

(1) We Face...

coordination through meetings with the Afghan government and donor countries.

In his opening remarks, President Ghani said Afghanistan was facing the "5th wave of international violence."

"If we look at the previous waves, each wave lasted 20 to 30 years. Now there is the need to control the situation."

"We are targeted by Al Qaeda, Daesh, regional terrorist groups and Pakistani Taliban, so there is need for sharing information and intelligence and a joint framework," he said.

He said the Afghans were united when it came to the defence of their values and the Afghan government was committed and had the political will to cope with challenges.

The president insisted on regional cooperation to work jointly towards resolving issues instead of blaming each other.

The enemies of Afghanistan had been trying to overthrow the government, but they could not succeed due to the sacrifices of the Afghan security and defence forces, he said.

After the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan, the country plunged into economic challenges in addition to security problems, he said, adding the poverty index increased from 46 percent in 2013 to 49 percent in 2014 and the level of joblessness had increased nationwide.

However, he said as a result of the Afghan government's efforts, the national revenue increased by 22 percent last year compared 2014.

He said the government also organised the budgeting system, encouraged international aid, established programmes for development of agriculture and the situation of farmers, constructed dams and improved conditions of cities.

Pashtani Bank, Milli Bank and the New Kabul Bank were now in better condition, he said, adding the National Procurement Commission (NPC) had so far assessed more than 1000 contracts with many relating to security. As a result of the assessment in the past one year, he said the government had saved 1.2 billion afghanis each month.

The government has brought some reforms to eliminate corruption especially in the judiciary and the efforts were still ongoing, he said.

"We have brought reforms and reshuffled many judges and other officials of the judiciary organs. There would be more good news in the next two weeks and we will also accelerate resolving cases by 75 percent," he said.

A special directorate was established for judges in the affairs of women and children, he said, adding some people in. (Pajhwok)

(2) Families of...

Wali Amin on behalf of the families of the martyrs thanked the president for his special attention.

They announced their support for government programmes regarding peace, reforms and anti-corruption efforts, a statement from the Presidential Palace said. President Ghani called Hikmatullah and Khan Agha as the brave sons of the country and said they would always be remembered.

He also thanked their families and elders of Kandahar and Helmand for growing up brave children of the soil. "Kandahar is the political heart of Afghanistan and without peace in the province, there would be no peace, stability and prosperity in the country.

The president once again prayed for the departed souls of the martyrs and wished a chosen place for them in the Heaven and patience for their families.

The president also asked elders of Kandahar to be united for peace and stability in the country. (Pajhwok)

(3) Watchdog ...

Vice President Sarwar Danish said government is committed to bringing reforms in the electoral system.

"The Selection Committee will hold its first meeting and will officially start its work in the next few days," he said. (Tolo News)

(4) Picks for...

Haq Ulumi resigned. Hamidi has

been named acting AG.

Minister of Parliamentary Affairs Ghulam Nabi Farahi told the Wolesi Jirga Hamidi had 15-year experience. He has received a bachelor's degree criminal science from the Police Academy. The AG-designate, a bachelor of political science from Kabul University, also holds a master's in criminal law from Azad Islamic University and another degree in public administration from the Howard University.

Similarly, Lt. Gen. Jahid has 22 years military experience, having received his bachelor from the Military University. He previously served as 207th Zafar Military Corps commander in western Herat province.

Sangari has done his bachelor in Sharia Law from Kabul University. He has held high judicial positions, including investigation chief and head of anti-narcotics court.

Wolesi Jirga Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahim asked the president to introduce nominees for other posts that are currently being held by acting officials.

The Ministry of Defence and the National Directorate of Security (NDS), the Afghan spy agency, have been under acting officials for a year and four months respectively. (Pajhwok)

(5) World Urged ...

continued assistance with Afghanistan until all the mines were cleared. "Afghans not need to worry; we will continue our assistance in this regard."

Meshrano Jirga Chairman Fazal Hadi Muslimyar praised services of de-miners and said "you are the people who endanger lives to protect the lives of innocent people. You are the real heroes of the country, we are proud of you."

He assured de-miners that the Senate legislative commission would struggle to draw the government's attention towards approving pension for deminers.

"You are the real servants of the country, so you should be given retirement benefits and changes should be brought to the labour law," a member of the Wolesi Jirga, Nazifa Zaki, said, while praising de-miners. (Pajhwok)

(6) Govt. Pledges...

