

(1) Execution of 700...

where people's security and lives were threatened.

He said death sentences were awarded in cases of mass murder and associated bomb explosions that resulted in the fall of the country's soil into the hands of the enemy.

Deputy foreign minister for economic cooperation AdilaRaz said the Afghan government had many achievements in the area of human rights and that was why Afghanistan wanted to nominate itself for membership of the UN Human Rights Council in its meeting in July next year.

She said human rights, particularly women's rights, had been given a high place in Islam and the Afghan government was committed to protect these rights. She said the Afghan government was committed to implementing human rights enshrined in the country's constitution.

European Union special representative for Afghanistan Franz-Michael SkjoldMellbin said though the human rights situation in Afghanistan was extremely bad, yet it was important the Afghan government should keep its promises in this regard.

"Women's and children rights, executions, torture, lack of access to justice and restrictions on the freedom of speech are areas the Afghan government should make them a priority and work on that." He said the EU was committed to assisting Afghanistan in ensuring human rights. (Pajhwok)

(2) Ghani Slams...

deed had no knowledge of religion. His lack of religious knowledge was disturbingly highlighted by the kidnapping and killing of innocent people, the president argued.

Earlier, the insurgents stopped several vehicles in ArzaqAngorBagh locality and seized 220 passengers. Some of them were killed yesterday while many others were set free. HidayatullahFaqiryar, administrative chief for Aliabad district, had said the insurgents had established a check-point and stopped passenger coaches.

The gunmen seized 40 passengers and released the rest. The bodies of 10people, allegedly killed by the captors, were found in the area on Tuesday. Today, eight more passengers were released but 10 others are still in the group's captivity.

A statement from the Presidential Palace quoted Ghani as saying that Afghan security forces had been authorised to use all resources at their disposal to protect the people and defend the motherland.

Ghani directed the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and transport officials to work together to improve the security of highways across the country. He asked ulema and civil society to raise their voice against the abduction and killing of innocent people. (Pajhwok)

(3) Mamnoon...

Qatar-based Afghan representatives to Islamabad in late April to discuss prospects for peace talks. However, the Afghan government also did not sent its own delegation following the April 19 deadly attack in Kabul.

"Pakistan is of the view that peace and stability in Afghanistan is imperative for peace in the region. This objective can be achieved through reconciliation among the stakeholders and there is no military solution to this problem," Hussain told the parliament.

He also referred to the efforts by the Quadrilateral Coordination Group of Afghanistan - China, Pakistan, the United States and Afghanistan - to facilitate talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban.

"Although some recent incidents in Afghanistan have hindered this process, we are still confident that these efforts will succeed," the Pakistani president said.

Senior diplomats from the QCG group met in Islamabad last month and agreed that "violence serves no purpose and peace negotiations remain the sole option for a political settlement in Afghanistan."

The president also touched upon internal and foreign affairs in his address that marked the beginning of new parliamentary year with a special focus on the multi-billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. He said the current positive indicators will encourage foreign investors and accelerate the country's economic progress, which will be further boosted by the CPEC.

"At this juncture of our history, we need national consensus and solidarity, the significance of which is even greater in the context of CPEC.

There is no weight in the reservations expressed by certain quarters regarding the Corridor," Hussain told the parliament. He said the schedule of the CPEC clearly shows the project is not for the benefit of any particular government, political party or group of politicians but purely a national project.

"It is responsibility of the nation to remove every internal and external obstacle in the way of its implementation," he stressed. (Xinhua)

(4) Azerbaijan ...

attract support to the Afghan National Security and Defense Forces.

The trip by Atmar comes as the Afghan security forces are busy in fight against the terrorist groups amid concerns that the terror groups are attempting to expand foothold beyond the Afghan territory into the Central Asian States.

The Afghan government officials are saying the Afghan forces facing the domestic as well as the international terror groups and call on regional countries to support the Afghan forces in their fight against the global terrorism. (Khaama)

(5) Foreign Insurgents ...

insecure areas. Teams of volunteers should be allowed to vaccinate children against the crippling disease.

