

### (1) Ghani for ...

relations and assistance. The statement said the president told lawmakers that the country's current situation needed a nationwide mobilization and political consensus.

He said the National Directorate of Security (NDS) was a national institution and he had invested in the agency from the day one.

The president said they had made clear the standards for peace. Armed militants would be denied safe havens, resources, medical treatment and others, he said.

He added the world also supported these standards and wanted the creation of an atmosphere of trust between the NDS and Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

He said he had started consultations for changes to the accord and asked lawmakers to appoint a delegation to look into the document, which would go to the parliament in order to speak from a strong forum and achieve peace with dignity.

Earlier, some Wolesi Jirga members had said the deal between the NDS and the ISI had been inked. The lower house had also summoned the spymaster and the national security advisor to explain their position on the matter.

The statement from the Presidential Palace said the Wolesi Jirga speaker thanked the president for calling the consultative meeting with lawmakers and praised his clear policy toward Pakistan. (Pajhwok)

### (2) Rabbani Urges...

to collaborate closer and pursue a holistic approach to countering terrorist ideology and radicalization and empowering Muslim youth to prevent their radicalization.

Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah opened the 42nd meeting of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers on Wednesday

Addressing the opening session, Sheikh Sabah said the meeting came in the light of political and security challenges the world, particularly the Muslim world, was facing.

"We should work together to address these challenges," he said, adding: "We as Muslim states, are responsible to correct the distorted image of Islam, to show the true image of Islam and its tolerant human values to the world." He stressed support to Iraq to maintain its security, stability, sovereignty and unity against the terrorist Daesh group.

The Afghan foreign minister said his country looked forward to deeper and broader cooperation with OIC member states and urged the forum to continue supporting Kabul efforts for a peaceful, stable and democratic Afghanistan.

He said radical groups had launched a vicious cycle of violence and brutality in Muslim countries, resulting in mass killings and persecution of fellow brothers and sisters.

He quoted President Ashraf Ghani as saying: "We are dealing with terror as a systematic phenomenon, it is becoming more lethal, more organized and more resourced."

He added terrorism required a common understanding because without understanding the menace, the Muslims would not be able to fashion strategies to combat it. (Pajhwok)

### (3) Rula Ghani ...

Afghan women. She touched on so-called "traditional values," which are often referenced in attempts to restrict Afghan women from being active and equal participants in society.

"I don't do politics," Mrs. Ghani told The Associated Press. Instead, Afghanistan's First Lady sees herself as part sounding board and part women's champion. She described herself as "a counsellor ... a listening post."

To be sure, Mrs. Ghani's role in the public affairs of her husband's government is an unprecedented one in Afghanistan. In the past, Afghan first ladies in never had the presence seen among first ladies in Western democracies. But Rula Ghani seems to be setting a new standard. (Tolonews)

### (4) Taliban Capture...

the Taliban in Uruzgan - taking their weapons with them, said officials.

District governor of Khas Urozgan, Abdul Karim Karimi confirmed the reports but said that a number of these defectors have since been killed by the Taliban.

According to Karimi, security force members have been engaged in ongoing clashes with Taliban insurgents over the past 15 days. In addition, the Taliban have overrun

a number of military posts in the area.

Last week officials said that heavy clashes have been the order of the day for over a week in the Khas Urozgan district. At that stage at least 10 posts had been reportedly seized by insurgents.

The central government has yet to comment on the clash or on the collapse of the posts. (Tolonews)

### (5) Police in ...

Pul-i-Sokhta or the streets nearby the locality.

Seddiq Seddiqi, Ministry of Interior spokesperson, rejected allegations, saying if people had any evidence they should share with the authorities. "The leadership of the MoI has sternly directed all police forces to use all means in arresting drug smugglers and sellers," he claimed. Based on a survey released last year, number of drug addicts in Afghanistan has risen to three million. (Pajhwok)

### (6) Afghan Drug ...

problem for Eurasia and Central Asia, with its level increasing 50 times since the launch on October 7, 2001 of US operation Enduring Freedom and continues to rise," Victor Ivanov said.

