi Hamidi, the in-charge of judiciary and military leader of Taliban in Marja and Mullah Dur Mohammad, a mine expert and commander of roadside bomb planter unit of Taliban in Helmand province, the official said.

According to Zazai, the killing of the three could be a major setback to the Taliban fighters in Marja district and in the restive Helmand province.

Similarly, the Afghan national army carried out series of air strikes against Taliban militants in Aband and Gilan districts of the eastern Ghazni province on Thursday, killing 29 insurgents and injuring 14 others, army spokesman in the province Mohammad Hanif Rezae said.

An army general and a district police chief have also been killed in the southern Kandahar and western Ghor province since Thursday.

However, 12 civilians - six children, three women and three men - were killed as their vehicle ran over a mine in Baghlan-e-Markazi district of the northern Baghlan province Thursday night, according to district governor Gohar Khan Babiri.

Babiri blamed the Taliban outfit for the incident, saying the deadly roadside bombing claimed the lives of 12 innocent civilians from two families. Meanwhile, Taliban confirmed fighting in several provinces, including Helmand and Baghlan, claiming that it inflicted casualties on the government forces.

Fighting usually increases in Afghanistan in spring and summer commonly known as fighting season among Afghans. (Xinhua)

### (13) Afghan Army...

to the Kabul government could only bear fruit if the Afghan army stopped the Taliban from gaining the upper hand.

"We believe that there should be effective action by Afghan national security forces to ensure that there are no military gains by the Taliban," Chaudhry told Reuters in an interview late on Thursday.

The Taliban "need to realize they would have more to gain on the table than they can do on the battlefield", he said.

Afghan security forces have struggled to contain the Taliban since NATO-led forces pulled out of combat operations in 2014.

Fighting has been fierce and more than 6,600 Afghan soldiers and police were killed last year, according to the U.S. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction.

However, despite the brief capture by the militants of the northern city of Kunduz last year, they have not been able to capture and hold on to any provincial capital.

Chaudhry said officials at the Islamabad talks had told him Taliban gains in an offensive this year were not as big as the insurgents had hoped.

The first formal talks with the Taliban since their 2001 ouster collapsed in 2015 after it was announced that their founder, Mullah Mohammad Omar, had been dead for two years, throwing the militant group into disarray.

The movement has since split on whether to participate in talks.

"OPTIMISTIC" Afghanistan has accused Pakistan of harboring militants seeking to topple the Afghan government, including the notorious Haqqani network, blamed for high-profile attacks in Kabul.

Pakistan denies that but nevertheless, the United States has also urged Pakistani to do more against militants on its soil.

The U.S. Senate on Thursday passed a defense policy bill increasing restrictions on military aid for Pakistan over frustrations it has failed to crack down on the Haqqani network.

Chaudhry said the bulk of the Afghan Taliban leadership was in Afghanistan and Pakistan was using all "leverage and influence" at its disposal to get them to the table. "We are doing whatever we can to persuade the Taliban and the

Haqqani leadership, whoever we can contact," he said. "We believe the Afghan government should also make ... a similar kind of effort."

The Pakistani foreign secretary also urged Kabul to create "incentives" and confidence-building measures to persuade the Taliban that it was serious about giving peace a chance. But last month, following a bomb attack in Kabul that killed 64 people, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani declared that, while the door to peace was not fully closed, military operations would have priority.

Ghani said he no longer expected Pakistan to bring the Taliban to the table but it must act against militants sheltering in its territory who rejected peace.

Chaudhry said the talks were not dead. "We need to remain optimistic," Chaudhry said. "The signal we get is that the Taliban have not said 'yes' to the talks but have also not said 'no'." (Reuters)

### (14) Daesh ...

mountain on Thursday evening when he was going home.

He escaped unhurt, but some of the bullets hit his vehicle, Yasini said, adding the teaching centre in Kama had 600 male and female students.

He claimed receiving threats over the telephone from unknown individuals, who demanded the closure of the girls' section. (Pajhwok)

### (15) Afghan Officer...

security forces, often carried out by insurgent infiltrators. Two members of the international military stationed at Kandahar Airfield were shot dead by Afghan colleagues earlier this month. Both were members of Romania's special forces.

Last September, at least one U.S. serviceman was killed when an Afghan soldier opened fire on a group of American troops in the eastern city of Jalalabad. That attack was claimed by the militant Hezb-i-Islami group, which this week finalized a peace agreement with the Kabul government, expected to be signed in coming weeks.

