

(1) 85% of Afghan...

Deputy Minister of Public Health said.

Also at the meeting was Deputy Minister of Hajj and Religious Affairs Abdul Hakim Munib who said: "We have published a few books on women's rights and their role in the family."

Although a number of government and non-government departments said they have recorded achievements in terms of addressing the problem of harassment, officials from AIHRC and parliament's human rights and women's affairs commission said these efforts are not enough. According to them, the departments working to end harassment against women and children have failed to end the problem and that the anti-harassment law needs to be implemented fully.

The law was approved by parliament in 2017 and was signed off by President Ashraf Ghani in April 2018.

The law has three chapters and 29 articles and aims to end harassment against women and children in the country.

Under the law, jail terms and cash fines will be imposed on anyone found guilty of breaking this law. Human rights activists said they hope government will implement the law.

"Almost all families are affected by harassment. We hope that a mechanism is established," said Fawzia Kofi. (Tolo news)

(2) MPs Oppose...

to its old place, it might spark protests.

He said: "Moving the Afghan movie archive to the presidential palace means there is no safe place in Afghanistan. I urge the government to reconsider the issue."

He said if the Afghan movie archive building had been given to the British Embassy then the government should provide details in this regard. (Pajhwok)

(3) ACCI Reports I...

are making efforts to increase the agriculture products and this year has been good for us that is why we have been expected to increase our products," said Akbar Rustami, Spokesman of the Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL).

This comes as statistics from ACCI shows that Afghanistan's export volume is currently about \$800 million including \$780 million from agriculture products. The figure indicates an increase of 85 percent in exports of the products. (ATN)

(4) U.S., Afghan...

years ago. Since then, the movement has gained a reputation for brutality extreme even by the standards of the Afghan conflict, making a trademark of executions by beheading or explosion. The fighters in DehBala, next to Achin district where the U.S. military dropped its largest non-nuclear bomb last year, were funding themselves by illegal logging and talc mining, as well as exploiting local villagers.

However a clear link between fighters in places like Gargari, a mudbrick village down the road from DehBala's district capital, and the militants behind a series of sophisticated suicide attacks in Kabul or Jalalabad is elusive.

"The network is very fungible..." said Brigadier General John Brennan, Resolute Support commander in eastern Afghanistan.

"I wouldn't say the actual suicide bombers came from DehBala, but facilitation runs all along the border and part of it used to come through here." (Reuters)

(5) 5 Injured as...

building causing no casualties, he added.

Taliban claimed responsibility for mortar shelling. Zabihullah Mujahid, the group's spokesman,

said the Taliban targeted the joint meeting of Afghan and US forces in governor house.

He claimed the participants of the meeting suffered casualties during the attack. (Pajhwok)

(6) 2-Day NATO...

of President Trump's strategy for South Asia. Afghan and Americans officials would assess the enforcement of Trump's policy, he added.

Intizar Khadem, an international affairs expert, called the forthcoming meeting vital for Afghanistan. He believed it would not be just another summit.

He said peace -- not war -- would be the main topic for NATO allies. Decisions would be made about financial support for Afghan forces, he hoped.

"One critical issue is that the international community should put pressure on the US to push Taliban to the negotiating table and thereby improve prospects for ending the conflict," he said.

According to Khadem, restoration of peace -- vital for Afghanistan -- will top the summit agenda. An strategy should be devised to convince Pakistan into backing the Afghan peace parleys, he suggested.

Mushtaq Rahim, another commentator, also opined the event would be important because the Afghan government had already stepped up efforts for making peace with the Taliban.

He said seeking support from NATO allies in the current situation would be decisive for Afghanistan.

Political observer JavedGhafoor made similar remarks, saying the peace process would be accelerated with the support of NATO allies.

He said Saudi Arabia would also host an ulema conference and the two events will pressurise Pakistan and Taliban on the issue of peace parleys. (Pajhwok)

(7) Delays Hamper...

delay was a lack of capacity on the part of local companies and a lack of interest by foreign companies. He did not however give details, or even the name of the Indian company that has the contract.

"The design work on the project started last (solar) year. The design process is about to be completed. The other part is procurement which has started. We are waiting for the completion of the procurement process so that we can start the practical work," Sultani said.

He said once the procurement process is complete they will be able to move on to the next phase which will include the construction phase of bus stations and roads.

Sultani also said that no decision has been made regarding the purchase of busses or how many busses will be needed.

