

(1) Ghani Launches ...

on peace and reconciliation efforts pursued in member countries, economic resilience and implementation of new deals among others. Afghanistan is also expected to share an update on the report of fragility assessment which itself is an important milestone for Afghanistan in terms of New Deal implementation.

The g7+ comprises 20-member nations and was formed in response to a gap identified by conflict-affected states in the achievement of Millennium Development Goals and service delivery.

Having learned difficult lessons through the experience of conflict or disaster, and seeking to transition to the next stage of development, member nations recognized that conflict-affected states are best positioned to learn from one another.

To this end, on 10 April 2010 in Dili, Timor-Leste, the inaugural meeting of the g7+ was held, during which members expressed the will to establish the group as an international organization and continue meeting and sharing experiences.

The group's vision for peace building and state building was recognized and set out in the Dili Declaration (April 2010).

Today, the g7+ is building a strong and respected platform, working in conjunction with international development partners, the private sector, civil society, the media and people across countries, borders and regions to reform international engagement in development in member countries. (Tolonews)

(2) Taliban Show ...

to the press release, Taliban showed willingness to exchange soldiers detained after their helicopter crashed in northern Faryab province on November 24 last year but were not given a green light by the other side (government).

The helicopter made an emergency landing after experiencing a technical error in Pashtun Kot district of Faryab province that is partly controlled by Taliban.

Reports surfaced then suggested that the militant group seized over a dozen soldiers.

Government is yet to release information about fate of the hostages. (KP)

(3) Japan Pledges ...

According to a statement by the Embassy of Japan, USD 15,000,000 will be allocated to Irrigation Restoration and Development Project (IRDP).

The statement further added "The assistance from Japan is to co-finance IRDP project to improve the irrigation systems and the broader water resource management in Afghanistan as well as people's access to services. The contribution will help increase agriculture productivity in the project areas."

USD 15,000,000 will be allocated to Afghanistan Rural Access Project (ARAP), the statement said, adding the funding from Japan is also to co-finance ARAP project, which will help rural communities to benefit from all-season road access to basic services and facilities through rehabilitation and maintenance of rural roads and infrastructure.

Another USD 33,654,545 will be allocated to Recurrent Cost Window. "Over USD 33 million will be added to the operating budget of the Government of Afghanistan through the Recurrent Cost Window of ARIF, facilitating continuation of the government's service delivery to the Afghan people," the statement added.

Japan has been assisting Afghanistan's nation-building efforts in various fields, ranging from security to economic and social development sectors including agriculture, rural development, infrastructure and human capacity development. The cumulative Japanese assistance to Afghanistan since 2001 amounts to USD 6.131 billion. (KP)

(4) 600 Afghan...

the Father of the Nation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and his companions who had offered immense sacrifices for achieving a separate homeland for the Muslims of Sub-Continent.

The ambassador also highlighted the efforts made by Pakistan for further enhancing and strengthening bilateral relations with Afghanistan.

He said Pakistan desired to see Afghanistan a peaceful and prosperous country. The ambassador informed the participants that Pakistan had made tremendous

efforts for promoting peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan, besides executing a number of projects in the health and education sectors of Afghanistan.

He also highlighted the contributions made by Pakistan in Afghanistan's health and education sectors, particularly the construction of Liaquat Ali Khan Engineering University at Balkh, Allama Iqbal Faculty in Kabul University, Rahman Baba School and Hostel in Kabul, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan Faculty of Natural Science in Nangarhar University, Jinnah Hospital at Kabul and Kidney Nishtar Hospital at Jalalabad.

"Apart from building educational institutions, Pakistan also offers fully-funded scholarship to Afghan students in various disciplines of its high-ranking universities."

Hussain urged Pakistani community and embassy officials in Kabul to serve their country with dedication by following the guiding principles of the Father of the Nation i.e. Unity, Faith and Discipline. (Pajhwok)

(5) Lawmakers ...

responsibilities were spearheaded by acting officials at a time when the country's security situation was worsening with each passing day.

Lawmaker Ghulam Hussain Naseri asked the government to pay attention to the country's security situation besides bringing reforms to the election system.

Earlier, Syed Safar Hashimi, the presidential deputy spokesman, had said the process to hire new security officials went at a snail's pace because last year was tough and the enemy had nefarious designs.

He hoped new faces would be introduced to security institutions in the new year. (Pajhwok)

(6) Rights Group...

to protect children and their future by implementing the Safe Schools Declaration it signed in 2015, the New York-based group said. The declaration commits the government to follow guidelines for protecting schools.

Last year, the United Nations verified 20 instances of military use of schools, 15 involving Afghan National Security Forces, including the army and police. The numbers are probably higher.

