

(1) Afghanistan

has intensified across Afghanistan and reports say Afghan security forces have occupied schools in Helmand province to use them as bases against the resurgent Taliban.

The majority of the 257 incidents documented in 2015 were comprised of threats and intimidation, including death threats, assaults of health and education personnel, forced closures of schools, letters prohibiting school attendance - particularly against girls - extortion and other harmful acts, the report noted.

It also documented incidents of improvised explosive devices detonated near schools and clinics, killing and wounding health care and education personnel.

(2) Foreign Nations

called on Afghan security forces to have no mercy on militants in any part of Afghanistan because defending the country is their main duty.

"You [security forces] are in a legal defense state. The war has been imposed on us; therefore, it is obligatory on you to defend your country," he added.

Some MPs meanwhile said strategic parts of Kunduz will fall to insurgents if government did not pay the required attention to the province.

"The situation is very bad in Kunduz and Baghlan [provinces]. We are in contact with them [local officials] every day. There are lots of forces but the management is very weak," said MP Sayed Mohammad Hassan Sharifi Balkhahi. (Tolonews)

(3) HIA Demands

party has also demanded the removal of the other leaders name from the blacklist, including Abdullah Nowbahar and Abdul Saboor.

The two leaders were added to the list of Specially Designated Global Terrorists by the United States of America earlier in the month of March.

According to US State Department, the designations blocks all property subject to U.S. jurisdiction in which Abdullah Nowbahar and Abdul Saboor have any interest and prohibits U.S. persons from engaging in any transactions with Nowbahar and Saboor.

The State Department said both Abdullah Nowbahar and Abdul Saboor

are explosive experts for Hezb-e-Islami Gulbuddin (HIG) and participated in the September 18, 2012 attack on a bus carrying foreign employees of Kabul International Airport that killed 12 people. (KP)

(4) Clerics Urged

remote districts if local residents extended them support.

The deputy governor said the Afghan forces were real defenders of the soil and the people of Afghanistan and they should be voiced support in every home, hujra and mosque.

Shamsi urged religious scholars to counter fitwas imported to Afghanistan from outside. He also called on the insurgents to renounce violence and work for peace and stability in their country.

Kandahar provincial council chief Syed Jan Khakrezwal said security in Kandahar had improved as a result of people's sacrifices and people were able to travel to far off areas.

He said hundreds of influential and prominent figures were lost to targeted killings in the past years, a situation that forced people to send their sons to join security forces and face the enemy.

He praised security forces, but said the forces should be careful during their operations in order innocent people were not harmed.

Religious scholar Maulvi Faizul Haq focused his speech on peace, saying it was the duty of religious scholars to pave the way for peace talks between the warring parties.

He mentioned many countries where people belonged to different religions but they lived in peace unlike Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(5) Strategy Devised

security situation, administrative corruption and political instability as main hurdles to the development of trade, industry and movement of goods and services in the country.

Pajhwok learnt these problems have resulted in a sharp decline of trade activities, with tax evasion contributing to the phenomenon. Exact figures and the volume of Afghanistan's exports are yet to be known.

Afghanistan continues to depend on imports despite a decade of massive US aid money inflow into the country, which could not be spent on basic infrastructural development projects and a large amount of the billions of dollars foreign aid ate up by administrative corruption.

At today's lower house session, some lawmakers accused the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of making some recruitments without

following the legal process, but Raza said not only he but his two deputy ministers made recruitments in case of urgent need on merit. (Pajhwok)

(6) End Violence

official speaking on the condition of anonymity further added that the warning by Pakistani authorities have been issued amid concerns that the spring offensive by the group could derail the peace initiative the Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG) had launched in December last year.

Calling the announcement of spring offensive by Taliban as disappointing, the official said the Taliban leadership has been given a clear message through 'intermediaries' that they would have to pay a 'heavy price' if they refused to go back to the negotiating table.

The announcement by Pakistani authorities to warn the Taliban group comes as the Afghan officials have long been criticizing Pakistan for remaining reckless to act against the safe havens of the militant groups operating in the country. (KP)

(7) Conflict Deaths

previous year's 363 attacks, resulting in reduced casualties among security forces and civilians.

