

(1) Afghanistan Second...

stakeholders," the report said. "It is our hope that, over time, this diagnostic tool will help identify strengths and weaknesses in each country under review and encourage policy choices that strength the rule of law."

WJP executive director, Juan Carlos Botero, emphasized that the study could help countries produce their own indicators on these issues.

"As countries measure economic indicators and health indicators with certain levels of uniformity, they should be able to measure justice and corruption and governance in the same way," Botero said.

Afghan analysts, meanwhile, admitted to a lack of rule of law in the country, blaming it on illegal powerful individuals, especially in the remote districts and villages.

"Individuals in different parts of the country have their own laws ruling over their districts and that is because of weakness in our legal and judicial institutions," political analyst Mir Ahmad Joyenda said.

President Ashraf Ghani's acting spokesperson, Hamdullah Mohib, said Ghani has always stressed the importance of strengthening the judicial sector of the country.

"The president put a high value on the importance of the judicial sector as he believes Afghanistan's stability depends on rule of law," Mohib told TOLONews.

Despite some initiatives by Ghani to curb corruption, including reopening of Kabul Bank corruption case after assuming office last year in September, Afghanistan is still one of the most corrupt countries in the world. (Tolonews)

(2) MEC Report ...

MoFA more than any other government department in appointing their relatives.

He said 12 MoFA employees had close relations with the current and previous lawmakers, four were sons and daughters of former ministers and seven others were relatives of government officials.

He said becoming an employee at the MoFA required a special procedure, but a majority of the current staff had not gone through the prescribed process.

A couple of months earlier, a detailed Pajhwok Afghan News investigation found most of the diplomats and senior officials at the MoFA were family members and relatives of government officials and lawmakers. It found that their appointments appeared to be based on nepotism and against rules and merit policy.

"Sons and other close relatives of government officials and members of parliament have been appointed to key posts in Afghanistan's embassies abroad, where a number of embassy staff has sought political asylum," the report said.

The MEC report also pointed to the safe use of diplomatic passports, saying a majority of the MoFA employees had been issued diplomatic passports for personal journey abroad.

Around 4,650 diplomatic passports were issued illegally to the employees, who had been benefiting from privileges in foreign countries even after the expiry of their office terms. The MEC expressed deep concerns over the current irregularities and corruption in the MoFA and demanded introduction of a clear and transparent policy for recruitment of employees.

Pajhwok Afghan News reporter tried to contact a senior official at the MoFA for comment about the MEC report, but could not succeed. Earlier, Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabani, during his introduction to the lower house, had pledged to bring drastic reforms in the ministry and combat corruption. (Pajhwok)

(3) President ...

by the interior minister, acting defence minister, national security advisor, National Directorate of Security (NDS) head, Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) chief, deputy interior minister, NDS deputy head, Chief of Army Staff, military corps commanders of northern and southwestern zones and the governors of Bamiyan and Uruzgan provinces.

In another part of the conference, Ghani stressed improved livelihood of security forces and ordered relevant organs to increase the amount of subsistence both for the air and ground forces based on their needs and requirements. (Pajhwok)

(4) 25pc of Mine...

Failure to comply with standard hygiene, lack of safety equipment, modern tools and suitable accommodation, lack of health insurance and protective clothing were the most important challenges the workers

faced, he added.

Atta said some of the workers were children. "From 20 to 25 percent of the workers are children of ages between 8 to 18 years old. They do hard work against 3,000 to 5,000 afghanis per month."

The report stated that some of the children either suffered from health issues or could not go to school.

The group urged the unity government and officials at relevant ministries to take appropriate action to ensure that the rights of labourers were protected.

The group also presented a set of 15 demands to the government and firms working in mines about workers' safety and well-being.

Najib Amin, policy director at the Mines Ministry, said illegal extraction of mines took place in insecure localities, but they haven't received any report confirming the huge number of children working in those mines. (Pajhwok)

(5) WJ Condemns...

humanity. The lawmaker praised the Turkish president for raising his voice in support of the persecuted Muslims in Myanmar.

