

(1) Indonesia, ...

she said. "The Indonesian Islamic Center is one of the icons of Indonesia-Afghanistan friendship and a symbol to disseminate the message of Islam as rahmatan lil alamin (a blessing for the universe)," she said.

Indonesia has also invited Afghanistan to join the ministerial international conference "Bali Process" to be held later this month. The conference will discuss people-smuggling and trafficking in persons and other transnational organized crimes.

Meanwhile, Minister Salahuddin Rabbani praised Indonesia which has helped organize the fifth Extraordinary OIC Summit themed "United for a Just Solution", with emphasis on the settlement of Palestinian and Al Quds Al Syarif (Jerusalem) issues.

"This Summit is very important to build unity and solidarity among Islamic states for the sake of Palestinian independence," Salahuddin said.

Indonesia and Afghanistan also have close cooperation in handling the issue of irregular migration, including the issue of asylum seekers and refugees. Afghanistan participated in the fifth Bali Regional Ministerial Conference (BRMC) on people smuggling held on April 2, 2013, and Jakarta Declaration Roundtable Meeting on Addressing the Root Causes of Irregular Movements of Persons held in Jakarta on November 27-28, 2015. (Monitoring Desk)

(2) UNDP to...

and no new photographs would be posted, he said. The campaign will last about a week, he added. In conservative Afghanistan, women are often subject to abuse, forced into arranged marriages, and even traded to settle disputes. Domestic violence is endemic. High-profile women have been murdered. As a result, few women work outside the home or are active in public life, despite constitutional guarantees of their safety.

Few said the UNDP's decision came after an Afghan woman helped by the agency to escape an abusive forced marriage said she was too afraid to have her photo published alongside a report about her experience.

"Walk down any street, or into any government office, or into any hospital, police station, business or university, and you have to ask yourself, 'Where are the women?'" Few said. "We've come a long way since 2001, but we need to do more to make women safer and to allow them to take part in economic and public life."

As the Afghan government moves toward a dialogue with the Taliban to end the war, now in its 15th year, many women fear that hard-won legal rights will be sacrificed for peace.

The extremist Taliban regime ruled Afghanistan for five years before being toppled by the 2001 U.S. invasion. During that time, women were terrorized - banned from education and work, forced into their homes unless accompanied by a male relative and wearing the all-encompassing burqa. The post-2001 constitution protects women from violence and discrimination. But after more than 30 years of conflict, Afghan society has largely retreated into religious conservatism that has seen more women, even in the capital Kabul, wearing the burqa and the niqab full-face veil for fear of a Taliban return.

President Ashraf Ghani has pledged that women's rights will not be eroded in exchange for peace with the Taliban. Face-to-face talks that were expected to take place early this month appear to be in jeopardy after the Taliban issued a statement Saturday saying they would not participate.

The UNDP's decision to question the way women are treated in Afghan society also comes ahead of the first anniversary on March 19 of the public murder of a woman in central Kabul, after she was falsely accused of burning a Quran. Farkhunda Malikzada was set upon by a mob, brutally beaten, driven over by a car, and her body burned.

Her killers, identified from mobile phone footage of the incident, had their sentences commuted, and most of her immediate family has left the country for their own safety.

In recent months, a number of women have been publicly stoned

in remote parts of Afghanistan for apparent adultery, and one young woman had her nose cut off by an abusive husband. (AP)

(3) CEO Vows to...

deal with us from a different perspective, they always mock us," another female journalist from Daikundi, Rahima said.

"Government is aware of the problems facing female journalists," Abdullah told the gathering of female journalists, adding that "you (female journalists) raised the voice of pride and honor of the people of Afghanistan, we will do whatever we can to support you." (Tolnews)

(4) Women's...

to resolve women's problems took place each month under his chairmanship.

"Five women hold high government positions in Nangarhar, 3,000 women are associated with handicraft industry and tens of thousands are getting education." Nangarhar women's affairs director Anisa Imrani said the first lady had promised to create a fund for underprivileged women in the province.

She told Pajhwok Afghan News on the sidelines of the gathering that she urged the first lady to increase women's participation in government offices and pay attention to their education.

Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) head for Nangarhar, Sabrina Hameedi, told Pajhwok Afghan News that 338 incidents of violence against women took place this solar year. (Pajhwok)

(5) Afghanistan,...

and Pakistan. The group is known for numerous attacks against authorities and civilians of both countries.

Talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government began in Pakistan last July but were suspended over the news that long-time Taliban leader Mullah Omar died back in 2013. Calls for peace talks come after a series of significant military gains made by the Taliban in several Afghan provinces. (Sputnik)

(6) Stronger Global...

have not only clinched large swaths of land in Iraq and Syria, but also spread religious extremism and carried out brutal attacks that have victimized innocent people regardless of their nationalities. (Xinhua)

(7) ACCI Calls ...

said Mosafer Qoqandi, spokesman for the ministry. It is said that Pakistan, during the last session of APTTA, has agreed to allow ten trucks of Afghanistan's goods on daily basis to go directly to Wagah border between Pakistan and India. However, officials at the ACCI say that Pakistan doesn't allow trucks to bring Indian goods in return and that's why no transportation company is ready to transport goods to Wagah. (Tolnews)

(8) ERC Welcomes ...

remain strongly committed to bringing about electoral reforms and holding elections," he said. The president called on lawmakers to support the move. Ghani said that he will also send a constitutional agenda about electoral reforms to parliament.

Previously, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) had introduced Ahmad Zia Langari, and the Independent Administrative Reforms Commission had introduced Mohammad Nader Hotak as their representatives in the selection committee. Now, it is said they will be replaced. (Tolnews)

(9) Rehab Center...

used them again and this continued," said Ahmad Jawed, a drug addict.

Zia, another addict, said that he has a family and has three children and he has used drugs for 16 years.

The center is also treating female drug addicts. Samira, 32, who is from Iran, and has a BA degree, was referred to the center for help. Those who know her say that she can also recite the Holy Quran. (Tolnews)

(10) Afghans ...

to be prevented from using services such as medical centers and education facilities set up with European funds in Turkey, the fact they speak Pashto and Dari, rather than Arabic, risks excluding them from projects designed for Syrian

refugees, aid workers warn.

"The EU is not even discussing these issues and is exclusively focused on Syria," Kati Piri, the European Parliament's rapporteur for Turkey, told Reuters last month.

"Even if the Syrian crisis would be solved tomorrow, there would still be a serious refugee crisis, with a large number of refugees in Turkey who don't have access to their rights."

Afghan migrants in Turkey interviewed by Reuters said that over the past few years they had been denied interviews with U.N. refugee agency UNHCR that would formally determine their refugee status, a key step in the journey to being resettled.

Polat Kizildag, program coordinator at ASAM, an organization which registers asylum seekers in Turkey, said they were generally told they were ineligible because Turkey was the third country on their journey and the expectation was that they apply for refugee status in their second, in many cases Iran.

Human rights groups have said Iranian forces deport thousands of Afghans without giving them a chance to prove their asylum status and that they are pressured to leave the country.

"We want to stay (in Turkey) but ... there is no support here. It's too expensive," said Najebullah, 45, a father of four originally from Kabul waiting in Cesme, on Turkey's Aegean coast, to make an illegal crossing to the Greek Island of Chios.

"In Europe we will get work and they will help us," he said, echoing a commonly-held belief among the migrants flooding to Turkey's shore that once they arrive in Europe they will be more easily able to build a new life.

Selin Unal, UNHCR spokeswoman in Turkey, said the most vulnerable, including Afghans, still received interviews, adding that close to 500 Afghans had been interviewed last year. She said the sheer numbers meant those most at risk were prioritized among UNHCR's active case load of some 254,000 non-Syrians.

RESETTLEMENT WOES
More than 63,000 Afghans came to Turkey last year, a sharp rise from 15,652 in 2014, according to ASAM, counting only those who registered. Some came directly from Afghanistan, others from Iran, where they had tried unsuccessfully to settle.

Kirikkale, near Turkey's capital Ankara, is one of several satellite towns where registered Afghans are allowed to reside.

Hakima Rezai, in her late thirties, said she was trying to get to Europe to be reunited with her four children, taken to Europe by sea by her brother-in-law almost a year ago. She said UNHCR - which declined to comment on individual cases - had told her they could not help.

Rezai lives in a single room with a coal-burning stove and relies on the charity of neighbors. She does not receive the cash cards given to some Syrian refugees by international NGOs and their local partners to help meet basic living costs because there is no such scheme specifically set up for Afghans.

"I cry every day," she said, showing the identity documents of her absent children. The exodus from Afghanistan has been prompted by an increasingly precarious security situation, with 11,000 civilians killed or injured in 2015, as well as widespread corruption undermining faith in the future and a war-ruined economy that cannot provide enough work for its population.

Kabul and other Afghan cities have seen a spate of suicide bombings and other attacks as the Taliban has stepped up its insurgency following the withdrawal of international troops from most combat operations in 2014.

The insurgents, driven from power by a U.S.-led campaign in 2001, are seeking to reimpose hardline Islamist rule and are now in control or threatening around a third of the country.

FALSE PERCEPTIONS
According to the European Commission, 64,109 asylum requests were registered in Turkey in 2015, more than 11,000 of them from Afghan citizens, but only 459 were concluded, either by granting or rejecting refugee status.

Some are still waiting in Turkey, but others are among the thousands to have crossed illegally to Europe.

