

(1) Durable Peace...

to investigate the inhuman killing of Farkhunda, he added.

In a statement, Ghani vehemently condemned the arson of a Mosque in northwestern Faryab province as an un-Islamic act.

Some days back, rebels set a Mosque on fire and some houses in the Sherin Tagab district when they were defeated by security forces.

But Taliban rejected burning of a Mosque, with the group's spokesman Qari Yousuf Ahmadi said: "We condemned the burning of a Mosque and will not allow others to do so." (Pajhwok)

(2) Tajik-Afghan...

ment (USAID) through its Trade Project has been working effectively with the Ministry of Commerce and Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) Customs for the implementation of the APTTA which came into effect on June 12, 2011 due to the Trade Project's efforts. APTTA is a successor to the 1965 Afghanistan Transit Trade Agreement (ATA) which aims to boost regional trade between and through the two countries.

APTTA requires procedural and regulatory reform to discourage unauthorized trade and introduces mechanisms that reduce transit cargo dwell time.

With the completion of the APTTA, the United States and other NATO states are planning to revive the ancient Silk Road. This is to help the local economies of Afghanistan and Pakistan by connecting South Asia with Central Asia and the Middle East. (Wadsam)

(3) Abdullah Visits...

the Afghans around the world have been staging protests and rallies to demand the safe release of those abducted. (Tolonews)

(4) Afghanistan ...

Russian weapons, and "some 500 Russian helicopters are flying in the Afghan sky. Therefore, we are buying guns, cartridges and other munitions from Russia."

The Afghan Air Force received the first six Armed MD-530s last month with the NATO Train, Assist, Advise Command-Air and 438th Air Expeditionary Wing, saying that the armed MD-530s will increase the Afghan Air Force aerial fires capability.

Armed Mi-17s and MD-530s give the Afghan Air Force six times the number of armed aircraft for Fighting Season 2015 as compared to last fighting season, which only employed five Mi-35s.

Pentagon awarded MD Helicopters Inc. a maximum \$44.2 million firm-fixed-price contract last year to develop and provide an armament package for the MD-530F helicopters that were already supplied to the Afghan Air Force.

Around 17 of the Afghan Air Force's MD-530F helicopter will be upgraded under the contract which is expected to be completed early next year.

MD-530F helicopters are designed for high altitude and/or hot weather operations, where thinner air costs helicopters some of their lift. (KP)

for CIS states Mohammad Shaker Kargar are on visit to Azerbaijan.

The visit is being held at the invitation of Azerbaijani Minister of Economy and Industry Shahin Mustafayev and will last until Apr.10.

During the visit, Afghan officials hold meetings with Azerbaijani leadership. "We held a number of useful meetings in Baku, considered the next steps to strengthen relations between Azerbaijan and Afghanistan," said the minister. "The level of economic relations does not satisfy the either of sides, and we intend to develop cooperation in this sphere."

He said that the embassy of Afghanistan has been operating in Baku for already two years, and a lot of high-ranking officials of the government of Afghanistan visited Baku during this period.

"Former President Karzai and our current president practically made their first foreign visit to Azerbaijan," Mohammad Shaker Kargar said in his turn. "It means that our relations with Azerbaijan develop successfully."

The trade turnover between Azerbaijan and Afghanistan stood at \$275.99 million in 2014 and this amount was fully formed as a result of the export operations from Azerbaijan, according to the State Customs Committee of Azerbaijan.

The trade turnover between the two countries in January-February 2015 amounted to \$15.7 million, according to the State Statistics Committee. (Trend News Agencies)

(6) Ghani to Take...

oversight committee for MoD fuel contracts disclosed on Thursday that

leading companies collaborated with each other and with the Directorate of Reconstruction and Development and the Special Procurement Committee to charge the government over \$100 million USD above the daily market rate.

Former minister of finance Hazrat Omar Zakhailwal who is the current economic advisor to Ghani and the former minister of economy Abdul Hadi Arghandiwal were the members of Special Procurement Committee.

Meanwhile, the economic analysts and the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) members asked the government to bring all the corrupt officials to justice. "Not only the procurement committee and the defense ministry are involved in the case, but three to four ministers are also involved in it, and they must appear before the courts," deputy ACCI head Khan Jan Alokozai said.