In previous rounds of the anti-polio drive, families of foreign militants had scuttled the effort in Juram district. The Taliban have not yet commented on the incident, but the group had said they did not oppose the drive. (Pajhwok)

(6) 8 More Passengers ...

a check-point and stopped passenger coaches.

The gunmen seized 40 passengers and released the rest. The bodies of 10people, allegedly killed by the captors, were found in the area on Tuesday. (Pajhwok)

(7) Due in Islamabad, ...

refugees. "The Afghans will remember their unprecedented support forever," remarked the former president, asking the Pakistani establishment to focus on strengthening relations with the Afghans instead of using pressure tactics.

He urged Pakistan to avoid imposing the strategic-depth theory on Afghanistan, saying it should be replaced with a policy of friendship and good neighbourliness.

Issues between the neighbours could be resolved politically through mutual understanding, he believed. He dispelled the impression the current Afghan government could not take decisions as a sovereign authority. (Pajhwok)

(8) 427 Cases...

time or committed by insurgents and because it was impossible to investigate them, he said, adding the committee had sent 401 cases to the Ministry of Interior and NDS and seven other cases to the Attorney General Office.

Eighteen cases committed by foreign troops should be referred to the Foreign Ministry to discuss them with NATO headquarters, he said. (Pajhwok)

(9) Pakistani ...

Ministry of Foreign Affairs MoosaArefi strongly condemned the act and said the move was against the diplomatic and consulate relations and the international confederation. Arefi conveyed serious concerns to Pakistani chargé d'affaires and said such should not be repeated warning that such moves could harm the relationships between the two nations.

In his turn the Pakistani chargé d'affaires promised to convey the concerns by Afghanistan as well as the official memo to the relevant authorities in Pakistan.

The Afghan consulate in Peshawar city was closed by Afghanistan in protest over the harassment of the Afghan diplomat by Pakistani security forces on Tuesday.

The harassment of the Afghan diplomat in Peshawar city by the Pakistani police and closure of the consulate comes as the relations between Kabul and Islamabad witnessed ups and downs during the recent weeks. Recently tensions intensified between the two countries over the closure of Torkham gate which sparked as the Afghan border forces stopped the Pakistani forces to install barbed wire. (KP)

(10) Kabul Serena...

General Manager in Kabul Serena Hotel. During his tenure Mr.Shahryar Khan proved to be a manager of excellence and was able to reap prestigious awards including the famous World Travel Awards, being one of the best hotels award in 2014

and 2015."

Mr.TimotheusSwagemakers has been appointed as the new General Manager of Kabul Serena Hotel. He has a vast experience of over 30 years in the hotel industry and has worked for several different hotel chains in countries like France, Germany, Canada, Bahrain and England just to name a few.

Mr.Swagemakers joins us directly from Dubai where he worked for the Ramada Hotel chain. Mr.Boolani says, "We are very happy to have Mr.Swagemakers on board. With his experience and leadership qualities, Kabul Serena Hotel shall further excel in service standards and remain the number one destination for National and International guests seeking tranquility and security in the midst of the bustling city of Kabul." (PR)

(11) Etisalat Launches ...

blood and save precious lives.' Said Dr. Salah Zerguerras, CEO of Etisalat Afghanistan.

Etisalat launches this yearly campaign to extend a helping hand towards those sick people who are in need of blood transfusion, invite more blood donors and raise awareness of need of blood donation.

'While we are proud and appreciative of Etisalat employees, we need others to join them in this humanitarian act and help their own people who are in need of blood donation.' said head of Central Blood Bank of Afghanistan, 'We assure all the donors that their donated blood will only be given to deserving patients.' As a part of its social responsibilities, Etisalat Afghanistan has been committed to support Afghanistan in the areas of health, education and other key areas that lead the country toward a better tomorrow. (PR)

(12) Pakistan's ...

cross the border from June 1. We have talked to the central authorities in this regard," he said, confirming the Pakistani restrictions had gone into effect.