"Military use of schools can mean the occupation of a few classrooms or playgrounds, or a complete takeover of school facilities and grounds. In recent years, Afghan military forces have deployed weaponry in or around schools and used facilities as fixed firing positions.

"As a result, students are not only deprived of an education, they are also put at grave risk of attack by insurgents who then see schools as military targets," the statement added.

According to HRW, schools in Afghanistan have frequently been attacked by the Taliban and other insurgents. The UN documented the closure of 222 schools in 2015 as a result of attacks and threats by insurgents.

At least 25 casualties among students and school staff were documented from incidents involving insurgents and government forces. The figures highlighted the real risk of schools becoming targets or battlefields, HRW said. (Pajhwok)

(7) Turkey Returns ...

[initials changed for security reasons].

He said he was on a plane in Istanbul, and then called again around an hour later during the flight's layover in Ankara. He said he was being forcibly returned to Kabul along with around 30 other Afghan women, men and children, after their requests to apply for asylum in Turkey were refused.

H.R. said that he had been part of a group trying to reach Greece by boat. They were apprehended by the Turkish coastguard and then detained in the western coastal city of Izmir. After five days in detention, he said he was physically forced to put his thumbprint on a document "agreeing" to a voluntary return to Afghanistan. He was not given a copy of the document. H.R. told Amnesty International by phone: "We don't want to go back because we are in danger in Afghanistan. If we go back, we will be killed by the Taliban."

The flight from Ankara to Kabul left at 1:30 am on Saturday, March 19. Amnesty International has seen a photo of H.R.'s boarding pass, as well as a travel document issued by the Afghan authorities in Turkey, apparently showing that he

was "deported because of illegal entry [to Turkey]".

Although H.R. responded to messages mid-day on Sunday in Kabul, subsequent attempts to reach him have failed and his phone appears to have been switched off.

When contacted by Amnesty International about the returns, the Turkish Directorate General of Migration Management acknowledged the return of 27 Afghans, but insisted that all were returned voluntarily and that none had requested asylum.

The events described by H.R. are identical to forced returns and other abuses documented by Amnesty International in a December 2015 report.

The organization found that refugees and asylum-seekers were apprehended at the western border, detained without access to lawyers, and then forcibly returned to Syria and Iraq after being forced to sign "voluntary return" papers.

At the time the European Commission responded that it would keep this "serious matter under review," however it is still not acknowledging the violations as documented by Amnesty International. In recent months, growing numbers of refugees intercepted en route to Greece have been transferred to the EU-funded Erzurum Removals Center, from which they have been forcibly returned to their countries of origin without access to lawyers and asylum proceedings. Without any human rights benchmarks or independent monitoring of the EU-Turkey deal's implementation, there is no guarantee that such abuses will not be repeated.

"Returns to Turkey cannot proceed on the basis that Turkey is a safe country for refugees. The EU should adopt an independent resettlement plan and work with its partner Turkey to end the abuse of refugee rights," said Dalhuisen.

While Turkish law protects the right of asylum seekers to apply for asylum from detention, Amnesty International has documented many cases where this right has not been granted in practice. Asylum applications for people who remain within Turkey are rarely processed. Amnesty International has repeatedly made freedom of information requests regarding the number of claims processed by the Turkish authorities and the number of people provided with refugee status. The authorities have repeatedly refused to provide this information on the grounds that it is "confidential." (PR)

(8) 2-Day Anti... extremism and to evolve anti-extremism strategies." The Egyptian scholar, Dr. Mohammad Ahmad Fatehi, who attended the two-day conference, told Pajhwok Afghan News that extremism was an act against Islamic Shariah. He said if the Muslims shunned extremism they would be able to get rid of problems they faced today.

"Extremism has posed a great threat to the Islamic world. That's why the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) has prohibited the Ummah from extremism and had said the prophets were sent to make life easy not violent." Religious scholar Mohammad Karim said from Islamic point of view, excessive use of religious instructions was called "ifrat" and making the instructions negative meant "tafrif."

(8) 2-Day Anti...

"In short, we can say an abundance of Islamic directives, teachings and our customary habits is called ifrat and a shortage of these is tafrif." Civil society activist Mohammad Zaman Nazari told Pajhwok Afghan News that such conferences had been beneficial and had a positive impact on the society. He stressed continuation of the conferences. (Pajhwok)

(9) New Zabul ... activities and in this regard I demand tribal elders' cooperation." Speaking on the occasion, provincial council chief Atta Jan Haqbayani said no development activity had been carried out in Zabul over the past few years.

"This province has been without university so far. Zabul borders Pakistan, but has no customs office. There are many areas where nothing special has been done so far," the public representative said. Senator Dr. Zalmai Zabuli told Pajhwok Afghan News government officials subjected the people of Zabul to a step-motherly treatment.