However, chairman of the Directorate of Reconstruction and Development of Afghanistan Abdul Wakil Hanifi rejects the accusations. But the other accused officials are yet to comment in this regard.

The committee has asked the president to seize properties owned by government officials who are accused of being involved and have called for them to be investigated and if found guilty to be fired and to be charged in a court of law.

The fuel agreement was made with Ghazanfar oil, Abdul Wase Faqiri, North One Logistic Services and General Logistics for the total value of \$900 million USD over three years, according to committee's findings. The price for one liter of fuel according to the contract is 60 AFN.

TOLONews was unfortunately unable to get comment from anyone at Ghazanfar Group. However, Hamidullah Farooqi, Chairman of the Oversight Committee for MoD contracts said: "The issue of bribes is the case here, one of the officials has been paid up to \$5 million USD."

In addition to reviewing the fuel contract of the MoD, the committee has reviewed 11 other MoD contracts, the findings of which will be revealed soon. (Tolonews)

(7) Dahla Dam's...

that the initial works would be started with the Finance Ministry's \$37m, but the ministry could not provide the money, thus forcing the USAID to halt the project.

He called as crucial raising of the dam's banks, saying the reservoir was 40 percent silted, reducing its water storage capacity from 484 million cubic square metres to 300 million cubic square metres.

He said agriculture lands in seven districts, Shah Walikot, Arghandab, Zheri, Panjwai, Maiwand, Dand and Daman were irrigated from the dam, benefiting 2.5 million people.

Attaee said if the dam was raised, it would not only help resolve the scarcity of irrigation water but also enhance the power-producing capacity to 10 megawatts.

The irrigation director urged the government to make serious efforts at initiating the second phase after completion of the phase-I, which was about to finish over the next two months. He said the dam was full of water, which would be released to farmers through its network of canals until next week.

Residents said they were unhappy with the project's halt and asked the government to resume work on it on a priority basis.

A resident of Shah Walikot district, Haji Azizullah, told Pajhwok Afghan News residents were ready to vacate their homes to pave the ground for raising the dam's banks.

He said land, homes and orchards of 5000 people were to be submerged in water in Shah Walikot district with the dam's reconstruction and residents were ready to be shifted to other areas and vacate their homes. But the project has been stopped, he lamented. He said the dam's was the only irrigation source for people and the government should complete it with financial support from USAID and the World Bank.

A resident of Arghandab's Manar area, Noor Mohammad, also said the dam's reconstruction would help overcome the shortage of irrigation water and electricity.

Earlier, Canada has rehabilitated many of the irrigation canals south of Dahla Dam as part of the Arghandab Irrigation Rehabilitation Project at a cost of \$50 million from 2009 to 2011.

First built in 1950-52 on the Arghandab River 30 kilometres northeast of Kandahar City, the Dahla Dam's technical and structural parts have been destroyed due to 30 years of the conflict and negligence. (Pajhwok)

(8) President Vows...

particularly women's rights, and the freedom of speech and press.

While stressing reforms in Afghanistan's justice and judicial organs, Ghani said the Afghan government wanted to do away with torture of prisoners by carrying out fundamental and solid measures.

The president said the government would reform the judiciary to enable it to effectively dispense justice in order to strengthen people's trust in the justice system. (Pajhwok)

(9) Second Vice...

that in regards to the [issue of] Human Rights, whether with peace issues or any other issues we cannot simply let it go," he said.

Danish said the current situation in terms of women's rights in the country was shameful and re-iterated that need for laws prohibiting violence against women to be closely implemented.

Danish emphasized that if reform is not brought to the judicial institutions, it will be hard to bring justice. This was "in response to some of the views that have been discussed ... that this law would be in contradiction or conflict with the Sharia law".

"The main issue is reform, which must take place in the judicial system of the country, and if these reforms do not take place, we will face problems in many other areas to implement justice or rule of law or standards of human rights" says Danish.

Meanwhile, the Independent Human Rights Commission speaks of extensive corruption in the judicial institutions and emphasizes that formation of good governance is the route to security, peace and human rights.