Lawmaker Allah Gul Mujahid asked the United Nations and human rights' organizations to play a proactive role to resolve the crisis.

He noted the US and human rights organizations should come forward and address the situation of Muslim minority in the southeastern Asian nation.

Haji Qadir, 1st deputy speaker who chaired the session, also condemned the ongoing situation in Myanmar and asked the UN secretary general to play his role in halting the killings of innocent people.

On Tuesday, the Mesharano Jirga or upper house also condemned persecution of Muslim community in Myanmar and asked the government to raise the issue on international forum.

Chairman Senate Fazal Hadi Muslimyar denounced the killing of Muslims and asked the United Nations and human rights' organizations to play a proactive role to resolve the crisis. (Pajhwok)

(6) Pakistan yet...

(A.S), the 12th Imam, in Mazar-i-Sharif, the capital of northern Balkh province.

Local residents, government and security officials participated in the gathering. "We can't succeed unless tolerance, respect and love for each other prevail," Mohaqiq said.

He said the involvement of neighbouring countries in the Afghan reconciliation process and regional economic cooperation were the unity government's top priorities.

"Bringing the Taliban to the negotiating table and decreasing their attacks during their spring offensive were the two major promises Pakistani has not fulfilled so far," the 2nd deputy CEO said.

He said the Afghans were a peaceful nation who made every effort for peace in the region, Mohaqiq said, calling for an end to bloodshed of innocent Muslims.

Mohaqiq also praised security forces for combating armed militants with a high morale. He also said the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) was serious to nominate governors for the remaining provinces. (Pajhwok)

(7) Afghanistan Economy...

dropped markedly to 1.5 percent in 2014, from 3.7 a year earlier.

Inflation, private consumption and investment also declined while agricultural production remained similar to the bumper crop of 2012 and eight of the country's banks were declared "weak."

These indications of economic decline reported by the IMF, as well as in an Asian Development Bank (ADB) report in May, show an economy that is suffering from insufficient policy responses.

"The withdrawal of international troops, the prolonged political transition, and inadequate policy response resulted in lower economic confidence and activity," the IMF report said.

"The presidential elections were completed in late-September, with the inauguration of President [Ashraf] Ghani and Chief Executive [Abdullah] Abdullah, but formation of the new government was prolonged and a central bank governor has not been confirmed," the report noted.

The election process began in April 2014 but was drawn out by disputes over electoral fraud in the second-round run-off, leading to a national unity government which itself then faced problems in forming a cabinet. Ghani took 100 days to agree with Abdullah on a list of ministerial candi-

dates, only for Afghan parliament to reject the majority of names.

An increasingly violent Taliban insurgency has also been highlighted as a cause for reduced investment, with the Taliban launching a stronger drive against remaining international forces and attempting to gain a military advantage that could be used in peace negotiations with the government.

According to a report released Wednesday by the U.S.-based Brown University, titled Costs of War, almost 100,000 people have been killed since U.S.-led forces ousted the Taliban regime in 2001. (ANADOLU AGENCY)

(8) DABS Fails ...

warnings.

About 20 days ago, DABS chief Mirwais Alami issued a list of ministries defaulting on power bills and urged the government to resolve the issue. He had warned of legal action against defaulters including high-ranking government officials and set them a 10-day deadline.

But now the DABS spokesman said despite the passage of more than two weeks only 250 million afghanis had been recovered so far. He said the bulk of payment came from the Ministry of Higher Education.

Tawhidi said government departments owed nearly 660 million afghanis and some government officials and private individuals owed 60 million afghanis to DABS.

He said the Office of Administrative Affairs had urged DABS to avoid sending representatives to the houses of high-ranking government officials. Instead, the Office of Administrative Affairs would put pressure on government departments to pay the bills in light of the list the office had been delivered, he said. (Pajhwok)

(9) Mafia, Terrorists...

Mohammad Ashraf Ghani has promised strict actions against poppy cultivation in Afghanistan. (KP)

(10) CEO Visits ...

