

(1) Steps Being...

have proper economic relations while earlier, these cities entirely relied on districts' raw materials. Some districts, he said having natural resources were noticed as the poorest because the resources were plundered and smuggled illegally. The districts bordering neighboring countries, he said were entirely isolated sans any development. In major cities, Ghani added, corruption had reached its heights and the poor's suffering had become manifold. He assured that the government had identified the problems in majority of these districts and was committed to change their condition. (Pajhwok)

(2) 6 Ministers...

introduced to head the ministry of higher education and Dr. Naserin Oryakhail the ministry of labor, social affairs, martyrs and disable. Mrs Salam Azimi as minister-designate for the ministry of counternarcotics. They will present their strategies and plans on Saturday to Wolesi Jirga. President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani announced the names of 16 ministers on March 22, and the second vice president introduced them for vote of confidence on April 1, 2015. The remaining ten ministers-designate's documents are under verification process.

Humayun Rasa was nominated for ministry of commerce and industries, Asad Ullah Zamir for ministry of agriculture and irrigation, Eng. Mehmood Baligh for ministry of public works. Abdul Sattar Murad for ministry of economy, Dr Mohammad Ullah Batash, ministry of transport an aviation, Asad Ullah Hanif, ministry of education, Abdul Razzaq Wahedi, ministry of information, communication and technology, Mrs Dilbur Nazari, ministry of women affairs and Ali Ahmed Usmani for ministry of energy and water resources. The president nominated Afzal Ludin for ministry of defense but he has not been introduced to Wolesi Jirga so far.

The government introduced 25 ministers-designate to Wolesi Jirga in January including head of National Directorate of Security (NDS) and head of central bank of Afghanistan. But interior minister, foreign minister, rural development and rehabilitation minister, Hajj and religious affairs minister, mine minister and public health and refugees and repatriation minister got their vote of confidence. The rest of the ministers' documents are being verified. (Pajhwok)

(3) Azerbaijan, ...

was fully formed as a result of the export operations from Azerbaijan, according to the State Customs Committee of Azerbaijan. (Trend News Agency)

(4) UN Claim Top...

but even this has failed to yield positive results. In light of this, the UN has said that in some cases the militants take advantage of disputes around land. Bowden said: "New Kabul City was expected to house over three million people and generate over \$70 million USD in investments. At one time it was estimated that state land made up over 60 percent of new Kabul City. Now only 15 percent of the land is estimated to be state land available for distribution in accordance with the master plan."

He said he was aware the matter was a critical issue to President Ashraf Ghani and that the President had prioritized the matter so as to "restore the social fabric of life in Afghanistan". Bowden went on to say that in one province a prominent government official gave two townships to MPs. In another province he said officials including the former Ghazni senator and members of the provincial council seized 150,000 acres of state-owned land over the last 10 years. "There are fears that those involved in illicit land grabbing are now trying to get their hands on the remaining 650,000 acres of state land."

Meanwhile, the head of Afghanistan Independent Land Authority Jawed Paikar has said that nearly one million acres of land has been grabbed across the country with the majority being grabbed in Kabul, Nangarhar and Balkh provinces with the support of government officials.

"I can confirm that we have a list of 15,131 individuals who have been involved in land grabbing. This includes 355 townships which have been constructed illegally. The majority of the land grabbers are supported by the tribal elders, influential figures and a number of Afghan National Army and National Police officials," Jawed Paikar said.

According to some government offi-

cial, non-implementation of the law against land grabbers and non-consideration of tough penalties were among the fundamental problems fueling this trend.

"Failure of prosecution of the land grabbers and the non-existence of a legal framework for certifying the penalties for criminals have been the main reasons why there is a growing rate of land grabbing in the country," said acting minister of justice Syed Yousaf Halim.