According to Ivanov, leading world experts agree that the drug production in the country will continue to grow unless the international community takes active steps.

Afghanistan produces some 90 percent of the world's illicit opiates. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimates that in 2014 the drug production levels climbed 17 percent compared to the previous year. (Sputnik)

### (7) China, Russia,...

dence-building measures in areas including counterterrorism, drug control, disaster management, trade and investment opportunities, regional infrastructure construction and education to be jointly implemented by a number of countries and organizations involved in the collective. (Xinhua)

### (8) Greece Arrests ...

countries, he said.

"Since the start of this year more than 7,000 refugees from various countries have been arrested here who were trying to illegally enter the European countries," he added. According to the UNHRC security threats and poverty were two fundamental factors that force migrants to leave their homelands and seek refuge in Europe.

"There are no job opportunities in Afghanistan as poverty, unemployment and security threats are on the rise. These factors force people to escape from one province to another and even from the country," Nadir Farhad, a spokesman for the United Nations High Commissioner UNHCR told media in Kabul on Thursday.

European Union statistics reveal that casualties among migrants that try to cross by boat have increased dramatically over the past few months and since the start of new year more than 1,800 migrants have lost their lives in the Mediterranean. (Tolonews)

### (9) New Minister...

project during the next 100 days and the connection would never experience breakdowns in future," Wahidi said.

According to him, the internet was currently being provided through optic fiber from Torkham port to Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif.

Wahidi said they planned to provide video conference facilities to 10 government organisations and 15 schools and 10 universities would also be connected to the optic fiber. "Our aim is to provide better education programmes for students and enhance the education system."

He added they were also planning to install free wifi hotspots in 10 universities for students. (Pajhwok)

### (10) Ghani Suspends ...

Ghani has asked the Attorney General's Office to investigate the actions of the concerned individuals on the basis of the prevailing laws of the country and take necessary legal action in this respect.

The president has also directed the Ministry of Interior to ensure the suspended officials do not leave the country. (Tolonews)

### (11) Almost 60%...

supported drone strike attacks against terrorists, 43 percent of them changed their minds and said it is unacceptable for the government to carry out an attack if innocent Americans could be hurt.

The poll was spurred by President Barack Obama's apology for the

death of two hostages - an American and an Italian - who were killed by a US drone strike earlier this year. (Pajhwok)

### (12) Schools Closed ...

dismiss students for one day but on Wednesday and Thursday the students did not attend schools as it is a matter of concern," said Abdul Rashid Baghlan education department acting-director.

Baghlan provincial council warns that if the government does not take serious steps to improve security in Baghlan province soon the province will change to one of the insecure provinces and the government will face a public outcry.

"We are concerned about security in Baghlan and if the government does not pay attention to the people will go to streets and will rise up against the government," Baghlan provincial council head Dr. Safdar Muhsini said.

In addition, a number of provincial council members blame local officials for siding with the Taliban. "Both local officials and military generals have ties with the Taliban and giving opportunities to the Taliban to increase the war in the province," said provincial council member Bismillah Attash.

"The government got the power and now they don't pay attention to the people. National unity leaders! When you got to power now you have to pay attention for those poor people who are losing their close ones and day to day they are becoming poor. Ignorance is enough now," said provincial council member Shamsulhaq Barakzai. (Tolonews)

### (13) No Sign of Peace ...

while taking oath on September 29, 2014 pledged peace negotiation was among his top priorities. He had stressed that peace with Taliban was not simple but making it a success was mandatory.

A number of experts said talks process should not be carried out in haste but it should be progressed with a clear strategy and the achievements made in the past 13 years should not be damaged.