2005-2015 that will take place in Dushanbe from June 9-11.

The Chief Executive Officer of Afghanistan is position within the Government of Afghanistan. The extra-constitutional post was created in September 2014 following the disputes that arose after the 2014 Afghan presidential election when both Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah claimed victory in that election. As part of a national unity agreement, it was agreed that Ashraf Ghani would assume the presidency and a new post of Chief Executive Officer would be created for Abdullah Abdullah.

The Chief Executive Officer chairs a weekly meeting of a Ministers' Council which can make policy recommendations to the President. The Chief Executive Officer can also recommend ministers for the Cabinet of Afghanistan, a body chaired by the President.

The national unity agreement calls for a meeting of the Loya Jirga within two years to consider the need for the re-creation of a post of Prime Minister within the Afghan Government. (Asia-Plus)

(11) Ata Mohammad ...

Noor said, adding that "Instead, they should work honestly."

In response to a question regarding the government's most significant achievement so far, he chuckled "I cannot remember any successes at the moment."

Noor is an influential political figure and the leader of Jamiat-i-Islami party of Afghanistan. He played a key role in the controversial presidential election last year and was a close ally of CEO Abdullah Abdullah. (KP)

(12) Afghan Children...

in heavy labour as family breadwinners, and 43 per cent of girls get married when they are underage," Omid told a debate held in Paktia in south-east Afghanistan.

Qari Mohammad Qasim Rahmani, deputy head of Islamic education in Paktia's provincial government, blamed parents for failing to raise their children properly. This doomed them to a life of unemployment, he said.

"The lack of security has also had a negative impact on their lives," he added. "Children need to be raised in the light of Islam."

A member of Paktia's provincial council, Allah Mir Bahram, said it was the Afghan state, civil society organisations and other agencies were failing the younger generation.

"All members of society should consider it their responsibility to try to solve children's problems, both in the family and in society as a whole, so that these young people do not become a burden on society in the

future," he said.

Ali Mohammad Khan, representing the provincial department for labour and social affairs in the southern Helmand province, said that extreme poverty was forcing children into hard physical labour.

"Hundreds of families lack breadwinners or are headed by people with disabilities," he said. "The children have to earn their family's entire income. Overall, 30 per cent of children in Helmand are able to go to school. Between 15 and 20 per cent of children do heavy labour due to poverty or vulnerability - some are orphans or have disabled or drug-addicted parents."

Jamila Niazi, the head of the women's affairs department in Helmand, noted that tradition forced families to send children out to work.

"The women in families which have lost their male breadwinners cannot go out to work due to cultural restrictions," she said. "They have to send their children out to work, and the children's rights are ignored." Marzia Khugyani, head teacher at a girls' high school in Helmand, noted that conservative traditions also affected her pupils.

"I know many students whose elders have stopped them from coming to school for reasons of culture," she said. (IWPR)

(13) UAE to Cooperate...

in Afghanistan.

Ali Ali said that his country is working on providing scholarships for 100 Afghan students and sending 10 officials from the Ministry of Higher Education to UAE for technical studies.

Ali Ali further said that 18,700 Afghan Mullahs have so far studied under his country's program and 1,300 will join this program in future. Afghanistan has friendly relationship with UAE and both countries are working on strengthening this relationship. (KP)

(14) Kabul Police...

The police confiscated half a kilo of hashish and half kilo of a dangerous drug known as Sheesha from a man named Khawaja Mir in the Bagh Ali Mardan area of Kabul. However, when he spoke with TOLONews, Mir claimed the whole operation was a sham.

"If the police of the district don't take money, then how can I sell these drugs?" Mir asked. Indeed, the Bagh Ali Mardan neighborhood is located just 500 meters away from the First Police District. "It's my first time here today, they are not arresting the real people, but they are arresting us."

According to a self-identifying drug user named Naseer, the price of a gram of heroin has gone up to 200 Afghanis, but it remains less than a gram of Sheesha, which is a more dangerous type of drug, and is valued at 400 to 500 Afghanis. Naseer also claims the police are wrapped up in the drug trade. "The First District police take money from us and are three percent partner with the drug dealers," he said.

