

**(1) Pakistan-Funded...**

to the health sector of Afghanistan.

He conveyed Prime Minister Imran Khan's message that Pakistan would continue to take all possible measures for the welfare of the Afghans and that he wished to see a stable, secure, prosperous and sovereign Afghanistan.

Dr. Feroz expressed his deep thanks to the government of Pakistan for the generous gift of Jinnah Hospital.

He also appreciated Pakistan's immense assistance in the health sector, including the under-construction Naeb Aminullah Khan Hospital in Logar.

The 100-bed hospital would cost \$19 million. Pakistan has also implemented in Afghanistan other projects like the Nishtar Kidney Center in Jalalabad.

Pakistan Ambassador Zahid Nasrullah Khan called the Jinnah Hospital a flagship project implemented at a cost of \$1 billion in pursuance of Pakistan's policy objective of broadening people-to-people contacts between the two countries. (DOA & Pajhwok)

**(2) Rabbani, Kyrgyzstan...**

in various disciplines, shine well in educational institutions of this country and have their homeland in mind to be able to serve their people one day," Rabbani remarked.

At the end of the event, Rabbani awarded certificates of appreciation to four of the Afghan students with outstanding academic achievements. (Pajhwok)

**(3) UAE Embassy...**

accomplished by encouraging capacity building and organisation methods involving the local communities in Afghanistan with the production of hand-woven carpets being the catapult for the success of the initiative. (Agencies)

**(4) Afghan Cyclists...**

get more knowledge about the transit route," said Aminullah Azadani, the provincial head of Foreign Affairs Directorate.

The cyclists said they will begin the 4,000-kilometer journey with the hope to pass on Afghans' message to the world.

"We are trying to pass on the Afghan people's message of peace and friendship to the (Lapis Lazuli route) member countries," said Mohammad Siddiq Jami, a cyclist. "To introduce Afghanistan's civilization, history, culture, and cultural values to the member countries of the Lapis Lazuli Corridor," said Abdul Ahad Siddiqi, a cyclist.

Another cyclist, Binyamin Jami, said Afghans are tired of war and that they want to open a new chapter in their lives.

Meanwhile, Head of Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) in Herat, Ali Arghon Chinari, said they welcome the initiative by Afghan cyclists.

"They (the cyclists) are the ambassadors of development, stability and peace. Turkey is interested in partnership and in supporting Afghanistan in all sectors," he said.

This is the first long journey by Afghan cyclists outside the country in which they will travel to Turkey through Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Georgia. (Tolo news)

**(5) Art Exhibition...**

"I really liked these artworks," said Paiman, a visitor.

The creation of the artworks took five months, artists said. (Tolo news)

**(6) Spring Operations...**

said Qariburrahman, member of the peace movement.

Members of the movement said they will travel to villages as part of their campaign for peace.

The Helmand Peace Convoy They got the name when a group of at least a dozen activists staged a protest in Lashkargah City last year in March against an attack that killed around 16 people that

month. About a month later, the activists left Helmand on foot for Kabul.

The activists walked through towns and villages, crossed provinces and met with local residents along the way. For 38 days, they walked and as they progressed, so their numbers grew.

About 700kms later, the group of eight had grown to an estimated 100. They arrived in Kabul on June 18 and handed over demands for a ceasefire and peace to both the Afghan government and the Taliban.

During their stay in Kabul, they held sit-in protests outside diplomatic offices in Kabul. They also met with President Ghani on a Kabul street where they asked him to accelerate the peace efforts.

The activists, whose ages ranged from 17 to 65, came from all walks of life and include students, athletes and farmers among others. It was these and other activists that then extended their walk from Kabul to Balkh.

The activists are now in Nangarhar where they will continue their campaign for peace. Last month, they met with US Special Envoy Zalmay Khalilzad and asked him to expedite the peace efforts. Their main demand is an immediate ceasefire between the warring parties. (Tolo news)

**(7) MAIL Reports 50...**

capacity building activities, training, and research programs in the framework of short-term workshops to resolve the issue. The workshops will be organized locally and internationally.

The ministry also added that standard demonstrative farms would also be created and practical steps would be taken for the execution of research projects to boost Saffron production in the country.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock also expressed concerns regarding a sharp decline in foreign buyers to purchase Afghan Saffron, reduction in Saffron prices, and lack of expertise, emphasizing that the ministry has plans to cope with the mentioned issues during the current year. (KP)

**(8) NATO Envoy Sees...**

government want the level of violence to decrease and that the group should not concentrate on fighting right now.

"Why would you (Taliban) want to have an offensive when the focus should be and is on peace talks?" Kay asked.

Kay said the upcoming presidential elections is crucial for the future of the country and that both elections and peace should be led forward together.