A member of the Wolesi Jirga or lower house of parliament Nahed Farid welcomed the opening of office for the Taliban militants in Qatar for peace talks but said the office was not a privilege for Taliban.

She said the government should not cross red lines to damage the constitution or achievements of past 13 years during talks with Taliban. Eng. Mohammad Khan, the first vice-president for Chief Executive Officer (CEO) said opening the Qatar office was good if Taliban militants come to negotiation.

"If Taliban add new conditions or they oppose the current constitution of Afghanistan, then I think the opening of the office will be ineffective," Khan said.

Last month, a Canadian organization Pugwash organized a two-day seminar in Qatar between Afghan officials and Taliban where High Peace Council (HPC) officials, political parties, civil society activists, Taliban leaders and Hizb-I-Islami Afghanistan (HIA) were participated.

Some analysts believe Afghan government had no clear plan for peace negotiations.

A political analyst Abdul Hameed Mamnoon said the government should work out clear strategy for talks and explain demands of both sides to the people.

However, an HPC member Shahidullah Shahid said efforts for the peace talks were underway. Taliban would be asked to ensure ceasefire if the peace negotiations begin face-to-face, he said.

He added peace was very important at the current time because insecurity was on the surge in all parts of the country.

The president on the head of a delegation is scheduled to visit Qatar next week. The aim of his visit is not clear but likely he would pave ground for peace talks with the Taliban. (Pajhwok)

### (14) 19 Hostages ...

recent meeting with Khalili, tribal elders from Zabul and Ghazni provinces reportedly indicated that the abductors are ready to release the remaining hostages.

"If efforts aren't accelerated for the safe release of the hostages, the warm weather in Zabul could endanger the lives of the remaining hostages and it is a matter of serious concern to us," Khalili said on Thursday.

Quoting tribal elders from Zabul, Khalili said that eight to nine passengers out of the eleven remaining hostages are known to still be

alive. "We will have good news, God willing, the hostages will be released," he added.

For the families of the hostages, local tribal elders have also been a crucial point of contact for getting updates on the conditions of their loved ones. "Tribal elders told us that the hostages are in good health and talks are continuing in Zabul for their release," said Syed Jawad, the father of one of the remaining hostages.

The families of those who remain in captivity continue to camp out near the Presidential Palace in Kabul in hopes of putting further pressure on national leaders to gain their release. "We and our passengers are forgotten following the release of 19 passengers," another hostage's father named Abdul Hussain said. "We will remain in the tent until the release of the remaining hostages." Nineteen hostages out of a total 31 were released two weeks ago in a prisoner exchange, where the Afghan government gave the militants 26 prisoners. Those hostages who have been released and reunited with their families have declined to speak with the media until the rest of the hostages are freed. (Tolonews)

### (15) Some 100,000 ...

scrutinising the 'suspect CNICs' and so far around 100,000 such CNICs have been blocked. The holders of the blocked CNICs are not Pakistanis, most of them being Afghans," Chachar quoted by Pakistan's Dawn News said.

He said "As the Nadra has a 'fool-proof' system, it is blocking dubious CNICs."

Chachar also added "NADRA cannot issue or renew the CNICs to those who have no history of being Pakistanis. Without having a record with NADRA how can the authority issue CNICs to aliens?" The latest report comes as over 30,000 Afghan refugees were forced to leave Pakistan and return to Afghanistan amid fears of persecution by Pakistani authorities following a deadly attack on a school in Peshawar city last year.

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) more than 22,000 undocumented Afghans flocked across the border at Torkham in January.

Following a deadly attack on an army-run school in Peshawar city of Pakistan, the federal government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa set a deadline for the expulsion of Afghan refugees on 20th December last year.

In the meantime, the affected people have said they are Pakistanis and are wrongly declared as "Afghans", with Mehmood Khan Achakzai, the chairman of the Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party, saying he will take up the issue with the authorities. He is critical of the interior ministry's step to block the CNICs of Pakhtuns by describing them as "Afghan refugees". (KP)

### (16) Forces Supporting...

how Daesh got a sudden strength in the Shinwari districts of the province.