"For instance, a person grabs two acres of land in a mountainous area and the other grabs thousands of acres of lands - the issue is that the law has prescribed the same penalty for both individuals and this doesn't help with the conflict in the country," an official of the attorney general's office Dastgir Hedayat said. The UN has also said that land was grabbed in the southern province of Kandahar - including by people who had close ties with the previous government. The UN has called on the leaders of the National Unity Government to make good on their promises with regards to preventing any further land grabbing. (Tolnews)

(5) Etisalat Signs ...

partner/sponsor of all domestic and international matches of AVF for 2015.

Being a telecom operator, Etisalat has placed the development of society where it operates at the far front of their business priorities. The company supports causes beneficial to societies and provides the platform for young people who want to make positive differences to the country. "We believe that it is the responsibility of every business to have practical and strategic CSR programs to ensure the wellbeing of our community," said Yasser About Amayem, Chief Commercial Officer, Etisalat Afghanistan. "We also believe that sports can play a very crucial role in development of a society. Empowering sports helps inspire youths and deter them from engaging in anti-social activities."

Etisalat has been the official partner of AVF since 2010 during which the game has evolved and has achieved quite a lot. Afghanistan's Volleyball team's qualification to Men's Volleyball World Cup - 2014, where Afghanistan was eliminated in the preliminary round, and its exceptional performance and shine in international matches against some of the volleyball giants and their unprecedented move from 131st to 79th place in IVF ranking are some of the improvements that the game has experienced under Etisalat's sponsorship and for the first time in its history in Afghanistan.

"Etisalat Afghanistan has been a great partner to AVF and it has been a pleasure working with them. I would like to appreciate their commitment and the generous support they have shown toward sports and other development programs in our country." We have over 17 programs scheduled including 2 International events. said DR. Muhammad Yunis Popalzai, president of AVF. Since its establishment in Afghanistan, Etisalat has strived to support sports at different levels and has taken numerous practical steps. Etisalat has also been the official sponsor of Buzkashi, the national sport of Afghanistan, and the official sponsor of Afghanistan cricket team and Afghanistan Cycling Federation. Etisalat stands committed to Empowering Sports in Afghanistan.

About Etisalat Afghanistan: - Etisalat Afghanistan is part of Etisalat Telecommunications Group, headquartered in UAE, one of the largest telecommunications groups in the world. Etisalat Afghanistan launched their services in 2007 and has rapidly become the fastest growing telecommunications service provider in the country with an active base of 4 million subscribers. The company aims to be at the forefront of its market based on quality, innovative services and competitive pricing, with unsurpassed coverage in every province in the country. Since 2007, the company has invested US\$ 300 million in Afghanistan and is the first telecom company to launch 3.75G services in Afghanistan. (PR)

(6) All Abducted...

soldier. The statement termed the act as inhumane and unIslamic. (Pajhwok)

(7) Senate to Summon...

manding change to tax payment system.

They passed a resolution demanded the government to address their grievances otherwise the protest would be continued indefinitely.

According to the early law, individuals with 5,000 afghanis income were exempted from tax payment, but

those earning up to 12,500 afghanis needed to pay two percent tax.

But Haji Sarwar, head of the garments union, told Pajhwok Afghan News before the taxes were collected from the income but now the taxes would be collected from the sales. Zalmai Zabuli, a lawmaker from southern Zabul province, said the government should bring reforms to tax system and devise investors-friendly environment.

The government, he alleged has failed to tax tycoons and mafia groups but it targeted poor people to collect tax from them.

Another Lawmaker Sahila Sharifi also stressed Senate's administrative commission to summon finance minister to brief them on tax system. Chairman Senate Fazal Hadi Muslimyar said the concerned commission would decide tomorrow to summon the finance minister on appropriate time.

Separately, some senators asked the government to identify a place for demonstration in capital Kabul in order to avoid disturbance for other people.

Senator Baz Mohammad said protest was the right of people but it should not create problems for others. Chairman senate said protesters should avoid blocking roads and creating problems for public. (Pajhwok)

(8) AI Warns ...

warlords and government officials as well. Laws meant to support them are poorly implemented, if at all, while the international community is doing far too little to ease their plight. The report states that rights defenders have suffered car bombings, grenade attacks on homes, killing of family members and targeted assassinations. Many continue their work despite suffering multiple attacks, in the full knowledge that no action will be taken against the perpetrators.