Under a law passed two years

ago, Afghans and other refugees have access to healthcare in Turkey and Unal said the most vulnerable could also benefit from social security schemes.

In January, Turkey also passed a new law to give refugees access to legal employment, a move praised by the European Union, although the program has not yet been rolled out.

But many of the Afghan refugees, hampered in part by language difficulties, are unaware of their rights and rely on illegal labor such as fruit picking to survive.

Birnur Esen, a psychologist who works for IMECE, an organization which collects and distributes clothes and other supplies to migrants rescued at sea, said convincing migrants to stay in Turkey meant improving their lives there and making them realize conditions in Europe would be just as difficult.

That, she said, should be the focus of European efforts.

"We are trying to change their mind," she said. "Europe must stand behind Turkey. It must say that if you stay in Turkey, we will improve your conditions." (Reuters)

(11) Taliban...

country, hurting the homeland to some extent.

Ghani said the outgoing solar year had been vital for Afghanistan because some thought the current system would collapse within this year that ends on March 21.

The president said it was the unity government that strengthened the country and assured the international community that Afghanistan was a reliable partner and thus the world's belief in the country was restored.

Ghani said the unity government leadership did not desire war with the enemy rather there was a political, military and international support for peace in the country. He said the government wanted peace and would not refuse to make attempts at peace and stability even in difficult situations. He assured that the government would consult and inform the nation about every step it took for peace and stability.

The president said besides efforts for peace and stability, the government was fully aware of the challenges in form of violence and conflict which he said had been imposed on the Afghan nation. "We should be prepared for the worst and should keep live our hope for peace and stability."

He said Al Qaeda, the Pakistani Taliban, extremist groups from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Chachneia were the main factors of terrorism in Afghanistan. He said Afghanistan was the first country where Daesh was on the run.

Ghani said his government strived for peace on two fronts --- the peace process with Taliban and Hikmatyar and with Pakistan and foreign terrorist networks. (Pajhwok)

(12) Karzai Says ...

Taliban statement released on Saturday, refusing any offer to sit-in for direct peace talks with the Afghan government.

According to a statement released by the group, the decision to refrain from direct negotiations was taken due to deployment of troops by US to Afghanistan, ongoing airstrikes, and expansion of military operations by Afghan government amid ongoing efforts to revive peace talks, which the group called a propaganda.

Meanwhile, Karzai said India, Iran and Russia should be included in the talks with the Taliban. "We believe China has an influence on Pakistan, and we hope it will exercise that influence to bring peace in Afghanistan," Mr. Karzai said. He also added "Let's look at it this way... this quadrilateral dialogue implies that the problem for Afghanistan is external, then there are other external players as well who are important. Iran is the first, then India and Russia. They are all friends and neighbours, so I hope the talks would include them too." (KP)

(13) Dand-E-Ghori...

However, it has been nine months that Dand-e-Ghori has been under the Taliban's control.

"Security forces managed to clear the area with bravery and sacrifices. They have inflicted heavy losses on the Taliban militants," he said.

Arab Tapa, Niazullah, Darqad and Afghan Tapa were the strongholds of the Taliban in Dand-e-

Ghori, which are now under the government's control.

Ahmadi said that the Taliban fought against security forces for several days from these strongholds, they killed nine army troops, but were eventually defeated.

The Taliban has now fled to Bibi Gahwara Mountains, which share a border with Samangan province.

"The enemies had created obstacles in Arab Tapa area to hinder the progress of Afghan security forces. However, our brave and alert forces - national police, national army and commandos - managed to break the enemy's front line and move forward to Afghan Tapa," said Abdul Latif, another army commander in the province. (Tolnews)

(14) Taliban Quetta...

have a tough war ahead during this spring season," said Majid Akhundzada, deputy chairman of the Helmand provincial council. Ataulah Afghan, secretary of the council agreed that a number of Taliban Quetta Shura members have come to the district to lead the war. Meanwhile, a number of civil society activists in Helmand province, have asked how the Quetta Shura members managed to reach Musa Qala. (Tolnews)

(15) Years of Efforts...

were leaving country due to joblessness and insecurity.

"Ambiguity still surrounds the fate of Wolesi Jirga and district council elections and the national unity government did not come up to our expectations," he added. About peace talks, Ibrahim said despite several meetings in the past 10 years in this regard, but the prospect of peace remained remote. (Pajhwok)

(16) Ghazni Revenue ...

Finance (MoF)'s 343 million afghanis target for the outgoing year. The official said the revenue would be spent on development activities in the province as planned. Governor Mohammad Aman Hamid said some companies who evaded taxes for 14 years had been registered now and they paid regular taxes. (Pajhwok)

(17)700kg of Drug
man for cooperating with the insurgents. He said one AK-47 assault rifle, three remote-controlled landmines and 30 mortar shells were recovered from the detainee's home. A similar amount of drugs had been confiscated by NDS officials during a previous raid in the same district about 10 days ago. (Pajhwok)

(18)Roads Being...

