

**(1) Ghani,...**

Qazi Mohammad Hakim Hakim reached the Afghan capital.

Advisor to HPC on foreign affairs Mohammad Ismail Qasimyar told Pajhwok Afghan News on Tuesday that the peace talks with the HIA delegation had gone successful.

He said the peace talks were about to reach a conclusion because the HIA had initiated the talks with honesty and goodwill. "Considerable points in the talks are settled and the little bit differences have extensively neared a settlement."

Qasimyar said it was expected that President Ashraf Ghani and HIA leader Gulbadin Hekmatyar sign a peace accord between the Afghan government and the HIA in one or one and a half week.

He said information about the text of the peace agreement would be unveiled once the document was readied for signing and both the sides were agreed to it.

Recent reports said talks between the two sides were ongoing on removing Hekmatyar and other HIA members from the UN blacklist, releasing HIA prisoners and paving the ground for the return of Afghan refugees.

Qasimyar did not share information about any contentious points but said the sides were not far from reaching an accord.

Nearly two weeks back, Afghan peace negotiators said the government was committed to releasing HIA political prisoners but through a commission in order HIA prisoners could be identified.

Qasimyar said the Afghan government had contacted the United Nations to call for removing the name of Hekmatyar and other HIA leaders from the UN Security Council blacklist.

He said the United States had also put Hekmatyar and other HIA members on its blacklist but it was the High Peace Council's official request to the international community to show goodwill in this regard.

"When peace is reaching with the HIA, it becomes meaningless to keep names on blacklist," Qasimyar said, adding they were expecting a positive response from the UN about the removal of names of HIA men from its blacklist.

He said the international community had recognised the peace talks as Afghan-led and Afghan-owned and the international community should respect Afghanistan's decisions in this regard.

Contact could not be established with the HIA delegation, but the delegation had previously claimed considerable progress in the peace talks with the government. (Pajhwok)

**(2) ADB Ok...**

of the Asian Development Fund (ADF-ADB grant window, on May 1, 2016.

Minister of Finance Eklil Hakimi participated in the ADB annual meeting in Germany on May 2. On the sidelines of the meeting, he discussed the implementation and funding of development projects with ADB officials.

A statement from the ministry quoted Hakimi as saying: "This grant will enable us to implement large infrastructure projects in energy, transport, and water infrastructure sectors and bring us closer to our aspiration of becoming a self-reliant country".

ADB Country Director Thomas Panella stated: "All in all, the ADF contributions remain strong and ADB should be able to retain its commitment to Afghanistan as its lead infrastructure development partner."

Hakimi and ADB Vice-President Wencai Zhang discussed the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan, development projects, Afghanistan's priorities.

ADB's annual meeting, running from May 2 to 5, will draw over 3,000 finance ministers, central bank governors and other government officials, business leaders, investors, journalists, and representatives from civil society. (Pajhwok)

**(3) NUG Blasted...**

Ashraf Ghani said last week at a joint session of parliament that he would introduce nominees for the MoD and NDS soon.

"They say that they are going to devise security and devise a five-year plan; how can they do this without having a minister of defense and chief of NDS?... If they want peace to come and the security situation to improve..., they should introduce a minister of defense and NDS chief to parliament soon," said Dawood Asas, a former senator.

"Minister of defense and NDS chief have the authorities that caretakers don't have .... legally there is a big difference in administrative duties," said Najman Massoudi, a trainer at the Military Academy.

The political analysts believe that the NUG is a government of slogans and it has failed to deliver on its promises.

"If the NUG had worked strategically, it should have appointed compliant and qualified people as minister of defense and NDS chief, because they are the most important security institutions," said Sayed Farhad Hashimi, a political analyst.

The Presidential Palace meanwhile reiterated its promise that the two nominees will be introduced soon.