"Women human rights defenders from all walks of life have fought bravely for some significant gains over the past 14 years - many have even paid with their lives. It's outrageous that Afghan authorities are leaving them to fend for themselves, with their situation more dangerous than ever," said Salil Shetty, Amnesty International's Secretary General, in Kabul during the launch of the report.

"With the troop withdrawal nearly complete, too many in the international community seem happy to sweep Afghanistan under the carpet. We cannot simply abandon this country and those who put their lives on the line for human rights, including women's rights," he said.

In a statement issued by Amnesty International they said there has been significant international investment to support Afghan women, including efforts to strengthen women's rights. But too much of it has been piecemeal and ad hoc, and much of the aid money is drying up.

While Taliban is responsible for the majority of attacks against women defenders, government officials or powerful local commanders with the authorities' backing are increasingly implicated in violence and threats against women.

As one woman defender explained to Amnesty International: "The threats now come from all sides: it's difficult to identify the enemies. They could be family, security agencies, Taliban, politicians."

Based on interviews with more than 50 women defenders and their family members across the country, Amnesty International found a consistent pattern of authorities ignoring or refusing to take seriously threats against women. No woman in public life is safe - those facing threats and violence range from rights activists, politicians, lawyers, journalists and teachers. Even women in the police force are under threat, where sexual harassment and bullying is rife and almost always goes unpunished.

In eastern Laghman province, Dr Shah Bibi is the director of the Department of Women's Affairs, and continues her work to strengthen women's rights despite multiple death threats having forced her to move to a different province.

"Every day when I leave home I think that I will not return alive and my children are as scared as I am about a possible Taliban attack against me." Dr Bibi's two predecessors - Najia Sediqi and Hanifa Safi - were killed within six months of each other in 2012, by gunmen in broad daylight and in a car bombing respectively. Despite the existence of a legal framework to protect women in Afghanistan - much of it is thanks to tireless campaigning by women's rights activists themselves - laws are often badly enforced and remain mere paper promises, says Amnesty International. Amnesty International's investiga-

tion found that a lack of political will on the part of Afghan authorities means that government bodies and officials charged with protecting women are under-resourced and lack the support to carry out their work. Added to this is a common acceptance of violence against women and girls as a "normal" part of life, and limits their ability to participate freely in public life.

"The Afghan government is turning a blind eye to the very real threat women human rights defenders are facing. These brave people - many of them simply doing their jobs - are the bulwark against the oppression and violence that is part of daily life for millions of women across the country. The government must ensure they are protected, not ignored," said Horia Mosadiq, Amnesty International's Afghanistan Researcher.

"Afghanistan is facing an uncertain future, and is at arguably the most critical moment in its recent history. Now is not the time for international governments to walk away," said Shetty.

"The international community must step up with continued engagement and the Afghan government cannot continue to ignore its human rights obligations." (Tolnews)

(9) 'Violence....

had increased 60 percent this year. He told Pajhwok Afghan News approximately 30 violence incidents were recorded, with two of them murder cases. (Pajhwok)

(10) ACCI Rejects ...

European countries, so Pakistan is pursuing a political goal and doesn't have an economic objective."

Afghan traders operating in Pakistan have often complained of unfair practices and bureaucratic delays that hamper their growth. Despite numerous attempts by Afghan government officials to urge reform in trade rules and regulations relevant to Afghan businesses in Pakistan, major problems persist, prompting some to look toward Iranian ports like Chabahar as a better alternative. (Tolnews)

(11) Kidnappers ...

other message is "Warning to Afghan government".

One of the insurgents standing behind the person ask him questions in Dari language and the person who is letter beheaded answers the questions.

The deceased says he was a soldier since two years and then gives information about his home village.

The militant speaking in Dari language warns if their demands are not met the fate of the rest of the abductees would be the same.

The militants do not specify their demands. The video is dated to be filmed at 29/3/2015. Afghan government has not confirmed the authenticity of the video. (KP)

(12) Foods Safety...