This comes as the scheduled intra-Afghan meeting in Doha was canceled due to issues around the list of the 250-member delegation prepared by the Afghan government and politicians. (Tolo news)

**(9) Taliban Blames...**

d added, Afghan government official began mysterious meetings at Presidential Palace and started talking about redlines, raised new conditions and claimed they were going to head the meeting.

"They prepared a list which was not suitable and adjustable with the status of the conference and the most interesting point was that the list was published before being shared with the organizers of the conference to seek their consent," he said.

The Taliban spokesman said they showed maximum flexibility and their negotiating team worked day and night with patience.

He, however, said hidden forces and the Kabul administration sabotaged the Doha meeting and they should be held responsible.

The statement, however, did not clarify who the hidden forces are. (Pajhwok)

**(10) Kabul Attack...**

and gunfire could no longer be heard. However, there was no confirmation that the attack was over.

The explosion, which security officials said appeared to have been caused by a suicide bomber, was also close to the heavily fortified Serena Hotel, one of the very few Kabul hotels still used by foreign visitors.

Health ministry spokesman Wahid Mayar said six wounded had been brought to Kabul hospitals and one security official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media, said at least three people had been killed.

But there was no final word on casualties and no claim of responsibility for the operation, which marked a return to the kind of complex urban attack that have been familiar features of the Afghan conflict over recent years.

The Taliban issued a statement denying they were behind the attack, the latest in a series of militant attacks that have killed hundreds of people in Kabul over recent years. Many such operations have been claimed by the local affiliate of the radical Islamic State group.

Prior to Saturday's attack, Kabul had been relatively calm as U.S. officials have held a series of meetings with representatives from the Taliban to try to agree the basis for a peace settlement and an end to more than 17 years of war.

While heavy fighting has carried on across Afghanistan and Taliban militants have announced their now customary spring offensive, it had been months since the last major attack on civilian targets in the capital.

The attack, just days after a planned meeting between Taliban officials and Afghan politicians and civil society representatives in Qatar was canceled, underlined the hurdles facing efforts to reach a peace settlement.

Officials have said they hope to hold a meeting soon but no date has been set. (Pajhwok)

**(11) Court Moved...**

He asked who had allowed the Afghan refugees to conduct businesses in Pakistan without any legal permits, damaging the host country's economy and forcing the locals to live in poverty.

"Lives, security and property of our children women and others are always felt at stake and they don't feel protected," the petitioner prayed.

He requested the court to instruct the respondents to regulate the movement of Afghan refugees in Pakistan. (Pajhwok)

**(12) BRI Provides World...**

development and shared benefits, only by this principle can relevant parties reach a consensus and jointly develop any major project and benefit from it accordingly," he said, adding that the principle is very practical.

Surasit also described the BRI as a fruit of Eastern Civilization, which emphasizes "virtue" and conveys China's experience of dealing with poverty, social disparity and education to the other countries.

For Thailand's case, Surasit said the BRI is supportive and compatible to the Sufficiency Economy initiated by the late His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej and 20-year National Strategy.

The BRI looks to promote new aspects of development in transport, economic, trade and investment areas for participating countries. Since Thailand has implemented the Sufficiency Economy, the Belt and Road Initiative has come along in support of it over the last five years, Gen. Surasit told Xinhua.

He added that BRI has also offered to support and share development projects toward regional connectivity and people-to-people connectivity which will be compatible with Thailand's 20-year National Strategy put forward by current Thai government. (Xinhua)

**(13) Key Events in...**

passed by Islamists amid protests and walkouts by other groups.

June 30, 2013: On Morsi's anniversary in office, millions of Egyptians begin days of demonstrations demanding his resignation. The military gives him 48 hours to reach an agreement with his opponents, but he vows to remain in office.

July 3, 2013: El-Sissi announces Morsi's removal.

Aug. 14, 2013: More than 600 people, mostly Morsi supporters, are killed when police clear two pro-Morsi sit-ins in Cairo. Islamists retaliate by torching government buildings, churches and police stations. Hundreds more die in subsequent violence.

Dec. 25, 2013: The government designates the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist organization.

May 26-28, 2014: Egyptians vote in a presidential election. El-Sissi wins with 96.9 percent of the vote.

May 16, 2015: Morsi and more than 100 others are sentenced to death over a mass prison break during the 2011 uprising.

October 2015: Egypt holds parliamentary elections, leading to an assembly packed with el-Sissi supporters. (Fox News)

**(14) 3 Candidates Vie...**

minister without portfolio in 1992-1994 in the first government after independence and participated in writing the country's first constitution.