"Taliban are unable to fight against Afghan security forces so they only rely on propaganda," he said, adding 13 Taliban fighters had been killed, eight others detained and several more injured during the past one month in the province.

Up to 850 acres of land had been reclaimed from its illegal occupants during the year, the governor said.

Meanwhile, provincial council secretary Huma Ahmadi called on militants to shun violence and join the peace process. (Pajhwok)

(8) School Buildings

brother is a student of an institute but he is studying in an old building of a textile factory. Classroom of the institute leak in rains," said a resident of Kohistan district, Ziaur Rahman Shakiri.

Construction work on the building of the institute had been launched two years ago, but the project was yet to be completed, confirmed a student of the institute in Mahmud Raqi, Fida Mohammad.

The Ala Sai district chief, Ghulam Naqshbandi Safi, said they faced two main problems in the sphere of education - a shortage of professional teachers and lack of buildings for schools.

"The students of some schools have to study under leaking roof and while others have no accommoda-

tion facility in their schools," he said. There are two girls' schools in the district, but female students were taught in mosques due to the absence of proper buildings, the district chief admitted.

(9) Insecurity Hampers

of hajj and religious affairs, urged families to ensure their children received polio drop. He said: "Ulema and local elders should make sure every child receives the drops.

Police spokesman Hazrat Husain Mashraqiwal said there was no hurdle to the polio vaccination drive. Security forces have cleared Achin and Kot district, with an operation ongoing in Khogyani and Ghanikhel districts. (Pajhwok)

(10) Govt. Blasted

meanwhile said that Ariana Afghan Airlines quoted \$980 USD per person for this year's Hajj.

Deputy Minister of Hajj and Religious Affairs, Dae-ul-Haq Abid, said: "Ariana [Afghan Airlines] has several years' experience in transferring pilgrims, and besides that, it has offered a lower price compared to other companies."

According to him, the decision was taken by the procurement commission in the ministry.

However, there are some concerns that Ariana Afghan Airlines would not be able to carry out the process successfully.

Talking about these concerns, head of the airline company, Abdul Ali Frogh, said: "There is no doubt about the capability and capacity of Ariana Airlines. We have 61 years of experience. If we are not able to do this who will be capable of shouldering this responsibility."

According to reports, at least 24,000 pilgrims from Afghanistan attended Hajj last year. (Tolonews)

(11) Daikundi

agement Authority has pledged three million afghanis in assistance. The governor said the assistance promised would not be sufficient even for making up for five percent of the damage. The victims needed clothes, food items and reopening of roads to prevent a possible disaster, she explained.

Muradi said 367 schools were functional in Daikundi but 287 had no buildings and 80 of them had partial

structures. She said most of pupils studied in the open and during rains and floods they could not come to schools. (Pajhwok)

(12) Local Residents

of Qala-e-Zal district, and have sustained major casualties in ongoing fighting.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) in a statement early Monday said that Haqyar, a key Taliban commander and seven other insurgents were killed in clashes with security forces in Qala-e-Zal.

In addition, four other insurgents were injured in the attack. The statement said that the clash took place after insurgents attacked police outposts, adding that "the bodies of insurgents and their weapons remained on the ground."

The statement did not provide details about casualties among security.

Qala-e-Zal is about 50km from Kunduz city. This latest bout of fighting comes on the heels of ongoing clashes in Dasht-e-Arch, Khan Abad, Ali Abad, Imam Sahib and other parts of the province.

Heavy fighting in six districts out seven in the province has been ongoing for about five days. (Tolonews)

(13) Poppy Nearing

plant had reached maturity in the district. He said there had been speculations last year that the government would take no action against poppy growers.

"That's why people amid fears in their hearts started growing the poppy plant in their fields. We would everyday listen to news if the government plans to take action, but finally people realized the government is silent."

Attullah said he had grown poppy plant on his five acres of land and some had produced flowers and others reached maturity. (Pajhwok)

(14) Greek PM, EU

discussions with the private sector in order to find the suitable financing tools and with the Greek banks to finance particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), he said.

However, such discussions can continue under one condition, Katainen noted. "The conclusion of the Greek program review is the only way forward," he stressed.