Earlier, Pakistani authorities would allow Afghans having refugee cards, patients seeking treatment in Peshawar and women and children to cross the Torkham border.

A resident of Torkham border town, Imranullah, told Pajhwok Afghan News the Pakistani side started preventing Afghans without documents from crossing the border from the early morning.

"Those who do not have passports are not allowed, even patients are not allowed and many people were sent back this side of the border," he said.

He said there had been a great rush in the early morning, but it began reducing at around 11am.

A shopkeeper in the area, JavedShena, told Pajhwok Afghan News the Pakistani forces were not allowing cargo trucks to enter the neighbouring country, but later some were allowed. "Pakistani militia forces say people lacking passports are not allowed to cross the border from and into Pakistan."

Shena said there was no big crowd of people on Wednesday because people knew they would not be allowed to enter Pakistan without passports.

"By raising the issue of passport, Pakistan wants the Afghans to recognize Torkham gate as a port because Pakistan is pressuring its own people not to travel to Afghanistan without passports."

Meanwhile, a member of the Nangarhar provincial council, Dr. Nasir Kamawal, told Pajhwok Afghan News the central government should talk to Islamabad on the issue.

"Most of our patients seek treatment in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and tribes on both sides of the border have blood relations. The issue of passport should not be taken seriously."

He said the restrictions would create problems for many people.

The Nangarhar government had said it had informed the Kabul administration about the issue to resolve it through diplomatic channels.

A few weeks ago, Pakistan closed the border crossing for three days after Afghan security officials reacted to fencing the border.

Later Pakistan reopened the border but announced some restrictions on cross border movements. (Pajhwok)

(13) Kabul Launches...

to enter the country through Torkham border crossing.

Afghanistan National Security Council spokesman TawabGhorzang told Pajhwok Afghan News the Afghan government through diplomatic channels and the Afghan Embassy in Islamabad had started efforts to resolve the is-

sue with Pakistan.

"The Afghanistan government has very seriously started its efforts to resolve the matter," he said.

On his Facebook page, the Afghan ambassador in Islamabad, Dr. Omar Zakihiwal, explained his position on the issue.

"The issue of Afghans must have a visa to cross the Torkham border was announced by the Pakistani Embassy in Kabul some time ago, but I have not been officially consulted on the issue so far."

He said he had been unofficially trying over the past few days to reach the depth of the matter.

He said he was told by Pakistani officials on Tuesday evening that the issue had been discussed by the Afghanistan-Pakistan security coordination commission a few months ago and the Pakistani side had officially conveyed the decision to the Afghan Ministry of Defence.

The ambassador said the Afghan Ministry of Defence had referred the issue to the National Security Council.

Zakihiwal said he had launched efforts to gain more information about the issue and take further steps to resolve it.

(14) 71st Cottage...

women. The minister said the exhibition was aimed at encouraging local industries, creating opportunities and providing a platform to popularise domestically produced goods at national and international levels.

"All of the entrepreneurs are from rural areas and villages and we want them to get familiar with modern financing system so that their capacity can be enhanced," the minister said.

Durrani said women in rural areas were deprived of most of opportunities and their capacity building could leave a positive impact on their products.

According to MRRD officials, the ministry has created direct and indirect work opportunities for 68,000 people through capacity exhibitions and other capacity development programmes. (Pajhwok)

(15) Azizi Banks...

Director of Turkmen People Berleshek Association thanked Azizi Bank for arranging such an event for the merchants.

Mr.Furqani appreciated the initiative of the Bank and assured all possible support from the Turkmen Carpet Association.

The dinner meet at the hotel was graced by the presence of around 150 Carpet Merchants, most of whom were members of Turkmen Carpet Sellers Association and employees of the bank.