200 diseases - with most of them posing serious health risks to people. Unsafe foods caused many infectious and non-infectious diseases, Feroz said, adding that cholera, diarrhea and some cancers were the cause of unsafe food.

He warned that half-cooked food, especially meat, carried high risks of fatal diseases.

"There is a steady increase in the number of health problems caused by unsafe foods," Dr. Feroz said adding that the lack of financial support in the health sector was a major challenge for the ministry in their efforts to promote good health and nutrition in the country.

He stressed the need for financial support from domestic and international organizations in order to tackle the issue of safe food.

According to WHO officials in Afghanistan, the issue of unsafe foods has become a global threat. They urged cooperation between the relevant organizations and governments worldwide in order to tackle the problem. (Tolnews)

(13) NDS Vows to ...

viewed as their leader.

Urgenji says Mullah Omar has not been seen for some 13 years and, "according to Shari'a," can no longer be leader, insisting that his group was recognizing the authority of the Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of the Islamic State group.

According to Urgenji the Afghan soldier was beheaded since numerous female IMU members were captured by the Afghan security forces in Far-yab province recently.

He said a group of 30 Afghan soldiers have been taken hostage by Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan militants in retaliation for the detention of the female IMU members.

Urgenji also warned that more Afghan soldiers will be beheaded un-

less the Afghan government does not consider their demand to swap prisoners. (KP)

(14) Poppies Being...

Mohammad Idrees Safi, told Pajhwok Afghan News.

He said the campaign involving joint Afghan security forces was ongoing in the Rodat district, where the crop would be destroyed on 250 acres of land.

"The Ministry of Counternarcotics had set us the target of eradicating poppy crop on 500 hectares of land, but we plan to destroy the crop on 1000 hectares of land by using all available resources," the director said.

To a question that destroying the crop on just 1000 hectares out of 18000 hectares of land would not be insufficient, he said: "Yes, it is too much less, but you know the crop is sown in insecure areas and we are trying to destroy it beyond the target we had been set."

He said the ongoing campaign would be followed by another eradication drive to destroy the crop in areas left in the first round.

A student at Nangarhar University, Zabihullah, told Pajhwok Afghan News the government should destroy the poppy crop across the province.

He said the crop to be left untouched on 17000 hectares of land would produce thousands of kilograms of opium, which would create more problems.

A tribal elder in Shinwari district, Malak Rafiullah, told Pajhwok Afghan News the government should not only destroy the crop all over the province, but should also extend the awareness creating programme to every part.

"If the crop is destroyed in nearby districts and spared in remote parts, the residents of nearby towns would mind it," the elder said.

The elder said they would cooperate with security forces in eradicating the illicit plant.

Meanwhile, police said the poppy eradication campaign had been hitch-free so far amid close coordination among the security forces.

Nangarhar police spokesman Col. Hazrat Hussain Mashriqwal said the security forces had not yet faced any armed resistance during the ongoing campaign.

He said residents were cooperating with security forces and the target would be achieved in the stipulated time.

The bulk of poppy crop is grown in Shinwari and Khogyani districts, according to local officials. However, the campaign was launched from the Ghanikhel district.

Residents said security forces had started eradicating the crop in areas near district centres and they seemed reluctant to move to remote parts.

A resident of the Ghanikhel district, Jehtullah, "The campaign came to an end yesterday in our district. The crop was destroyed in fields near the district centre and left untouched in remote parts."

Provincial council member Ustad Israrullah Murad told Pajhwok Afghan News such campaigns targeted crops belonging to farmers who had no connections in the government.

"Those who have connections, their crops had never been destroyed during such campaigns. But I hope this time, the campaign will be implemented without any discrimination," the public representative said.

He demanded security forces eradicate the crop in all areas and make Nangarhar a poppy free province. (Pajhwok)

(15) Hundreds of ...

Pajhwok Afghan News hundreds of students from Barmal and Shakin districts had been studying in Pakistani schools over the past 13 years.