"Many residents of Zabul are eligible to work in government departments, but the government is not giving them a chance," the law-

maker said. Bismillah Afghanmal replaces Mohammad Anwar Ishaqzai, who served as Zabul governor for eight months, and has been reappointed as the governor of Badghis province. (Pajhwok)

(10) Pakistani ... 200 families to abandon the area. The cross-border incursions by Pakistani military intensified during the recent weeks and in its latest provocative move, the Pakistani military helicopters enter the Afghan air space in eastern Kunar province and dropped several bombs in certain areas earlier this month.

The provocative move by the Pakistani military sparked anger among the Afghan people and officials with the former Afghan President Hamid Karzai strongly condemning the provocative act. (KP)

(11) 24 Taliban... underway over the past few days. He said hundreds of families had been displaced from the area. However, a Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, denied casualties to the fighters. He said the rebels had not been engaged with security forces and the enemy's claim was aimed at boosting their soldiers' morale."

Elsewhere, insurgents stormed check posts of security forces in southern Ghazni province. At least 12 Taliban fighters were killed in the ensuing clashes in Azaad and Bakhtyar areas of Gilan district. Rebel commanders Hanzala, Zalmai and KochniFidai were among the dead and a policeman was also wounded in the clashes. Ghazni governor's spokesman, Javid Salangi, confirmed the clashes and the killing of at least 12 Taliban insurgents and wounding of six others. A resident of Bakhtyar area of Gilan district, Noor Ahmad, said clashes erupted between security forces and Taliban on Tuesday night, but he had no information about casualties. Zabihullah, the Taliban spokesman, confirmed the clash in Gilan district and said the fighters killed two ANA soldiers and wounded three others. He confirmed the killing of three fighters in the clashes. (Pajhwok)

(12) Girl Dead, ... Khalid Muslim, a resident of locality, confirmed the traffic accident. He said the injured were shifted to the clinic where they were provided medical treatment. (Pajhwok)

(12) Girl Dead, ...

(13) Child Suicide ... mother had died and his father was a drug addict. He received terror training in Peshawar. Trainers showed him videos to motivate the boy into joining the jihad against the Afghan government. "I came through Torkham to Lalpura. It was on Friday that I entered a mosque for offering prayers, but most of worshippers were Afghan security personnel who were introduced to me as non-believers. "I, therefore, felt I had been fed lies and I surrendered to police with the help of a religious scholar," Abu Zar added. Children trained for carrying out suicide attacks have surrendered to police in the past as well. (Pajhwok)

(14) Substandard ... treated at the Noor Hospital. "I was cooking soup, as I took the cooker off the stove, it exploded." Khadija, another victim of a similar incident, said: "Our pressure cooker exploded and hit my face and damaged my eyes, I currently use eyeglasses."

Herat Zonal Hospital spokesman Mohammad Rafiq Sherzai told Pajhwok that three women lost their lives to cooker explosions last year. The governor's spokesman, Jailani Farhad, said the provincial government was trying to prevent the sale of substandard cookers in coordination with traders. "The local government is not only trying to prevent substandard pressure cookers but also to control all kinds of low quality products," he said. Experts believe low quality pressure cookers threaten the lives of families. (Pajhwok)

(15) 2 Doctors ... been parked at the side of the road and some passengers had already disembarked from it. The vehicle slipped into the gorge, killing one person killed and wounding a second, he added. (Pajhwok)

(16) Russian, German... The German diplomat would also

meet U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, who arrived in Moscow on Wednesday afternoon. (Xinhua)

(17) US to Press ... transition" in Syria, the official said as Kerry arrived in Moscow. "Obviously what we are looking for, and what we have been looking for, is how we are going to transition Syria away from Assad's leadership," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. After five years of conflict that has killed over 250,000 people and caused the world's worst refugee crisis, Washington and Moscow reached a deal three weeks ago for a cessation of hostilities and delivery of humanitarian aid to besieged areas. (Reuters)

(18) French PM ... The French prime minister added there was a need to move forward "with all the means to fight against terrorism". He said as for the Brussels attacks, "Europe was attacked, so the response must be on an European level." (Xinhua)

(19) Kremlin Says... doubt Russia will continue to take this responsible approach." Peskov also said he knew of no prior agreement between Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Ukrainian counterpart Petro Poroshenko on handing Nadezhda Savchenko over to Kiev. (Reuters)

(20) UAE Ratifies ... release and clearance of goods, including goods in transit. It also sets out measures for effective cooperation between customs and other authorities concerned on trade facilitation and customs compliance issues. It also contains provisions for technical assistance and capacity building in this field. (Xinhua)