15000 afghanis to the total cost of 26 million afghanis. He said the people became ready to participate in development activities due to efforts by the municipality and the process would be extended to other parts of the city.

Governor HumayunAzizi praised people's contribution to the roads' construction and said their involvement would help maintain quality work. In Balkh, reconstruction works on NSP projects in 503 villages aimed at creating temporary jobs for 31,000 people has been launched as part of the government's national job finding project.

As a model launch of the job finding project in Balkh district, a ceremony in this regard was attended by local officials and residents.

Deputy minister for Rural Development Programmes Ahamd Shaheer Shahriyar told Pajhwok Afghan News the National Solidarity Programme was wrapped up after lasting 12 years across the country. (Pajhwok)

(19)Govt. Has ...

fathers were killed in the suicide attack currently live with their grandfather in Koorgah village of Dara-i-Noor district. Hazrat Omar and Gul Omar were two brothers who lost their lives in the Jalalabad attack. Their family and children now face hard living conditions.

The grandfather, Sayed Omar, told Pajhwok Afghan News: "The sight of my eyes has dimmed. I and the widowed wives of my sons are suffering from mental health problems after the death of their husbands."

Omar has three little children who they cannot help in financially supporting their family.

"My elder son Hazrat Omar was a prayer leader in Qala Shahi mosque and Gul Omar was a public order policeman in Maidan-Wradak province, both married the same day and died on the

same day. One left behind 10 children and another eight," he said.

Sayed Omar, 65, said. "That day, my younger son asked his elder brother to go with him to the bank to withdraw his salary so the elder brother could take the money home and he could return to his duty in Maidan Wardak, but they were killed in the bank."

When asked how he looks after the orphans, Sayed Omar in a faltering voice: "We spend life awaiting God's blessing. I have two fields of land but have no anyone to irrigate and cultivate it."

He laid his hand on one of his grandchild and said: "I am spending life in the hope that one day these children would grow up and help their family."

Zabit Amir Mohammad, a former provincial council member and a resident of Dara-I-Noor district, said that Sayed Omar and his daughter-in-laws whose husbands were killed suffered from serious illnesses and economic problems. "Omar has three more sons, but they are small, his wife has died," he said.

Like Sayed Omar's family, a number of other families who lost their members to the attack in Jalalabad also suffer from poverty. (Pajhwok)

(20)51 Killed ...

their cars while queuing at the crowded checkpoint.

The IS has frequently targeted areas where large crowds gather, including checkpoints, markets, cafes and mosques across Iraq. (Xinhua)

(21)Greece to Seek ...

start of relocation...is a matter of utmost emergency."

Hitting back at criticism by eastern European states over Greece's failure to stem migrant flows, Tsipras questioned the wisdom of admitting these countries into the EU a decade ago. (AP)

(22)Swiss Foreign...

is evidenced by the intense discussions we have conducted for a year. In my opinion we don't have to negotiate much longer as we are close to a solution with the EU," he was quoted as saying. (Reuters)

(23)Truce as

the Islamic State (IS) group, as both have been designated as terrorist organizations by the UN. Battles continued in Aleppo and the provinces of Latakia, Idlib, Hama and Homs, all the places the IS and Nusra controlled or frequently appeared in. (Xinhua)

(24)Turkish PM: ...

outcome in order to compete with the world economy," Davutoglu said.

Bilateral trade stood at \$22 billion in 2014 before declining to \$9 billion as a result of sanctions on Iran. Davutoglu said the two countries can raise this volume to \$30 billion. (PressTV)

(25)Britain Faces...

viously quit the EU, and a British departure would deprive the bloc of its number two economy and leading financial center. Cameron says leaving would be a risky "leap in the dark".

But Johnson said it would be a "huge weight lifted from British business" and he did not believe banks' "threats" to relocate from London if it happened. (Reuters)

(26)Myanmar ...

House of Representatives (Lower House), House of Nationalities (Upper House) and military-nominated non-elected representatives. So far, nominees from the three parliamentary groups for vice presidents are still not officially disclosed until next Thursday when the presidential election process starts. As the opposition National League for democracy (NLD), led by Aung San Suu Kyi, won in the election absolute majority of the parliamentary seats, it is fully qualified to form a new government independently under the constitution and has the right to nominate the president and two vice presidents. (Xinhua)

(27)Top Latam ...

Ortega told a ceremony for the anniversary of former Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez's death.

The Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, Gaston Browne, also voiced his objection on Saturday to the decree. He asked the United States to "remove this senseless executive order," because it only undermines the region's peace and unity. (Xinhua)