"We had witnesses at the Human Rights Commission that a judge had taken bribes in the case of a girl in Kabul, in the capital. And after a number of attempts we were able to get a divorce for the girl, due to the violence against her. Government then stripped the judge of his authority and sent him to work as an editor in another part of the country," said Seema Samar.

The organization is also concerned about the level of impunity in the country and said many corrupt violators of human rights work in senior government positions. (Tolonews)

(10) 18 Dead, 67....

civilians, he said.

Most of the injured were prosecutors and staff members at the judicial complex, including the provincial attorney, Mirza Ghulam Ali, the provincial police spokesman, Sherjan Durrani and four female attorneys.

The injured also included women and children and a number of them were in a critical condition, the senior doctor said.

Dr. Faiz said some had received shrapnel, bullet and burn injuries and others got injured after jumping from the compound.

Abdullah, giving an eyewitness account, told Pajhwok Afghan News the four attackers came in a black-coloured car.

They first opened fire at the guards and then entered the building. "Later a woman and a white-bearded man came out of the attorney's office building in injured condition," he said.

Abdullah said the attackers were dressed in military uniform and they detonated four bombs during the onslaught.

The Taliban immediately claimed responsibility for the attack that comes ahead of the traditional fighting season that begins when snow starts melting in spring.

The insurgency spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, said dozens of officials at the attorney's and the appellant court suffered casualties in the attack carried out by their four fighters.

He said the attack was in retribution to mistreatment of Taliban prisoners at the government's jails. (Pajhwok)

(11) Honey ...

Wardak, Panjab, Wers and Yakawlang districts of Bamyan and other districts in Ghor and Daikundi provinces.

Mohammad Amin Zaman, a farm owner in Maidan Wardak province, told Pajhwok Afghan News he started honey farming eight years back and was managing four farms in these four provinces now.

In the beginning, he said, honey production reached up to dozens of kilograms, while now it reaches up to 15 tonnes. He was also selling bee boxes to those who were interested in honey-raising.

Zaman said their products were being exported to Kabul, Kandahar and Balkh provinces and they wanted the government to help them in technicalities as well as finding international market.

Mohammad Ali Nekzad, who owns a small store in Bamyan and sells Koh-i-Baba honey, said their sales were less due to high prices. "This honey is pure, but some people cannot afford to buy it," he added, saying those

who knew good honey was ready to buy these products in any price because of its quality.

Honey is beneficial for health. Based on surveys in developed countries every individual consumes more than 1.5 kilograms of it annually.

A honey-bee lives for 45 days and one box of bees produce more than 20 kilograms of honey in a month. Mohammad Nabi, a professional beekeeper, said they also gave two-week training to those who were buying some farms. He added that during the winters they shifted their bee boxes to the tropical areas to reduce the number of fatalities.

Abdul Samad, a farm owner in Wers district who owns 50 boxes of honey bees, said: "one of the reasons people could not own farms in this region is because of the cold winters."

During the winters they should be shifted to the warm provinces, which according to him, was something that farmers could not afford. "We can't stay away from home for a long time because of these honey bees. But if there is a system that shifted all the bees to other province during winter then we would be interested in participating."

Mohammad Tahir Atee, agriculture department director, said only in Kahard district honey-bee farms and unions existed, while in other districts honey was produced on individual basis. (Pajhwok)

(12) Helmand Blames...

e the capability to implement it," Helmand Provincial Council member Abdul Majid Akhondzada told TOLONews on Thursday. Some sources close to the issue have suggested the U.S. aid organization could abandon the project if it is not completed within the next six

Preliminary planning for the Kajaki Dam project began over 10 years ago. Despite the province's Provincial Council leaders suggesting otherwise, the acting minister of Energy and Water, Ghulam Farooq Qazizada, has assured stakeholders that all necessary preparations have been made to ensure the dam is finished in 2015.

"We have transferred the necessary materials for the dam," Qazizada said on Thursday in response to the Helmand Provincial Council's comments. "On the basis of a presidential order, the construction work of the project will start soon, and a helicopter has been offered to the contractor for transferring equipment to the dam."