"The president in his address to parliament pledged [to introduce the nominees] and now the NUG has started discussions to introduce new people to lead the NDS and MoD," said Shahussain Murtazawi, the deputy spokesman for Ghani.

People also blasted the government for not keeping its promises.

"It is very important [for the NUG] to introduce minister of defense and NDS chief, because it is important for stability of the country," said Najib Sharifi, a resident of Kabul city.

Currently the two high level security organizations are being led by caretakers. (Tolonews)

**(4) No Plans ...**

modern military academy over the years.

Where many countries have cut back on aid to Afghanistan, India has stayed constant and promises to continue helping the country.

"We will continue what we are doing in Afghanistan. There is no plan for India to withdraw. We will continue our assistance with our Afghan friends in Afghanistan in construction to build public centers and in funding projects," said Jayant Prasad the director general for IDSA.

Currently 107 Afghan officers are receiving military training at the Indian Military Academy.

The officers are getting training in different areas including military exercises, use of weapons, horse riding and swimming.

"Each student at the academy is taught how to swim and at the end of the semester the student must swim 35m and if he fails he will be failed for six months and if he repeatedly fails he will be expelled from the academy," said Asadullah Massoud, an Afghan trainer at the Indian Academy.

Nearly 3,000 Afghan officers have graduated from the Indian Military Academy and received graduation certificates over the years.

"When the Afghan students graduate from here they are directly introduced to the Afghanistan defense force's foreign relations department and after an assessment their documents rank them and on the basis of that they are appointed to duties and the officers start serving people in Afghanistan," Massoud added.

The Indian Military Academy was established by the British Empire in 1932 and at the moment nearly 5,000 cadets from India and 17 other countries are receiving military training at the facility. (Tolonews)

**(5) Helsinki, Kabul...**

her country was dealing with the mass immigration issue in two ways. One way of resolving the problem was a joint Finland-EU strategy, she said. The two sides will meet on May 17 in Brussels on the future of asylum seekers.

A second way for Finland was take up the issue bilaterally with Afghan authorities, added Nerg, who is currently in Kabul to discuss the matter of asylum seekers with the Afghan government.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) containing the flow of illegal migrants was being drafted, she revealed, saying she had underlined the need for the voluntary return of refugees in her meeting with Afghan officials.

The visiting secretary said EU countries had been pondering over how they could provide financial support to the individuals who were ready to return to their country voluntarily. When asked about the future of refugees and her government's strategy for treating them, she said the cases of all 7,000 Afghan asylum seekers were being studied.

Finland understood situation in Afghanistan and the reason why these people had chosen to leave their country, Nerg said, hinting 3,000 of the asylum seekers might be allowed stay there.

Cases of the remaining 4,000 applicants are being investigated. She quoted the Finnish president as directing government officials to help the individuals facing grave security in home countries.

But those who merely wanted to have more comfortable lives would not be given permission to stay in Finland, explained Nerg, expressing deep concerns over the recent humanitarian crisis in the EU region. Some asylum seekers, including

women and children, lost their lives due to border closures by some EU countries. She said EU member countries had been working to prevent such tragedies. (Pajhwok)

**(6) President...**

for Afghanistan to enjoy the freedom of expression at the regional level despite a challenging security situation. One Afghan media outlet had even won a medal from Reporters Without Borders (RSF), he noted.

In his message, Ghani expect media leaders to play an effective role in supporting journalists and enforcing the draft law for private news organisations.

"Without doubt, freedom of the press is one of the main pillars of our newly-established democracy. The journalists, who provide accurate and balanced investigative reports, can play a vital role in institutionalising democracy."

"The government is responsible for adopting necessary steps for enforcing research-based reports and recommendations," the president concluded.

Separately, CEO Abdullah said the Afghans had fought for freedom of the press even when some people, parties and governments tried to silence their voices.

In a series of tweets, Abdullah pledged protecting media freedom. "I would like to tell media we are united, we are one nation, one voice and one group. You are the voice of our nation. I thank you."