Afghanistan was passing through an important exam.

"The enemies of this country, by pursuing their deceptive insight, try to misguide and create doubts among our people in their attempt to hinder them from the path of development and prosperity, but they will take such a dream to their grave," Danish said.

Meanwhile, parliament speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahim called on the president to refer the candidates for the post of the ministry of defense and head of the National Directorate of Security (NDS).

"Security threats take victims from us on a daily basis, the president must ensure that the candidates for the position of minister of defense and head of NDS is referred to the house as soon as possible," he said. (Tolo News)

(7) Faryab ...

working for own interest and dividing people.

Mohammad Nabi, one of the protestors, said Nazir was a commander of 14 uprising posts and was a member of the Afghan Local Police. "Nazir played a significant role in strengthening security in our district, but Tofan unarmed Nazir and dismissed him."

Nazir spearheaded a 50-member uprising group financially supported by local residents, with each family contributing 50 afghanis per month, Nabi said. "Tofan, the police chief, wanted a share in the money but Nazir denied, so he dismissed and unarmed Nazir."

However, Top fan denied the allegation and said the protestors had been provoked by insurgents.

He said Nazir was an ordinary policeman and residents of the district had officially complained against his atrocities and intimidation, compelling him to dismiss him. (Pajhwok)

(8) Herat...

Implementation of the project is part of the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) programme.

CAREC Program is a partnership among 10 countries and six multilateral development part-

ners, working to promote development, leading to accelerated economic growth and poverty reduction.

Speaking after the signing of the contract, Baligh said the Torgundi-Herat railroad was a part of the Lajaward Transit Route, which would connect Afghanistan with Europe through Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan.

He said the technical and economic study would take six months to complete and the project would cost \$1,603,500 provided by the Asian Development Bank.

The minister added said the railway line would stretch from Herat to Iran. The project will help boost regional trade and ensure the swift movement of goods and services. (Pajhwok)

(9) Kandahar...

Chancellor Eng. Tawab Bala Karzai said four of the faculties currently remained open during the night shift. But more of them, which are badly needed, could not be created due to insufficient and late delivery of funds.

The existing faculties could not meet the academic requirement of around 10,000 students enrolled in the university, whose teaching hospital was faced with lack of staff, the vice-chancellor added.

Medical students would get better professional education and patients receive satisfactory treatment if the problems were resolved, Karzai believed.

The new law related to universities was good for those institutions where only master's degree-holders could teach, the official opined. But there are fewer qualified people to be hired for all faculties and subjects.

"At times we are forced to appointment lecturers based on contracts due to the large number of students. But, unfortunately, we have no budget for them," he maintained. The university is one of five big institutions of the country.

The Kandahar University has branches in Helmand and Uruzgan provinces, where many students are pursuing higher education. Karzai said the university had 246 cadre members and 310 others attendants and contract teachers. Around 10,000 students, 11 percent of them females, are studying at the varsity.

It has a library containing 80,000 books, a laboratory, a cadre hospital, a research center, a meteorology department, an agriculture farm, a career-counseling centre, a media wing, an information technology centre, computer and English language institute and other facilities.

He said that 35 lecturers of the university would be sent this year to India, Japan, France, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia for master's and doctorates. Sixteen teachers, who have done their master's and doctorates abroad, had returned to Kandahar University.

The university got first position in terms of quality among 61 universities of the country, according to Karzai, who said 833 students, including 37 females, graduated from different faculties this year.

Kandahar University launched master's course this year, which the VC called a big achievement. But Karzai asked government to pay greater attention to resolving its problems on a priority basis. (Pajhwok)

(10) Insightful...

by the London-based Hurst Publishers, the book scrutinises how prohibition served divergent and competing interests. It also explains how these bans affected farming communities.

It also highlights how prohibition endured in some areas while in others opium production bans undermined livelihoods and destabilised the political order, fuelling violence.

"To understand the fragility of the Afghan state, one must read this thought-provoking and thoroughly researched book," says Nader Nadery, former AREU director. (Pajhwok)

(11) Afghan ...

Fawara Chowkarea on Sunday. Zawaruddin was shot with a 30-bore pistol, the official said, adding the attacker managed to escape. Police are looking for the killer. (Pajhwok)

(12) Taliban Ambush...

attack on their way to the district centre, sparking a brief clash that left six policemen dead and a seventh injured. Another policeman was taken away by the insurgents.