He said they sent a delegation, also including the provincial education director, to the two districts in order to pave the ground for education of Afghan students in Pakistan in their home towns. The governor said the delegation had been able to open four schools for the returning students and provide them with needed facilities.

"Barmal is a border district and the Wazir tribe is living on both sides of the border and they have close relations. We want to provide our students more facilities and high standard of education than they received in Pakistan," the governor said. Paktika Education Director Kuchi Zazai also confirmed to Pajhwok the repatriation of Afghan students, who had been studying in Pakistani schools over the past 13 years, in cooperation with tribal elders.

"Barmal borders both south and north Waziristan. Students in Barmal previously lacked facilities and they had study across the border."

The director said two primary, one middle and one high school had been set up for the returning students to

continue their studies in their home town.

The Wazir tribe council head, Shah Baraz, expressed his happiness over the establishment of schools for students leaving schools in Pakistan and thanked the Afghan government.

"After this development, we will not send our children to study in schools across the border," he said. (Pajhwok)

(16) Farkhunda Case...

Spokesman for the Attorney General's office has said that this is the first incident of this sort to ever be dealt with by their office. The spokesman said that the acting Attorney General has assigned 12 experienced attorneys to review Farkhunda's case. They are expected to bring the case before court on Saturday.

"Investigations have been carried out and more arrests have been made. Those involved in the case of Miss Farkhunda will be investigated by this office," says Baseer Azizi, spokesperson for the Attorney General's office. (Tolnews)

(17) CNN Publishes ...

have come to Afghanistan - let's join them.' Then we joined them and pledged allegiance to them."

CNN has quoted Colonel J B Vowell, a US military officer, as confirming the ISIS recruitment but he says that the number is very small "There has been some very small numbers of recruitment that has happened," he is quoted as saying.

"You have disaffected Taliban who are losing politically and some of the younger, newer fighters are moving to that camp. It doesn't mean it's operationally better. We are concerned about it - resources, weapons, capabilities. (But) I don't see an operational effect." Colonel J B Vowell. (KP)

(18) Panjsher Gets ..

would be used under his department's authority.

The need for snow clearing machinery was felt when an avalanche killed at least 200 people, including women and children in the province.

"After the devastating natural disaster, the Afghanistan Natural Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) decided to include Panjsher among vulnerable areas of the country," the governor said. (Pajhwok)

(19) Police Desert ...

eas against militants.

A government official in Sangin, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Pajhwok Afghan News the ANA troops had returned from northern areas of the district without establishing their posts there. (Pajhwok)

(20) Efforts Intensified ...

provided 800 more students the opportunity to study.

The newly constructed schools have been named as Hazrat Usman (RA), Hazrat Abdullah Bin Abbas (RA) and Hazrat Hamza (RA) in Qalat and Dr Noor Amin primary school in Shahkoy district. (Pajhwok)

(21) Nimroz Custom ...

was collected from fuel imports and 80 percent from garments, electronics, vehicle parts and other items imported from Iran.

Turabi linked the hike in revenue to good governance, law enforcement, custom clearing evaluation and installation of Automated System for Customs Data in the department.

The fuel in the past was illegally trafficked to Afghanistan through Kang and Chahar Burjak districts of the province but illegal imports were prevented after patrolling by Nimroz custom police. (Pajhwok)

(22) Haqqani ...

eight years in Paktika," he said. However, he did not provide details on whether the ANA suffered any casualties during the operation.

Paktika province, which borders Pakistan, has seen frequent insurgent activity in the past. (Tolnews)

(23) 5 Civilians Dead,...

he said three persons have been killed and as many wounded in a dispute over the ownership of a forest in Wata Por district. Police reached the area to defuse the tension. (Pajhwok)

(24) Kandahar Students...

among one of the important financial zones in the country. He said USWDP would assist the education system on the campus as well as affiliating the university with international universities to build up the capacity of its students on international standards. (Pajhwok)

(25) Flash Floods...

The NDMA officials have said that aid has been provided to victims, but a number of families are still in desperate need of assistance. Every year, flash floods in the northern part of the country causes devastation in the spring season. (Tolnews)