"Daesh fighters have increased in number considerably in Shinwari area. We have talked to senior officials in Kabul and asked them how this group emerged all in a sudden. I asked officials in Kabul to tell our people who brought Daesh fighters and who are supporting them," the lawmaker added.

He asked tribal elders they should not support the new terror group. "Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif warned Taliban to end fighting or be ready for dire consequences. I ask Nawaz Sharif that the resurgence of Daesh is a project. One project is about to end and another starts," he added.

He urged the government to pay special attention to develop the neglected provinces of eastern zone. "The government is not heading toward right direction. I don't think the government will complete its constitutionally mandated tenure. I ask people to play an active role to protect their constitutional rights," he added.

Mirwais Yasini, another lawmaker, also complained about growing insecurity in parts of eastern provinces and urged the government to keep lion share in development projects for eastern provinces. (Pajhwok)

### (17) Salma Dam ...

recalled that local officials had been pledging for years to build the dam but those commitments could not be materialized.

Abdul Qadeer Yarzada, a resident of 9th police district of the city, said it was a trend here when every governor took oath that work on the

Salma Dam would be started.

Wakil Ahmad Sohail, another resident of the locality, said: "We have heard a lot of tall claims of officials but practical work yet to be initiated."

In 2006, India promised funding for the reconstruction of the Salma Dam at an estimated cost of \$200 million.

Once completed, the hydroelectric plant would produce 42 megawatts of power in addition to providing irrigation water for 75,000 hectares of farmland.

In January 2013, the Indian cabinet approved revised cost for the completion of the project and declared it would be completed in December 2014 - four years behind original schedule. (Pajhwok)

### (18) Concerns about ...

for the crucial Minister of Defense post.

"Governors who have been serving as acting, ministers who have been serving as acting and now, the acting minister of defense, have been identified as the reasons behind insecurities, unemployment and poverty," Sar-e-Pul MP Muhammad Hassan Sharifi said on Thursday. According to MPs, Masoom Stanekzai, the national unity government's nominee for the Ministry of Defense (MoD), has yet to be sent to Parliament to receive a vote of confidence. And, until that point, the government's cabinet remains incomplete.

"Governors, Minister of Defense are acting, now, the only group that isn't acting are the MPs, who will apparently become acting soon," Ghazni MP Muhammad Aref Rahmani said. "This is a sad irony, but the good news is that Mr. Stanekzai [...] will soon be introduced to the House to get votes," he added.

In addition the MoD and provincial governments, however, the Central Bank, High Court and Attorney General's Office all require new leadership, which the national unity government has been unable to provide. (Tolonews)

### (19) New Police ...

emies of the country and peace always target our men who stand in their way like a shield."

The minister said efforts were being made to resolve security related issues in Uruzgan, meet the needs of police and provide them necessary training.

He said the new police chief for Uruzgan was also an experienced and professional police officer, who had the ability to put the security situation on the right track in a short span of time.

The interior minister urged the people of Uruzgan to cooperate with the new police chief the way they did with Matiullah Khan in order he could be successful in his mission.

New Chief of Army Staff Gen. Qadam Shah Shahim was also present at the gathering. He said he had directed Afghan National Army personnel to launch operations against militants in various parts of the province. (Pajhwok)

### (20) Ghazni Education ...

Khalil Hotak, another tribal elder from Rashidan district, said that education sector in his district faced lack of qualified teachers and books.

"We have no teachers here but if there are some then they have no required qualification. The teachers themselves have only 6th class education," he informed. The passage between his district and the provincial capital had been made insecure in a bid so that the district's schools should not get curriculum books. Teachers are not willing to be transferred to the district on meager salaries because of growing insecurity here, he said, recalling that not even a single building could be built for school during the last 15 years.