Azizi Bank is one of the largest bank in the country with more than 80 branches in 30 provinces. The Bank has planned major initiatives this year to increase its market share and will organize similar events periodically. (PR)

(16) 8 Afghan...

wounded, MoD added. In a separate operation at least 5 militants were killed and 8 others were wounded in Keshk-e-Kohna district of Herat province, MoD said, adding that 3 militants were killed and another militant was injured in Greshk district of Helmand.

The anti-government armed militant groups including the Taliban insurgents have not commented regarding the reports so far. (KP)

(17) 14-Year-Old ...

militant groups including the Taliban and the Haqqani network for the terrorist related activities.

According to reports, Madrasas are described as the main recruitment source as poor families in Pakistan and Afghanistan send their sons to such madrassas for free education and lodging.

In the past, a 17-year-old boy assigned for a suicide mission was arrested by the Afghan intelligence operatives in capital Kabul.

Last month, a 12-year-old child assigned for a suicide mission surrendered himself to the security forces in the eastern Nangarhar province. (ANI)

(18) IFJ Asks ...

media protection group asked the Afghan government to provide an explanation for the incident.

Karyab, a local correspondent of BBC, is also the Afghanistan Independent Journalists Association (AIJA) head for eastern Kunar province. (Pajhwok)

(19) 2 Key Commanders...

Special Forces have been deployed to southern Helmand province amid intensifying clashes between the Taliban insurgents and Afghan

security forces.

The Taliban militants launched coordinated attacks in Nad-e-Ali and Nahr-e-Saraj districts, erupting heavy clashes and at least 11 policemen lost their lives during the gun battle. (KP)

(20) About 20...

of Ethiopia, Puntland, Somaliland and a number of countries in southern Africa, the food security situation in these areas is not expected to significantly improve, due to the scale and intensity of the El Nino-induced drought that has already depleted coping mechanisms," it said. According to the UN, the rains have exacerbated the risk of communicable diseases in the region.

"As of May 25, several countries in the region had reported over 47,000 suspected cases of cholera and more than 970 cholera-related deaths; 1,935 confirmed and 1,400 suspected cases of measles; and more than 2,480 cases of yellow fever and over 300 yellow-fever related deaths," it said. (Xinhua)

(21) S. African...

the most recent incident on May 17, EFF MPs did not allow President Jacob Zuma to answer questions in Parliament. They damaged property and scuffled with MPs of the ruling African National Congress. The EFF MPs were forcibly removed from Parliament before the session resumed.

With the conclusion last week of the second parliamentary term for 2016, the cabinet has undertaken a review of the current environment in Parliament and its impact on government's program of transformation.

Ramaphosa said the Executive continues to take seriously its responsibility to account to Parliament, with ministers and officials regularly engaging with Parliamentary committees and participating actively in plenary debates. (Xinhua)

(22) Turkey Should...

said.

Putin said last week during a visit to Greece that Moscow was ready to restore relations with Turkey but expected some "concrete steps" from Ankara.

In response, Turkish President RecepTayyipErdogan said Tuesday he wanted Ankara to improve ties with Moscow, but was not sure what first step it was expected to take.

Erdogan also called the Su-24 incident a "pilot error" not worth sacrificing relations between the two countries. (Xinhua)

(23) UN Rapporteurs...

action to clear routes and allow blockaded civilians safe passage, this situation is deteriorating and urgent responses are needed to save lives," said the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons, ChalokaBeyani.

"That means ensuring immediate and unhindered passage of all civilians out of the conflict areas and their protection until they are able to return as well as rapid, safe and unimpeded access of humanitarian aid to all those in need," he stressed.

According to UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions ChristoffHeyns, there have been reports that ISIL militants have executed families, including women and children, with alleged links to Free Syrian Army affiliated groups in the town of Kiljibrin.

"We call for the cessation of violence to allow trapped civilians to leave conflict areas as quickly and safely as possible," the UN Rapporteur noted. (Xinhua)

(24) 867 Iraqis...

protect civilians.