The Kajaki Dam project entails the renovation and installation of turbines. The project was originally launched a decade ago with \$150 million USD in aid from the U.S. government. The project was expected to generate 150 megawatts of power for Kandahar and Helmand provinces, but so far it has only been able to generate a maximum of 30 megawatts of electricity.

"We know that the Helmand local government doesn't have the ability to implement this project and the central government also doesn't bother to do anything to resolve the issue," Helmand Provincial Council member Mayar said. "We aren't optimistic about the reconstruction of Kajaki Dam, because the government is unable to implement the project." (Tolonews)

(13) Kabul Gathering...

But some participants chanted "long live mujahidin leader Gulbaddin Hekmatyar."

Hekmatyar leads the HIA faction, which has been waging an insurgency against the government and its foreign backers.

Helal said the government should negotiate with the Taliban to end the violence. "If we follow Islamic principles, we will find justice and freedom," he said.

He said there were high hopes two months ago that the peace talks would begin, but the government later said it would make no compromise on achievements made over the past 13 years.

"Can you tell me what you have achieved in 13 years that you will lose," he asked the government.

Helal said no party had won the war during the past 13 years and there were no signs the violence would come to an end in another 13 years.

"The only way to achieve peace is flexibility and agreeing with each other. Peace talks must be started without any condition because peace will be the biggest achievement."

The former presidential candidate dubbed the national unity government as illegal, asking the leaders to appoint ministers and governors soon to clear the country's fate.

Former vice-president Mohammad Yunus Qanuni, who attended the gathering, said there was no place for extremism in Islam. "Those who interpret Islam as an extremism ide-

ology knows nothing about Islam," he added.

He said violence was a negative phenomenon but it was intentionally attributed to Islam by some political forces to defame the holy religion.

About peace, Qanuni said "peace is the demand of every Afghan, we need peace, we should win it, and we want an end to the armed struggle. Fortunately, more opportunities are available today for peace negotiations." (Pajhwok)

(14) NATO ...

in today's attack. We remain committed to assisting our Afghan partners in achieving sustainable security and stability," the statement added.

At least ten people were killed and around seventy others were wounded after a group of the Taliban insurgents stormed the attorney's office at 11:30 am on Thursday.

According to the local security officials the attack was launched by four insurgents who were all killed following clashes which lasted for almost seven hours. (KP)

(15) UN Imposes ...

against him.

The Security Council Sanctions Committee approved Fazlullah's entry to its sanctions list of individuals and entities for "participating in the financing, planning, facilitating, preparing, or perpetrating" TTP's acts or activities.

Fazlullah was the leader of the Taliban in Swat Valley and became the Taliban chief after the killing of his predecessor Hakimullah in a US drone attack in November 2013.

Under his leadership, TTP claimed responsibility for the December 2014 attack on an army run school in Peshawar that resulted in the deaths of at least 132 children, 10 teachers and three soldiers. (Pajhwok)

(16) Khost Governor...

the incumbent governor.

At least 18 persons were killed and 64 others, most of them seriously, wounded in a suicide explosion in southeastern Khost province last Thursday, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) said in a statement.

The blast jolted the locality near the tents established by the anti-governor protesters, an eyewitness said, adding that ambulances evacuated some injured to the hospital.

Later, a statement from the National Directorate of Security (NDS) said the dreaded Haqqani Network was behind the devastating blast.

Naeemi, however, rejected all allegations including that of corruption saying both the lawmakers wanted to defame him for their own personal interests.

He told Pajhwok Afghan News the lawmakers along with their associates had started armed uprising. He said such acts would bring bad name to civil society organizations and diminish people's trust towards local governments.

Naeemi claimed during the protests, a lot of weapons and ammunition were brought to the city which was also shown on the media. He claimed that some of them even had heavy weaponry in their vehicles.

The Khost governor presented some photos to Pajhwok Afghan News showing MP Kamal Naser Asoli with some illegal armed men.

But Asoli said the photos were fake and had been produced by governor's people. He accused the acting governor of misusing his authority. "Naeemi is an ISI person that has been deputed in Khost province," he claimed, adding that ISI wanted to create trouble for the central government through Khost province.