"Taliban announce from mosques' loudspeakers not to send kids to schools. Taliban threaten if someone sends his children to any educational institution then action will be taken against that person," he added.

Abdullah Khan, a resident of Gero district, said most of the schools were functioning but facing shortage of professional teachers. (Pajhwok)

### (21) Farah Residents ...

of the people. Hameedullah Rahmani, spokesman of civil society organizations, said: "I am hopeful the provincial council will do a commendable job to develop the province. People are satisfied with the council's dealing with the residents." Rahmani said provincial coun-

cil members helped in opening of road between governor house and the police headquarters for public, which was closed due to security reasons.

But Eng. Naqibullah Azeen, a resident of Farah City, accused provincial council members of having no strategy to develop some of the neglected sectors. (Pajhwok)

### (22) Taliban Attack...

in Chinartoo, Deh Rawud and Khas Urozgan districts of the province. Interior Minister Noorulhaq Olomi, who visited the province on Thursday, said that the insurgents are looking at foreign terrorists to help create chaos in the province but said that the Taliban will fail to defeat security forces or other capture parts of the country.

"They are mostly foreigners and the Taliban is encouraging them to create chaos but be sure that your government and security forces will suppress them," said Olomi. (Tolonews)

### (23) Conflict to Peace...

especially not government officials or military forces. Now there is no Taliban and anyone can come here for a picnic," said Yarana.

Sallahuddin, a Nimroz resident concurred and said even he had traveled to Arghandab for picnics. It is also here where the famous Baba Wali shrine is - a shrine that attracts visitors from around the country.

Even a Kabul resident, Haji Ali Ahmad, said: "We came from Kabul and see the security of Kandahar is better than in the past." (Tolonews)

### (24) Food Prices...

Pakistani flour decreased from 1,300 afs to 1,250afs, the prices of 24 kilograms of rice declined from 1,650afs to 1,550, 50 kilograms of sugar for 1,700afs, 16 litres of ghee was accounted 980afs compare to its price in last of 1,100 afs and a kilogram of African black tea edged down from 215afs to 210afs. (Pajhwok)

### (25) Taliban Push...

from the district and now they had no fighter in Khak-i-Safid. Samadyar, Anar Dara district chief, told Pajhwok Afghan News dozens of Daesh fighters had come to the district and were based in Sargazan village. (Pajhwok)

### (26) IAEA ...

that point to Iranian attempts to make such weapons, including suspicions that Tehran worked on the development on a nuclear payload for missiles. The IAEA relaunched its probe two years ago by asking for information on less sensitive work related to nuclear arms allegedly carried out by Iran, with hopes of moving to larger issues later. (AP)

### (27) Russia to...

been on full alert to military maneuvers around Russia. Its armed forces launched a four-day snap drill to test combat readiness of the air and air defense units in the country's Central Military District on Monday, while Finland, Sweden and Norway started in northern Finland the Arctic Challenge Exercise 2015 air force exercise. (Xinhua)

### (28) China Has...

China but we can take certain measures which will be a disincentive to China to continue these kinds of activities," he said.

In Beijing, China's foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said she had no information on the weapons. (Reuters)

### (29) Baltics Mull...

a medium-range air defence system to strengthen our defence capabilities," Lithuanian Defence Minister Juozas Olekas told reporters. (AFP)

### (30) Good Progress...

vilian atomic activities, Press TV reports. "In fact, inspection of military installations has never been on agenda in our negotiations. As we have made it very clear, we never accepted that there could be inspections from the military sites in our country," he said. (Agencies)

### (31) Western Women...

ist networks," said the report titled "Till Martyrdom Do Us Part". It said female recruits were increasingly younger, some from comfortable backgrounds and often well-educated, and were playing "crucial" propaganda and recruitment roles. (Reuters)

(32) Tajik Police police force in the early 1990s and attended training courses in Moscow and Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in the last several years. (TCA)