The international combat operation in Afghanistan largely ended in 2014, when it segued into a training and advisory mission with around 13,000 U.S. and NATO troops in the country. About 3,000 of the Americans are engaged in counter-terrorism operations.

Also on Thursday, a senior officer of the Afghan army's 205 Corps, Gen. Abdul Basir Sheerwand, was killed when a roadside bomb exploded in the Shah Wali Kot district of southern Kandahar province, the ministry of defense said.

Dawlat Waziri, the ministry's spokesman, said Sheerwand, a brigade commander in Kandahar, was involved in an anti-Taliban operation when the incident occurred. Kandahar was the base of the Taliban's 1996-2001 government, before they were toppled in the U.S. invasion.

The province has been relatively peaceful in recent years, though military officials have said they believe that unrest in neighboring Helmand province is set to spill over into Kandahar during what is expected to be a summer of fierce fighting between the government and insurgents.

In northern Baghlan province, the 11 civilians killed in the roadside explosion were all from the same family, according to Jaweed Basharat, spokesman for the provincial police chief.

Five children and two women were among those killed and three family members were also wounded in the blast. They were travelling home to their village of Qaisar Khil when their van struck the bomb.

Basharat blamed the Taliban for the attack, though there was no immediate claim of responsibility from any group. (AP)

### (16) Teen 'Kidnapped, ...

family decided to call off the engagement - which they said was forced on them.

"It was 7:00 pm when the brother of my fiancé along with his two brothers, father and six friends launched an armed attack on our house and beat my parents," the victim said.

Humaira Saqeb, a women rights activist, believes that Afghanistan's society is male dominated and that is why women's problems are not being properly dealt with. (Tolnews)

### (17) Afghan Army ...

Walikot district, he said. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the bomb attack, with the group's spokesman Qari Yousuf Ahmad saying Shahrwand had been killed along with other military officials.

A clearing operation to reopen the Kandahar-Uruzgan road is under-

way, but traffic on the highway could not be restored days after the operation was launched in the area. (Pajhwok)

### (18) Sugar, Flour ...

Market, Haji Rahmatullah, sold a kilogram of African black to for 260afis and the same amount of Madina green tea for 240afis.

But wholesale prices varied from retail rates in arts of the city. A retailer in Dahna Bagh area, Ahmad Navid, sold a 24-kg sack of rice for 1,900afis and a 50-kg bag of Kazakh flour for 1,450afis.

Similarly, he sold a 49-kg bag of sugar for 2,350afis, a 16-kg tin of Shaista ghee for 1,100afis, a kilo of black tea for 270afis and the same quantity of Indonesian green tea for 260afis.

Abdul Hadi, a fuel station worker, said that one litre of petrol cost 39afis and the same quantity of diesel 32afis - the same price as last week's. Mohammad Sharif, a dealer in Taimani locality, said gas prices remained unchanged during the outgoing week at 45afis per kg. (Pajhwok)

### (19) Azerbaijani...

media, the plane was on loan from Silk Way Air Carrier Company to carry out cargo missions in Afghanistan.

The administration said it will set up a task force to investigate the accident. (Xinhua)

### (20) 15 Injured...

group has claimed responsibility for the attack yet.

The province has been the scene of heavy clashes between the Afghan security forces and Taliban militants over the past couple of weeks.

About 600 civilians were killed and more than 1,340 others wounded in violence and Taliban-led attacks in first quarter of the year, according to UN mission in the country.

The mission has attributed 60 percent of the casualties to the Taliban and other insurgent groups, 19 percent were attributed to security forces while the rest 21 percent of civilian casualties were unattributed or caused by explosive remnants of war. (Xinhua)

### (21) Kabul Women ...

degree burns and the patient's current condition is satisfactory; but the patient also has respiratory burns," said Sayed Ishaq Tahiri, a doctor at the hospital.

Rahila's relatives said that after her first husband died, she married Samir - about eight months ago - but the marriage was fraught with domestic disputes and conflict over money.

"We want the government to set fire to the perpetrators, the same way they torched Rahila, so this does not happen again in future," said Nawab, Rahila's brother.

"They beat my mother just for money and they did this to my mother," said Shukrana, Rahila's daughter. But Samir, who is Rahila's husband, has denied the accusation in a telephone interview with TOLONews. (Tolnews)

### (22) 9 of a Family...

to hospital. The police officer blamed the Taliban for planting the explosive device, but the insurgents have not yet reacted to the allegation. (Pajhwok)

### (23) Thirteen ...

in civilian casualties," said Gawohar Khan Baburi central Baghlan district governor.