Asoli said people's demonstration in the city was peaceful and it was aimed at achieving their rights. He also rejected governor's claims that they had gathered weapons, saying thousands of Khost residents had gathered under tents amid peaceful demonstrations.

He said after the suicide bombing, it was the governor's bodyguards that started firing.

Regarding the heavy weaponry that were installed on some cars, Asoli, said it did not belong to them and they did not have any relations to the people. "I only have four bodyguards and their weapons are registered with the government."

According to him during the protests, there were no weapons with them, or with anybody else.

In contrary, he claimed, it was the governor who had armed some people including a notorious criminal Taj Ali.

Naeemi, on the other hand said, Taj Ali was an uncle of Kamal Naser Asoli and they had personal and family problems.

Naeemi said before the demonstration took off, some of the protesters had given them guarantee that their rally would be peaceful. But later on

it became visible that they were carrying weapons.

He also presented some photos on this regard to Pajhwok Afghan News. "What kind of a civil and peaceful movement was this that they had blocked ways to 42 government departments and were sitting in their tents armed to teeth?" he questioned. He was astonished how could some protesters were equipped with weapons despite security forces adopted strict measures.

"Only few of the men might had license for carrying weapons, but it is questionable how a large number of demonstrators were equipped with guns," Naeemi added.

But he added that there was clear evidences showing some protesters were wielding weapons. The weapons were taken out soon after the rally ended.

Naeemi claimed that Kamal Naser Ausoli imported hunting guns from Russia where Kalashnikovs were also secretly trafficked along with hunting guns.

"Hunting of birds is banned by the government then why people import hunting guns," he questioned. (Pajhwok)

(17) National Unity ...

Another member of CMSJ Ghulam Mohammad Mohammadi said a political transition of the government should be more legitimate but he regretted violation of the constitution and election law during the election process.

"Our demand from the leaders is that to respect the agreement they signed during the formation of the national unity government," he said. (Pajhwok)

(18) Pakistani Citizens ...

Torkham border post on Wednesday. The dead included Attaullah, Rahatullah, Ahmed Ali, Abdullah, Rehan Gul and Deedan Gul whose bodies were later dispatched to their native town Prang, in Charsadda district.

"Our deepest sympathies and condolences go to the families of the victims," the statement concluded. (Pajhwok)

(19) 4 Rebels ...

The police also confiscated two Kalashnikovs, a walkie-talkie and three military uniforms at the clash site.

But a resident of the area, Ahmadullah, said one policeman had been killed in the clash that left three militants dead.

"We saw the Taliban evacuating their dead comrades as well as the police shifting their dead and injured colleagues in their pick-up vehicle," he told Pajhwok Afghan News. (Pajhwok)

(20) Air Force...

over 100 pilots, co-pilots and repair workers who say that their salaries are so low some don't even have homes. Shah Muhammad is an experienced pilot and says that he and his fellow pilots have been trained in Russia, United States and other countries, but very little attention is given to them once they join the Air Force. (Tolonews)

(21) Price of ...

quantity of Vietnam green tea for 250afis -- higher than wholesale prices.

A filling station worker in Wazirabad locality, Abdul Saboor, said the price of one litre of diesel was 44afis and the same quantity of petrol 42afis, the same prices' of last week's.

A liquefied gas seller in Taimani area Mohammad Usman sold one kilogram of gas for 32afis, no changes in the price to last week's. (Pajhwok)

(22) Parents of ...

after the embassy of Afghanistan in Dushanbe told them that the Afghan government is unable to free the hostage. (KP)

(23) Kandahar Cooperat...

Khakrezwal said they had formed a delegation to investigate the issue and refer those involved in the corruption to the judicial organs.

Pajhwok tried to seek comments from the provincial agriculture director, but it was told he had somewhere on a trip.

The provincial council chief said they were trying to investigate the issue in cooperation with the agriculture director. (Pajhwok)

(24) 5 Kidnapped ...

employees' killing but a relative of one of the slain officials wishing anonymity, said they received news about the death of their family members who worked for the NGO.

Among the dead employees, one belonged to Nangarhar while the rests were the residents of Uruzgan province. Taliban did not yet comment on the incident. (Pajhwok)