"Iraqi civilians have become the target of terrorist suicide bombers and car bombs. Residential neighborhoods have sustained heavy damage. Armed clashes have spared no one. I urge the Government to make every effort to prevent the occurrence of such outrages," Kubis said. He also reiterated his call on the concerning parties in Anbar province, particularly in battlefield in Fallujah, to "protect the civilians and to preserve Fallujah's infrastructure in accordance with the relevant principles of international human rights and humanitarian law."

"Innocent civilians should not pay the price for the crimes of Daesh (IS group)," he said. (Xinhua)

(25) World's Longest...

through the Swiss Alps every year by rail.

In light of this and following efficiency norms and environmental imperatives, the Gotthard Base

Tunnel serves as a viable alternative to transalpine road transport for both passengers and goods.

Around 20 million people in the catchments area between southern Germany and northern Italy are expected to benefit from the 65 passenger trains scheduled to use the tunnel every day.

Thanks to the level route of the tunnel enabling greater cruising speeds, passenger transport will become faster as well as more reliable and punctual. (Xinhua)

(26) Egypt Reopens ...

been under a tight Israeli blockade for around ten years, while Egypt has been closing the crossing and usually reopens it only for humanitarian reasons.

The tight restrictions of free movement were imposed on the coastal enclave's populations were made right after Hamas movement and its militias violently seized control of the Gaza Strip in the summer of 2007.

"The crossing of Rafah will be operating from Wednesday to Sunday, but it will be closed during Friday," said the statement, adding "those who will be travelling through the crossing, are students, patients and with dual nationalities."

The Hamas-run corporation and international rights groups asserted that there are 30,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip who are in an urgent need for travelling abroad through Egypt. (Xinhua)

(27) AU Opens...

or a built-up fighting area," Madeira said in a statement released by AM-ISOM in Mogadishu on Wednesday. Madeira who toured the training centre said he was impressed by the ongoing progress of construction works, aimed at expanding the centre.

He said training of Somali military personnel is a key part of AM-ISOM's mandate and is essential in helping achieve the exit strategy for African Union troops.

The AU envoy also hailed the European Union and United Nations for supporting military training programmes in Jazeera.

"Without trained Somali soldiers and officers, we will have a lot of difficulties to leave you without an army that will be capable of securing the Government, the administration, the population and the infrastructure," Madeira said. (Xinhua)

(28) 103 Boats ...

Though the fleet's official mission is to confront smugglers and deter illegal immigration to Europe, in practice the effort has become one of the 28-nation bloc's biggest rescue missions in history, saving more than 10,000 migrants in the past year. (AP)

(29) Iran, Russia ...

have moved to deepen economic ties since the lifting of anti-Iran sanctions in January.

Russia and Iran signed a major agreement last October to promote economic cooperation. (PressTV)

(30) OSCE Consulting ...

responding to hostage incidents and applying optimal negotiation tools.

"As Turkmenistan recently passed a number of laws addressing the organization of public events, rallies and demonstrations, the Centre designed this training course to facilitate the exchange of best practices in ensuring the security during mass gatherings and events in line with international standards and national legislation," said Richard Wheeler, Political Officer of the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat. (Agencies)

(31) US Drone...

will not be allowed to re-enter into areas cleared in South Waziristan and North Waziristan."

The army chief and president also discussed issues of national security at length. The reception was also attended by Ji chief SirajulHaq, AkramiDurrani of JUI-F, Special Adviser for Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz and cabinet ministers, including Ishaq Dar. (Agencies)

(32) Chinese Gov't ...

governments in providing comprehensive assistance to these children across a range of aspects.

Such efforts include providing financial aid and special medical coverage. Local governments are urged to fully implement compulsory education and guarantee the fulfillment of custodian responsibilities for the children.

"Protecting children in difficult conditions is an important part of our efforts to build a moderately prosperous society, as well as a social safety net that leaves no one unprotected," Li said. (Xinhua)