The second target of the coordinated operations was drug dealers in the Kart-e-Now area of Kabul. The operation focused on major drug dealer named Ghulam Farooq, with whom 10 kilograms of hashish was recovered.

"I have collected this hashish from my land in Panjshir, and I sell it in kilos and small quantities to my customers," Farooq told TOLONews. Meanwhile, officials from the Counter Narcotics Department acknowledged that there were cases of police collusion with drug dealers in the capital. "We found out that in the Pul Sokhta area of Kabul that police were taking money from drug dealers or were involved, and we have referred the issue to investigative institutions to follow up," department director Mirza Muhammad said on Tuesday. "We will soon arrest them and will refer them to the judicial institutions." (Tolonews)

(15) US Embassy ...

province said a group of militants attacked the compound of PIN in Zareh district, leaving at least 9 dead. The officials further added that a woman was also among those killed in the attack.

The victims were working with the National Solidarity Program of the Ministry of Rural Development of Afghanistan, the officials said, adding that the aid workers were supporting around 100 projects and their brutal execution will have a negative impact.

People in Need is a Czech based Non-governmental Organization which has been operating in Zareh district of Balkh province since 2002. No group including the Taliban militants has so far claimed responsibility behind the incident. (KP)

(16) Bamiyan City...

assist in building the House of Fatawa (religious edict) in Afghanistan. Ali Ali said that his country is working on providing scholarships for 100 Afghan students and sending 10 officials from the Ministry of Higher Education to UAE for technical studies.

Ali Ali further said that 18,700 Afghan Mullahs have so far studied under his country's program and 1,300 will join this program in future. Afghanistan has friendly relationship with UAE and both countries are working on strengthening this relationship. (KP)

(17) Kandahar...

these projects, he said, not only their income had increased, but the airport was gradually adopting international standards.

In 2013, he said, the airport income stood at \$133,000, but the income rose to \$1 million and 400,000 in 2014, indicating a 19 percent increase. He did not provide figures for income during the past five months of this year, but said the political tension after last year's elections had an impact on the airport, but still income would be high.

The airport director also said all affairs of the airport would be transferred to the Afghan Aviation Authority from foreign forces in the near future. He said most affairs at the port currently spearheaded by Afghans.

He said a number of airport officials had been sent to India, Singapore, Jordan and other countries for technical education ahead of assuming full charge of the airport.

Running all affairs at the airport required a well-equipped and professional force, he said, adding the number of professional staff, including women, at the airport had reached 40. Only two women would work at the airport in the past, he recalled.

Faizi said foreign troops had promised they would continue assisting the airport and would leave behind their equipment.

He said their future plan was to change the airport into an international transit airfield and refueling facility at the airport had increased its international importance.

There were no mountains nearby that could create problems for flights during landing and earthquakes also rarely occurred to damage the runway, he said.

The airport has 37 parking facilities which could be used for parking 250 airplanes at a time. Faizi said security inside and outside the airport had been satisfactory and the airport was more secure than other airports of the country. That was why besides domestic flights, the airport was used by airlines from India, Iran, Dubai and others, he added.

He said a Turkish airlines would start its flights to the Kandahar airport in the near future after the country opened a consulate in the province. (Pajhwok)

(18) Joint Efforts ...

committee chairman, presided over the meeting. The meeting thoroughly reviewed the recommendations and proposals, presented in previous proceeding of the meeting and agreed upon most of points, with certain amendments.

It was said the illegal smuggling of manufacturing products of two-countries, higher-tariff, non-availability of common facilitation for importers and exporters, lengthy procedure of clearance of goods-money, irritants in issuance of various categories visas, as major impediments to Pakistan and Afghanistan trade. The meeting suggested that both countries should harmonize their customs procedures, remove specific duties and engage constantly for better understanding of regulatory regimes. Moreover, better rail connectivity and mechanisms for joint ventures without physical presence of the businessmen in the other country were also suggested by the participants. (Monitoring Desk)

(19) Amnesty ...

send the messages that aid workers are a fair target," Mosadiq said.