Two other children were also wounded in the incident. (Tolnews)

### (24) Unknown ...

has meanwhile angered tribal elders and religious scholars.

The elders and scholars said that the enemies of Afghanistan want to keep people in the dark by using Islam.

"People do not want their school doors closed and their children to remain illiterate. Those who did this we want them to be questioned," said Haqyar a religious scholar.

Meanwhile Education Minister Asadullah Hanif Balkhi said during his recent visit to Nangarhar province that soon wide reforms will be brought to the education sector in the eastern zone. (Tolnews)

### (25) Russia Urges ...

Islamic State group, have been excluded from the cease-fire, and Russia long has pushed for excluding other militant groups in Syria that have cooperated with the al-Qaida affiliate. (AP)

### (26) IOM Assist...

victims were children, with the latter accounting for almost 20 percent of IOM's caseload for sexual exploitation.

Starting in 1994, IOM's counter-trafficking programs have assisted over 70,000 trafficked persons and exploited migrants. (Xinhua)

### (27) Lithuania ...

The Commissioner pointed out poor health outcomes in Lithuania and the highest mortality rate in the EU among people of working age between 20 to 64 which is having a big impact on the potential available workforce and labour productivity. Butkevicius agreed that decreasing number of working age people is the key challenge for the Baltic country. (Xinhua)

### (28) President...

told reporters that during Obama's first visit to Vietnam from May 23-25 (Vietnam time), the president will have meetings with Vietnam's top leaders in Hanoi. While in capital city, he is also scheduled to deliver a speech on U.S.-Vietnam relations and to meet with members of civil society.

Obama will also travel to Ho Chi Minh City, where he will meet with members of the Young Southeast Asian Leadership Initiative, entrepreneurs, and the business community, Kritenbrink said. (Xinhua)

### (29) Turkish ...

returned to the Prime Minister's Office within 15 days in order to be sent to the judicial authorities.

The ruling party and the Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) aims to lift the immunities of Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) lawmakers. (Xinhua)

### (30) Japan to ...

Nations sustainable development goals, aimed at enhancing world-wide development.

"As the chair of the summit, I will call on leaders of the G7 countries to make ambitious efforts to achieve the SDGs," Abe was quoted as telling a Cabinet meeting on Friday. (Xinhua)

### (31) Greece...

deportation unless they successfully apply for asylum in Greece.

More than 54,000 people are now stranded in Greece since European nations closed their land borders to refugees.

The Dutch embassy in Tirana says that 30 more Albanian asylum-seekers have been deported to their home country. (AP)

### (32) Syrian Army ...

UK-based watchdog group. The Observatory, which claims to rely on a network of activists on ground, said hundreds of families have fled the southern sector toward other areas in Eastern Ghouta, following the progress of the Syrian army.

It contributed the military progress in that area, which has been under the control of disparate jihadi groups, to the huge infighting that has recently erupted between the Saudi-backed Islam Army and the Qatari-backed Jaish al-Fustat, Falaq al-Rahman and the al-Qaida-linked Nusra Front. (Xinhua)

### (33) India to...

would provide a credit line of \$150 million.

"The focus of the trip is connectivity and infrastructure," he has been quoted as saying by Reuters.

Baglay added that India, Afghanistan and Iran would separately sign an agreement to set up a trade and transport corridor during Modi's trip that will have Chabahar as the hub.

"The trilateral agreement will be a game changer for regional connectivity especially for Afghanistan which can find an assured and reliable alternate access to India via sea," Baglay added. (PressTV)

### (34) German ...

A recent study showed that if the UK leaves the EU, German economic output would suffer a loss of up to 45 billion euros (50.55 billion U.S. dollars) by the end of 2017. (Xinhua)

### (35) Egyptair Plane ...

on board. In Cairo, French and Airbus investigators were to meet their Egyptian counterparts to lay the groundwork for their probe. - Satellite spots oil slick - Relatives of some of the passengers and crew met EgyptAir officials and later gathered at a hotel near Cairo airport to exchange information. (AFP)

### (36) Chinese Vice ...

exchange to expand the tourism market and add impetus to the world economic recovery.

He encouraged giving full play to the advantages of the tourism industry in boosting employment so more people may benefit from tourism development. (Xinhua)