Although he said the municipality hopes to roll out the bus service by the end of the solar year, members of the public were skeptical and said they could see this happening in just a few months.

"The work is too slow. We have no idea where the metrobus system will be built," said Zabihullah, a resident of Kabul.

"The project will not be completed at the slow pace that it is going right now," said Mohammad Aziz, a resident of Kabul.

The metrobus service is expected to cover 111kms in total -- once fully implemented and will cost an estimated \$250 million.

The Kabul municipality unveiled the new development in June last year and said then that the first phase would be complete within a year and a half.

Kabul's acting mayor Abdullah Habibzai said at the time the metro bus service or Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is used in different countries around the world and will be rolled out in Kabul in or-

der to help curb growing traffic problems in the congested city. Habibzai added that the first phase of the project will cover an eight kilometer route between DehAfghanan area and Sara-e-Shamali.

According to him, the second phase of the project will start from Baraki and will cover Kote-Sangi and DehMazang to connect with DehAfghanan area.

The Kabul mayor also added that once fully rolled out Dar-ul-Aman, Karte-e-Naw, and Dasht-e-Barchi in the west will also have the bus service. (Tolo news)

(8) Peace Activists...

People's Peace Movement, previously known as Helmand Peace Convoy, are waiting for warring parties to respond to their demands lodged 20 days ago.

The group has sent letters to the UN secretary general's office and to the American people. This letter was sent while they staged a sit-in protest outside the US embassy in Kabul this week.

"Peace is a key goal for us. We will definitely achieve this goal," said AminullahWardak, a member of People's Peace Movement. Their next destination for a sit-in protest is the Pakistani embassy, Khyber said. (Tolo news)

(9) Afghan Forces...

known as the Helmand Peace Convoy, reiterated their calls to the warring sides to establish a ceasefire agreement and end the war.

"We had a life during the three-day truce over Eid. We cannot achieve anything from the war, therefore we call on the warring sides to seal a ceasefire accord," said peace activist Mohammad Amin.

But, the Afghan government says that extending the ceasefire unilaterally is not the answer.

"A unilateral ceasefire is not possible, because we are accountable to the faithful people of Afghanistan and the Constitution of the country," said Interior Minister Wais Ahmad Barmak.

In addition, the US envoy to Afghanistan John Bass has welcomed the Afghan forces' operations against the Taliban.

"We certainly support the Afghan government's efforts to reduce violence around the country, but at the same time, we continue to strongly support the Afghan security forces in defending themselves and in conducting operations against the Taliban in areas where the Taliban is continuing to fight," said Bass.

According to Afghan military officials, the operations are also aimed at boosting security ahead of the scheduled parliamentary and district council elections.

In the latest development, Afghan security forces launched an offensive operation in Chamtal district of northern Balkh province. So far at least 16 Taliban fighters have been killed.

The operation, "Walid 9", has so far been effective and five villages have been cleared of insurgents, provincial police chief Gen. Mohammad Akram Sami said on Sunday.

"Sixteen Taliban members were killed in the operation and the bodies of eight of them remain on the ground," Sami said, adding that "Shorabak, Arab-Mazari, Jar Qala, AyenQala and Alizaye are the villages that have been cleared of insurgents."

The officials said that the operation was launched when the Taliban closed in on the Chamtal district center.

Sami said the Taliban fighters involved in the assault had come in from Sar-e-Pul, Jawzjan and Balkh province and had planned to take control of the district center.

Afzal Hadid, head of Balkh Provincial Council, told TOLONews on Friday that the Taliban had gained on the district center and

were planning to seize control of the area.

Chamtal is located in the west of Balkh and is among the most vulnerable districts in the province in terms of security.

Kunar, Nangarhar, Farah, Helmand, Kunduz, Faryab, Uruzgan and Ghazni are among the provinces where security forces are currently trying to tackle insurgents. Security forces are also conducting operations in the eastern and western regions of the country. (Tolo news)

(10) Croatia Defender...

the Russian nation," he told Russian outlet Championat. "Football is outside politics. I didn't mean anything bad." Later, in an official news release issued by the Croatian soccer federation, Vida said: "It was definitely no political message, but a simple thank you for all the support from Ukraine, where Vukojevic and I spent a number of years. Our intention was not to offend anyone." (Agencies)

(11) Taliban Suffers...

Chahar Bolak districts and also to other areas where the enemies are active," Yaftali said, adding that "we will follow the insurgents."