Stevio Pendarovski, 56 – A former national security adviser for two previous presidents and until recently national coordinator for NATO, this is Pendarovski's second bid for the presidency after being defeated by outgoing President Gorge Ivanov in 2014.

Pendarovski is running as the joint candidate for both the governing social democrats and the junior governing coalition partner, the ethnic Albanian Democratic Union for Integration party. His candidacy is also supported by 29 smaller political parties.

He is a strong defender of the name deal with Greece, arguing that it paved the way for the country to nearly finalize its NATO accession and led to hopes EU membership talks will begin in June.

His slogan "Forward Together" reflects his main campaign platform of unity, and he has made NATO and EU membership a key strategic goal, saying they will bring more foreign investment, will create jobs and higher wages and prevent young people leaving the country.

Blerim Reka, 58 – A soft-spoken international law professor who headed the country's diplomatic mission to the EU from 2006-2010, the ethnic Albanian candidate was nominated by two small ethnic Albanian opposition parties, BESA and the Alliance of Albanians.

Reka chose "Reka for the Republic" as his campaign slogan, saying the concept of a "republic for all" is the most suitable for a multiethnic state. He has campaigned mainly in the larger ethnic Albanian communities. He advocates Northern Macedonia strengthen its multiethnic and multicultural characteristics, but insists the country must reform its "corrupt" administration and establish rule of law and an independent judiciary.

Reka also supports the name deal with Greece, saying the agreement ended a long-standing dispute and opened the doors for the country to join NATO and the EU.

No ethnic Albanian presidential candidate has ever made it to the second round of elections in the past. But the ethnic minority's votes, which make up about a quarter of the country's 2.1 million people, have proved crucial to the election of the president in the run-offs. (Fox News)

**(15) South Asia Has...**

by the region, job creation for the youth of South Asia – our region's biggest asset – and alleviation of poverty, he added.

"The SAARC CCI has taken initiatives to reinforce a common South Asian identity given by the re-

gion's close historical, cultural and geographical ties and the mutual aspiration and desire of all member states to promote the social and economic welfare of people.

The SAARC Chamber has been proactively advocating stronger commercial and economic relations for a prosperous and integrated South Asia.

Since its inception, SAARC CCI has played an integral role in providing an institutional framework for promoting economic and regional cooperation in South Asia, he added.

Ruwan Edirisinghe remarked that initiatives may be taken to utilize the potential of cooperation in the areas of tourism and energy of the region.

He said with a view to ensuring trade facilitation in the region the problems regarding SAARC visa sticker, removal of trade barriers including NTMs, acceptance of standard certificate, limitations of infrastructure in the land ports, etc. should be addressed.

Iftikhar Ali Malik, on this occasion appreciated the efforts of SAARC CCI President Ruwan Edirisinghe and termed his role imperative for restoration of peace and prosperity in the region. (Monitoring Desk)

**(16) Japan Asks Pentagon...**

land might interfere with American military power projection and has approached the request with caution.

"Any future commitments of specific US military support to the Olympics and Paralympics will be balanced against operational readiness concerns and Alliance obligations," USFJ spokesman Air Force Col. John Hutcheson told Stars and Stripes on Friday, adding that the US are waiting for detailed Japanese proposals.

Japan has other issues with the American military presence apart from being required to ask them for permission to use an airstrip. A controversial proposal to locate a US military base on Okinawa was overwhelmingly rejected by locals, but the government confirmed yesterday that it is still moving ahead with the plan. (RT)

**(17) Russian Embassy...**

The embassy said it hopes that the "end of the Mueller saga would contribute to further dispelling the smoke and mirrors on this topic." Now, it is time for the US and Russia to heal ties and "join efforts to repair the damage to bilateral relations."

The Mueller report generally obliterated the Russiagate conspiracy theory, but it still claims that Russian "interference" in the election did happen, and that Russian military intelligence was complicit in "hacking" the DNC, as well as the private email account of Hillary Clinton's campaign chair, John Podesta. (RT)

**(18) Populists Expected...**

The Europe of Nations and Freedom group, which combines right-wing and far-right parties like Italy's Liga, Britain's UKIP and France's National Rally would win 62 seats, compared to 37 currently. New parties like former UKIP figurehead Nigel Farage's Brexit Party, which are listed as "other," are expected to expand from 21 seats to 62.

The data is collected from national surveys and assumes that Britain will participate. (AP)

**(19) North Korea Slams...**

Korean vice minister also warned that there would be no good if the United States continued "to throw away such remarks devoid of discretion and reason".

North Korea said on Thursday it no longer wanted to deal with U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and that he should be replaced in talks by someone more mature, hours after it announced its first weapons test since nuclear talks broke down. (Reuters)