(21) Russia Accuses ... Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier in Moscow, told reporters that Kiev's inaction is the main stumbling block to a peace settlement in the east. Lavrov said Germany had floated the idea of holding an election in the rebel-occupied territories this summer but Kiev said no. "Minsk-2 cannot be reviewed, and we should resist attempts to undermine it," Lavrov said. Kiev insists it can't hold the vote because it cannot guarantee security for election officials. Rebels in their turn have said they will not allow Ukrainian right-wing parties to run, which the Ukrainian government says makes the election impossible. (AP)

(22) Security was catching a bus to work. "Life must go on." Jean and Anne-Marie Materielle were one of only two dozen or so tourists admiring the gilded gothic facades of Brussels' Grand Place. The pair from central France arrived from Brussels on Tuesday, arriving in the Molenbeek neighborhood only hours after the three bombs went off in the Brussels airport and subway. (AP)

(23) Sisi Reshuffles... business sector minister, while Mohamed Saafan replaced manpower minister Gamal Sorour. Mohamed Abdel-Atty was appointed as irrigation minister replacing Hossam Moghazi. Mohamed Yehia Rashed took the place of tourism minister Hisham Zaazou, and Khaled El-Anany replaced antiquities minister Mamdouh El-Damaty. (Xinhua)

(24) New Ukrainian ... a no-confidence vote in parliament thanks to support from his own party and lawmakers that Ukrainian media have linked to three powerful tycoons who enjoy great political sway. But two junior members of the pro-Western coalition that formed in the wake of October 2014 parliamentary elections broke ranks with the government after that vote. (AFP)

France, Palestinians Mull Proposal for Peace Conference RAMALLAH - Palestinian Minister of Foreign Affairs Reyad El-Malki said Wednesday that his French counterpart Jean-Marc Ayrault will visit West Bank to discuss French proposal to host an international peace conference.

El-Malki told the Palestinian Public Radio that Ayrault's visit will discuss the latest updates by

the French government, following the tour taken by its special envoy Pierre Vimont which included several European states and the United States. El-Malki said that the Palestinian leadership has been in touch with the French government constantly in order to hold a successful peace conference, based on the ideas put forwards by Vimont. He added that he will be meeting with officials of the European Union (EU).

The idea of holding an international peace summit in Paris was initially presented in January by former French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius, who said that if the summit would not materialize, France would nonetheless acknowledge an independent Palestinian state. Those statements antagonized Israeli officials with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu saying it is "counterproductive."

The peace talks between Israel and Palestine have been stalled since April 2014. The U.S. sponsored talks that lasted for nine months achieved no tangible results. (Xinhua)

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British Gov't Vows to Give Every Child Chance to Enjoy Great Outdoors LONDON - Every schoolchild in Britain is to be given the chance to visit Britain's inspiring National Parks under plans announced Wednesday by Environment Secretary Elizabeth Truss.

New figures reveal that only one in 10 schoolchildren currently have access to any outdoor learning.

The new plan for National Parks will start a program of activity to safeguard the future of iconic landscapes by engaging young people throughout their education.

More than 80,000 young people from primary schools will visit National Parks, and National Parks will be added to the curriculum at secondary schools. There will also be a doubling in the number of youth volunteers at National Parks as part of the National Citizen Service. The number of apprenticeships working in National Parks will also double by 2020.

A spokesman for Defra, the department for environment, food and rural affairs, said: "With over half of the population in England living within an hour of a National Park, the plan aims to increase the diversity of visitors from the UK, as well as promoting these world-class cultural attractions to a global audience through the campaign to drive international tourism."

Truss said she aims to build annual visitor numbers to the parks to 100 million, bringing an extra 570 million US dollars to local businesses, adding to the 5.68 billion US dollars already generated by National Parks. (Xinhua)

Moscow Steps up Anti-Terror Efforts after Brussels Attacks MOSCOW - Moscow has stepped up anti-terror measures in the wake of the Brussels attacks, authorities said Wednesday.

"Patrols were increased. The places where foreigners stay were located," Anatoly Yakunin, an Interior Ministry official, was quoted by the RIA Novosti news agency as saying. Such efforts were made last year as terrorist threats in Moscow increased after the launch of Russian airstrikes in Syria, he said.

"In light of yesterday's terrorist attacks in Belgium, we have resumed those arrangements," said Yakunin, head of the Interior Ministry's Moscow City Department. Explosions at the Brussels airport and a metro station killed at least 34 people. The Islamic State terrorist group has claimed the terror attacks, which put Belgium and other European countries on high alert. Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday condemned the attacks and urged international anti-terror cooperation. (Xinhua)

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