Abdul Manan Raufi, police chief (operations), said "first the police Ranger pick-up hit a roadside bomb then the insurgents opened fire."

He said police reinforcements had reached the scene to search for the captured policeman.

There has been no word from the Taliban about the attack. (Pajhwok)

(13) Killed, ...

on their website and said the fighters captured a check-post from police.

Six policemen and two fighters were killed and three ALP members and two fighters injured during the clash, the rebels claimed. (Pajhwok)

(14) Three Kidnapped ...

could release our dears," said Habibullah, a relative.

The kidnappers held the three youths for one week in their custody and the youths now have bad memories, said their relatives.

"Day and night they kept us and they were beating us and asking for money," said Asadullah, one released youth.

They criticized government for not having helped secure their release.

"There was no one to help us, no police and when the kidnappers got the money and released us then why did the police not follow them" said Abdul Wahid another freed hostage.

Meanwhile Mohammad, one regular driver on the Kabul-Daikondi highway said that they often face security challenges on the road.

"Security is very bad on the highway," said Mohammad.

Relatives of the freed hostages said security officials initially said they would help but instead they failed to do anything.

The Afghan Ministry of Interior however accepts that there are challenges on the country's highways but said that security forces are trying to secure the routes.

"Police in cooperation with security forces will do their best and will listen to people's complaints so as to solve the problems," said MoI spokesman Sediq Sediqqi. (Tolo News)

(15) Ukraine Faces...

smoothly and reluctant to speed up the promised reforms, such as tackling corruption and stabilizing the economy.

However, local analysts remain split on whether Yatsenyuk would resign. Many believe his retirement is just a matter of time as even some cabinet members have begun to publicly voice distrust on him in recent weeks.

"In the current circumstances, Yatsenyuk's resignation is inevitable, because nobody wants to work with him," said Yury Syrotyuk, head of Ukrainian Studio of Strategic Studies, an analytical center. (Xinhua)

(16) Landmines...

that people and supplies reach those most in need, Donat explained.

In Geneva, UNMAS is marking the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action with an exhibition showcasing a selection of photos and art pieces that illustrate the pillars of mine action, such as clearance, stockpile destruction, mine risk education, victim assistance and advocacy.

According to the UN official, UNMAS will also host seven live interactive sessions with country programmes from Afghanistan, Iraq, Mali, Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan and Syria. (Xinhua)

(17) First 32...

resettle one Syrian refugee from Turkey for every Syrian that Turkey takes back from the Greek islands.

This regulation applies initially to 72,000 Syrian refugees who have sought asylum in Turkey. A total of 15,000 of them can come to Germany. (Xinhua)

(18) Al-Bashir...

by Sudan's government on their movements, while the Sudanese government is accusing the organizations of surpassing their mandates and exercising other tasks including spying and providing support for the rebels.

On Friday, al-Bashir started touring Darfur's five states, ahead of the upcoming referendum on Darfur's administrative status, slated for April 11. (Xinhua)

(19) Jordan ...

Sunday. They also said the reopening of Iraq's crossing border with Jordan will help boost trade between the two countries.

Jordan's exports to Iraq in 2015 dropped by 46 percent to 690 million dinars (about one billion U.S. dollars), compared to 1.1 billion dinars in 2014. (Xinhua)

(20) Situation in ...

Also on Monday, the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry said that the country's armed forces have destroyed an Armenian command and staff point in the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region.

Hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan on the contact line of the Nagorno-Karabakh region flared up overnight Saturday with the two countries blaming each other for triggering the escalation. (Xinhua)

(21) Somali ...

and vehicles from garages, he arrested 8 terrorist suspects in connection with the latest terrorist incidents and they are being questioned at moment," Shukri said.

He added that the Somali security forces and the African peace-keeping troops conducted such operations in Warta-Nabbada and Hamar-Jadid districts on Saturday and Sunday nights.

The latest operations by NISA came hours after deadly assassinations and mortar attacks occurred in Mogadishu in which five government security personnel were among the dead. (Xinhua)

(22) Kremlin Dimisses...

edited from state construction contracts.

Prior to the publications, Peskov had said that the Kremlin expected that an outfit of international research in the West and in Russia was planning to publish "hoax material" on Putin, his family and friends.