Representatives of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and European creditors returned to the Greek capital to resume talks with the Greek government after a one-week

break for the spring meetings of the IMF and the World Bank in Washington. (Xinhua)

(15) No Secret

a political solution to the Syrian conflict.

'Plan B' for Syria Lavrov further stressed that a number of countries in the Middle East, including Turkey, have been supporting the so-called Plan B for Syria. (Press TV)

(16) 4 People Killed

district was also hit by a shell on Monday which originated from a region controlled by the Syrian army, Dogan News reported.

No casualties were reported however, and the Turkish Army responded with artillery fire.

The tension has been high in the region lately, as rockets fired from Syria have been hitting the Turkish province of Kilis for three consecutive days.

A total of 12 people were wounded on April 11, and two people were killed and six were wounded on April 12. (Xinhua)

(17) Thousands of

to 40 new opportunities every day for British businesses.

A UKTI spokesman said Monday: "Opportunities have come from 109 countries and 44 different sectors." (Xinhua)

(18) EU Agri-Food

accompanied by a business delegation of European agri-food executives. Opening up new markets and promoting consumption of EU dairy products and pig meat is one of his priorities. This report, issued by the European Commission, focuses on EU trade with China, which is the second most important destination and the fourth most important origin for EU agri-food imports. (Xinhua)

(19) Spain Moves

According to the Spanish Constitution, if no government is formed by May 2, Congress will be dissolved and new elections called on June 26.

Next week, Spanish King Felipe VI will hold a third round of talks with party leaders in an attempt to try and break the deadlock. (Xinhua)

(20) EU Releases

the transport of emergency assets to the affected areas. Moreover, advanced satellite imagery generated through EU's Copernicus system is being provided to Ecuador to facilitate the assessment of damage in the areas around the epicenter and beyond. (Xinhua)

Outlook Horoscope

Aries (Mar. 22-Apr.20)



Although you can make everything look easy, you're likely having a tough time expressing your needs today. It's doubly difficult if you can't even acknowledge what you want to yourself. In fact, your emotional denial could quickly transform easygoing relationship dynamics into a tangle of complications.

Taurus (Apr.21-May 20)



Your unrelenting determination is usually a strength, but your obstinate resistance to the truth could escalate a trivial misunderstanding into a major conflict. Although your ruling planet Venus raises concerns today as she crosses paths with uncompromising Pluto, ultimately the choice is still yours. You can avoid an unpleasant situation by demonstrating your willingness.

Gemini (May 21-June 20)



The intensity of your reactions makes you feel uncomfortable today, yet you might not understand the source of your agitation. However, pretending that everything is copacetic won't improve interpersonal dynamics because denial strengthens your emotions instead of dissipating them. Acknowledging your anxiety is a smarter strategy as long as you don't try to control the conversation.

Cancer (June 21-July 20)



Staying true to your feelings is no easy task today, especially if someone tries to persuade you to temper your position. Remaining open to a coworker's point of view is an admirable goal, but not at the risk of suppressing your own desires. Of course, a difference of opinions takes time to resolve, but avoiding conflict now comes with a cost.

Leo (July 21-Aug. 21)



A relationship with a coworker can grow complicated today because it's nearly impossible to maintain objectivity when your emotions are involved. You might believe the awkwardness will pass quickly, but apparently there are no simple solutions to the current predicament. Nevertheless, minimizing your desires won't work; you need to express them even if it temporarily upsets the applecart.

Virgo (Aug. 22-Sep 22)



Making the right choices in an emotionally volatile relationship doesn't come easily today, even if you think you understand your partner's position. As carefully as you listen to each and every word, you still might not be able to grasp the true meaning of what's being said. Unfortunately, logic won't ride to your rescue now; you're better off responding from your heart without wasting time overanalyzing your feelings.

Libra (Sep 23-Oct. 22)



Someone's actions may seem too abrupt today, stirring up old feelings of abandonment. But your current sense of rejection might be more connected to your past than to the present moment. It's possible that others are just as emotionally overwhelmed and frustrated as you because they cannot easily express what's going on in their hearts either.

Scorpio (Oct.23-Nov.22)



Your reaction to changes at work may be darker and more intense than anyone prefers, but it's not your responsibility to make others comfortable by hiding your needs. Vulnerable Venus squares ruthless Pluto today, requiring you to face feelings that are buried in the depths of your subconscious. Express your emotions, but do it kindly and without blame.