A number of people have however been displaced from the area after the operation was launched. These displaced people welcomed the operation but said "more security check posts must be established in the district, otherwise the Taliban will return."

"In the past three nights, there was more insecurity in Chamtal and my family had to flee from Dasht-e-Awliya area," a resident of Chamtal Ali Mohammad said. Abdul Jabar, another Chamtal resident, said: "I hope that peace comes to our district and we can live in peace. That schools reopen and streets are rebuilt."

A senior official in Balkh said on Friday four villages in Chamtal district had fallen to the Taliban following heavy clashes on Thursday evening.

Afzal Hadid, head of Balkh Provincial Council, told TOLONews on Friday that the Taliban had gained on the district center and were planning to seize control of the area.

Chamtal is located in the west of Balkh and is among the most vulnerable districts in the province in terms of insecurity. (Tolo news)

South Korea Denies Halt in Iran Oil Imports

TEHRAN - South Korea on Sunday rejected reports that it had stopped importing oil and condensate from Iran.

Iran's media quoted an announcement by South Korea's Embassy in Tehran as saying that imports from the Islamic Republic still continued.

On Friday, Reuters reported that Seoul was no longer lifting Iran's oil and condensate as it was trying to obtain an exemption from US curbs on buying Iranian oil.

Reuters in a report quoted familiar sources as saying that South Korea would not lift any Iranian crude and condensate in July for the first time over the past six years.

The move came as Seoul started negotiations with Washington to seek authorizations over buying Iranian oil, in line with a waiver it received during previous sanctions, the report added. "There was pressure from the South Korean government to halt purchases," Reuters quoted an unnamed source familiar with Iranian shipping arrangements as saying. "South Korea overall is lifting zero oil (from Iran) for July loading."

Two other sources said South Korea cancelled July loadings of crude and condensate cargoes from Iran as it was uncertain whether the country would receive an exemption from US sanctions on Iran trade.

"The embassy of the Republic of Korea denies any claims that it would not lift any Iranian crude and condensate in July," the South Korean Embassy responded to the report.

"The Korean government is negotiating with the United States to get exemptions from the restrictions on Iranian oil purchases," it said.

South Korea has bought nearly 296,000 barrels of oil from Iran in the first five months of the Iranian calendar year (starting on March 21), and is the biggest buyer of Iranian oil after China and India, according to media reports. (Press TV)

Iran Slams 'Psychological War' To Disrupt Ties with Europe

TEHRAN - Iran has hit out at a "psychological war" targeting its ties with Europe after reports that Iranian assets in Germany had been frozen ahead of a US deadline to reimpose sanctions on the Islamic Republic.

The freeze report came as ministers from Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia met their Iranian counterpart in Vienna Friday to provide Tehran with an economic package to compensate for US sanctions that began taking effect in August.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi said Saturday the German delegation, along with other delegates, examined how to find better mechanisms for boosting economic and banking cooperation between the two countries.

"Unfortunately, during the last few days and weeks coincident with the Iran and P4+1 negotiations, a campaign of news fabrication and a psychological warfare has been underway by certain trans-regional countries and spiteful groups in order to disrupt Iran's relations with Europeans, which needs to be confronted through vigilance," he said.

Qassemi dismissed claims that Iran's assets in Germany had been frozen, saying economic relations between the two countries were "normal."

The only news about the freeze of Iranian money in Germany dates back to January when the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) was reported to be suing a subsidiary of German stock-exchange operator Deutsche Borse for holding \$4.9 billion of Iranian assets.

According to the Deutsche Borse at the time, the CBI had filed a complaint against Clearstream at a court in Luxembourg where the post-trade services provider is based.

The assets sought reportedly included about \$1.9 billion which Clearstream has turned over to the US plus interest in addition to damages worth the same amount. Germany's Foreign Minister Heiko Mass, in Vienna Friday for Iran talks, suggested more negotiations would be needed in the future on how to compensate Tehran for companies leaving the Islamic Republic.

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani told German Chancellor Angela Merkel over phone Thursday that Tehran would continue cooperation with Europe if the remaining parties to the 2015 nuclear deal met Tehran's expectations.

Rouhani said the US withdrawal from the deal had caused some problems in economic areas specifically banking transactions as well as investments by foreign companies in Iran's oil sector.

Iran says signatories to the nuclear deal should provide assurances that Iran's oil flow to the market continues.

Iran's traditional trade partners such as China and Turkey have affirmed their determination to maintain economic links despite the looming US sanctions. (Press TV)