Founded in 1997, the ICIJ is a global network of more than 190 investigative journalists in more than 65 countries and regions working with leading news organizations worldwide and focusing on issues like cross-border crime, corruption and accountability of power, according to its website. (Xinhua)

Wave of Suicide Bomb Attacks Hit Iraq, as Security Forces Repel 3 IS Attacks

BAGHDAD - A series of suicide car bomb attacks targeting security forces and crowded areas in central and southern Iraq on Monday left a total of 15 killed and some 48 others injured, while the security forces repelled three attacks by Islamic State (IS) militants, including suicide bombings, in the western province of Anbar, security sources said.

The deadliest suicide car bombs occurred in the southern province of Dhi Qar, when a suicide bomber blew up his explosive vest at the restaurant on a main road south of the provincial capital city of Nassriyah, some 375 km south of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, leaving five people killed and 22 others wounded, a provincial police source told Xinhua on condition of anonymity.

The attacker apparently targeted members of a Shiite paramilitary unit, known as Hashd Shaabi, or Popular Mobilization, who were having breakfast at the time, the source said.

Many civilians were also among the killed and wounded, the source added.

Another attack took place in the oil-hub city of Basra, some 550 km south of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, when a suicide bomber detonated his explosive packed car at a busy intersection in al-Khaura district in downtown the city, killing four people and wounding six others, a local police source told Xinhua.

At least six nearby cars were set ablaze by the powerful blast, the source said.

In Baghdad, a suicide bomber detonated his explosive vest, during the morning rush hour, at a crowded checkpoint near a hospital in Sab'a Abkar district

in the northern part of the capital, leaving three people killed and 12 others wounded, a police source said. (Xinhua)

Abbas to Meet French President in Paris on April 17: Official

RAMALLAH - Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas will meet on April 17 in Paris with French President François Hollande to discuss France initiative for peace in the Middle East, an official announced on Monday.

Reyad el-Malki, Palestinian Minister of foreign affairs told "Voice of Palestine" Radio that President Abbas will arrive in Paris on April 15, adding that Abbas is scheduled to stay for two days and will meet with Hollande.

Asked about French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault's visit to the West Bank, which was scheduled for early April, el-Malki said "the visit was called off due to the intensive French consultations over France's peace initiative."

Former Foreign Minister of France Laurent Fabius has in January announced that his country will speed up moving its initiative for holding an international peace conference to succeed the principle of the two states solution.

The Palestinians welcome the French initiative, while Israel refrained from welcoming it and said that it will encourage the Palestinians to foil the peace negotiations.

Direct talks between Israel and the Palestinians stopped in April 2014 after it went on for nine months and were sponsored by the United States. The talks achieved no significant progress due to deep difference between the two sides. (Xinhua)

Philippine-U.S. Joint Military Drills Kick Off in Manila

MANILA - The annual Balikatan (Shoulder-to-Shoulder) joint military exercises between the Philippines and the United States opened in Philippine capital on Monday.

Some 9,000 Filipino and U.S. forces, as well as about 80 from Australian Defense Force personnel, are participating in the almost two-week long drills from April 4 to April 15 in the islands of Luzon, Palawan and Panay.

Vice Admiral Alexander Lopez, exercise director for the Philippine side of the Balikatan 2016, said during a news conference at Philippine military headquarters that the exercises would capacitate the country's armed forces to "deal with a whole lot of exigencies."

U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter will visit the Philippines next week to personally observe the drills.

For the first time, a High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS), a long-range multiple rocket system, will be part of the exercises.

Balikatan is a regularly conducted exercise that focuses on scenario-based combined action planning on territorial defense, disaster relief, civic assistance and tactical-level field training. (Xinhua)

Cambodian Parliament Passes Controversial Draft Union Law Despite Protests

PHNOM PENH - The National Assembly of Cambodia on Monday adopted a controversial draft trade union law despite protests from opposition lawmakers and unionists. Sixty-seven lawmakers from the ruling Cambodian People's Party (CPP) approved the bill, as 31 lawmakers from the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) voted against it. To pass the legislation, the National Assembly required a 50 percent plus one majority vote, or 62 votes only.

Labor Minister Ith Samheng said the bill would govern about 3,366 trade unions operating in the kingdom, particularly in some 1,087 garment and footwear factories with 700,000 workers. (Xinhua)