On Monday night, a group of unknown gunmen killed nine aid agency workers from the Czech Republic's People in Need organization - among them a woman.

After the attack, President Ashraf Ghani strongly condemned killing of aid workers and called the perpetrators "enemies of progress and development in Afghanistan."

Calling it a "coward act," Ghani has ordered the Interior Ministry to launch investigations and arrest the perpetrators.

The incident took place in Zareh dis-

trict after a number of insurgents attacked the aid agency's compound, a spokesman for Provincial Governor, Ahmad Muneer Farhad said.

According to officials, the Czech agency works with farmers in the province and helps provide them with seed.

No group including the Taliban has claimed responsibility for the attack. People in Need (PIN) has worked in Afghanistan since 2001. The mission focuses on more than just humanitarian aid, seeking to find long-term solutions to the systemic problems in the sectors of education, livelihoods and rural development. In keeping with the organizational approach, PIN focuses heavily on contact in the field, and on areas that are more remote. Working closely with local investors to develop and implement projects, PIN has achieved a higher level of sustainability. (Tolonews)

(20) Albania Sends ...

equipment, and the creation of better infrastructure conditions," said Kodheli.

"Much remains to be done, but it is important to emphasize that you have what it is needed to accomplish the mission assigned," added Kodheli. (Xinhua)

(21) MoUD Officials ...

they would be apprehended by Afghan authorities with the help of Interpol in order to stand trial.

Lawmakers in the Senate, meanwhile, urged the Attorney General's office to follow up on the matter. "We hope that the corruption will be addressed and the disclosure of this corruption case will be a lesson for our other new ministers to prevent corruption," Senator Faisal Sami said.

President Ghani suspended the six senior officials last month after meeting with Ministry of Urban Development leaders. (Tolonews)

(22) New Governor...

Nasar Kamawal, provincial council deputy chief, said the governor had many challenges such as land mafia, lack of coordination among various departments and administrative corruption. He suggested transferring old employees who had been remained on their posts for years to tackle administrative corruption in the province.

Obaid Jabarkhail, a student of Nangarhar University, said new governor would have to confront worst law and order situation since the start of spring offensive by militants. The government sought support of provincial council members and local people to overcome challenges and improve law and order in the province. (Pajhwok)

(23) 20 Taliban...

said the fight between security forces and Taliban militants erupted at 3am midnight and lasted till morning. The civilians remained safe in the gun battle but several families suffered financial losses, he added. Zabihullah Mujahid, Taliban spokesperson, confirmed last night gun battle and said heavy casualties inflicted to security forces. He avoided sharing casualties about Taliban militants.

Meanwhile, Hikmatullah, a driver, told Pajhwok Afghan News that Taliban militants had blocked the main Kabul-Gardez highway since early morning. "Taliban militants check every passenger, taking away some with them," he said.

Police chief Ashaaqzai also confirmed Hikmatullah's statement. Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers had presence in the area and it was their duty to take Taliban militants out of the area, he added. (Pajhwok)

(24) ISIS Beheads...

engaged in clashes in troubled Afghanistan.

Afghanistan has been the scene of violence since 2001 when the US and its allies invaded the country as part of Washington's so-called war on terror.

The US-led military alliance in Afghanistan officially ended its combat mission on December 31, 2014.

Insecurity still lingers on in the war-torn country despite the presence of foreign troops. (Press TV)

(25) Iraqi Officials...

again used this weapon, which Abadi has described as having the same effect as "small nuclear bombs".

IS claimed responsibility Tuesday for a huge suicide attack that killed 47 people at a police base, which had been recently retaken as part of efforts to tighten the noose on Anbar. As they edge towards Ramadi, officials said Iraqi forces risked coming under attack because IS had closed the gates of a dam in the city to dry up the Euphrates. (AFP)