Sagittarius (Nov.23-Dec.20)



You might not consciously realize your feelings are coloring your perceptions today. Interactions with others are complicated by powerful emotions that make calm conversation impossible. Unfortunately, it's tougher to separate your personal needs from a situation that demands objectivity now. Diving directly into the complexities moves you closer to the truth and teaches you something meaningful about yourself in the process.

Capricorn (Dec.21-Jan19)



There's no apparent straightforward path to your goals today. Nevertheless, your agenda is set in stone, and you're not interested in changing it to make others feel more secure. But your eagerness to accomplish something special prompts you to overlook what someone else wants now. Although pursuing your ambitions can bring great rewards, don't forget the importance of human connection.

Aquarius (Jan 20-Feb.18)



An unresolved feeling lingers in your heart and it won't go away until you address it. Naturally, the most direct solution is to discuss your concerns with a trustworthy confidant. Although you're ready to spill the beans about a emotional problem, your casual tone might make it sound less important than it really is.

Pisces (Feb.19-Mar.20)



It feels as if you're at the end of your rope now because your words keep slipping away before you can finish expressing what's on your mind. Ironically, you know exactly what you want to say until you open your mouth. But even if you think you're falling short of an adequate explanation today, don't retreat until you give it your best shot.

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-56.

Across

- 1. After-bath powder, 5. Classifies, 10. Lather, 14. Diva's solo, 15. A religion based on sorcery, 16. Again, 17. Scallion, 18. Paltry, 20. Alley, 22. Give forth, 23. Damp, 24. An elongated leather strip, 25. Sociability, 32. Banish, 33. Small songbirds, 34. Dismember, 37. A soft return in tennis, 38. Small finch, 39. 20th-century art movement, 40. Eastern Standard Time, 41. Beauty parlor, 42. In a weak manner, 43. Appendages, 45. Big name in computers, 49. Genus of macaws, 50. Feared, 53. Sniveler, 57. A riotous brawl, 59. Relating to aircraft, 60. Feudal worker, 61. Way to go, 62. French for "Black", 63. Colors, 64. Chose, 65. Leg joint

Down

- 1. Gangly, 2. District, 3. Mortgage, 4. An easy accomplishment, 5. A musical composition, 6. Comply with, 7. Regulation (abbrev.), 8. Story, 9. Leveling wedge, 10. Good person, 11. Anagram of "Urban", 12. Greek letter, 13. Broom, 19. Oxygen and helium, 21. Used to be, 25. Formally surrender, 26. Allies' foe, 27. Pepper, 28. Inhabited, 29. Mistake, 30. French for "Queen", 31. Hotel, 34. Hindu universe, 35. Doing nothing, 36. Not nights, 38. A single-reed woodwind, 39. Data storehouse, 41. Squalid, 42. Lean and sinewy, 44. Singled out, 45. Supplemented, 46. Lacking wit or imagination, 47. Tubular pasta, 48. Paths, 51. River of Spain, 52. Let go, 53. Pigeon's home, 54. Many millennia, 55. French cheese, 56. Bygone era, 58. Not in,

Yesterday's Solution

Grid for yesterday's solution with words: AGUE, HOP, QUAL, LUNA, ARTAS, ESNE, ENDS, GENRE, META, SKITTS, SKIPP, RED, SEAS, SAITS, CARP, HUNCH, ABUNDANT, SERIN, NET, TSARS, ARA, SLEEK, UNOPENED, FOGGING, ATAMEGA, GLEAM, DIBS, ENCHORIAL, RABBI, VOLE, DEFOG, SILT, IDEA, STILE, SLUE, LEWD, YALE, YLEW

Word search grid with words: FALSERELECTAECY, STYLEUANLCLMRS, CURVEMEZNORAH, SAIUVMHAAOOTS, HRQDGLLRSRMHR, ARVIEBHATCHET, MGPSMSTREAMBS, ETIEUHMANGED, WSHSMVEGETABLE, CIMPPAIENTOC, ANSWERCURLYWR, DGMANDATEWDEE, FORGETROUGHRE