Although Afghanistan had come a long way, there were still problems and challenging facing it, the CEO said. "We have recently witnessed attacks on media in Afghanistan..."

The unity government would continue working to respect Afghan media organisations for their work and tireless efforts throughout the last decade, the CEO promised.

However, he urged the media to avoid spreading wrong information. "Our country is facing so many problems today. Media should prioritise protecting national interests." (Pajhwok)

**(7) MoD Aims to ...**

presence of women in the army. "Fortunately, a lot of efforts have been made over the past few months to improve conditions [for women] in areas of capacity building, recruitment and creating a safe environment," said Azimi.

"Opportunity should be fostered, so that women will be able to protect women in all areas," said Hasina Safi, a civil society activist.

Currently there are 1,400 women working in different positions at the MoD. (Tolonews)

**(8) Govt. Criticized...**

Mohammad Sarwar Danish. According to reports, the decision to implement the project through Salang was taken during the last cabinet meeting.

A source privy of the development has said the government has decided to transmit another 220kV line from Bamyan province with the financial support of the Asian Development Bank.

The source further added that the government will also construct a substation in Bamyan province after approving Salang as the transit route for TUTAP project.

The decision by the government to transit the TUTAP line from Salang pass has sparked criticisms among the Afghan people.

The acting provincial governor Ata Mohammad Noor has also slammed the government for selecting Salang as the transit route for TUTAP, saying Salang is not a priority considering the presence of power lines.

Noor further added that the implementation of the project from Bamyan will not only ensure balance and justice in the implementation of development projects but will also boost unity among the Afghan people.

He urged the government to consider the demands of the residents of central province and allow the project to pass through Bamyan province.

This comes as Vice President Danish wrote a letter to the Ministry of Energy and Water and Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat and called for technical approach to implement the project, considering the needs of the residents of the central provinces for their access to energy who have repeatedly demanded the government to ensure social justice while executing such projects.

Pointing towards the survey conducted by the Fichtner Engineering Company in 2013 for a 20-year master plan of Afghanistan, a report of which was presented to the Asian Development Bank and Ministry of Energy and Water, Danish said the Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat is ignoring the technical views of Ficht-

ner.

According to Danish, ignoring these points will not only delay the development of power supply and has no justification in terms of theory and technical aspects. (KP)

**(9) Taliban Must ...**

consider themselves sons of Afghanistan'.

In a statement released following a series of deadly attacks across the country since the group announced its spring offensive, Karzai said the war has been imposed on the Afghan nation and has roots outside the country.

Karzai further added that the main organizers of the war are living outside the country with full immunity and are plotting attacks to kill the Afghan people.

He did not elaborate further regarding the roots of Afghan war which falls outside the country but the Afghan officials have long been criticizing Pakistan for allowing the Afghan anti-government armed militants to use their soil as sanctuaries for conducting attacks in Afghanistan.

The Taliban group leadership as well as the notorious Haqqani terrorist network are openly operating in Pakistan by establishing councils in Peshawar and Quetta cities. (KP)

**(10) Website ...**

ministers and was published in the official gazette of Afghanistan, but we haven't seen its effective results so far," said Shahla Farid, legal advisor for the website.

"In addition to quality-based research, we have also launched a quantity-based research program, which looks at sexual harassment in the work environment, university environment and public places. To find a solution, we have also talked to men," said Zarqa Yaftali, head of the organization.

Afghan psychologist, Sayed Rohullah Rezwani, said that in a society when a person's sexual demands are not addressed through safe and legitimate ways, the person naturally looks for illegal ways.

The organization said the advice given to women is free. The website can be accessed at [www.harassmap.af](http://www.harassmap.af) (Tolonews)

**(11) Keep Supporting...**

upcoming presidential elections in the US and prior commitments from Washington.

President Barack Obama has pledged to keep 9,800 US troops in Afghanistan through most of 2016. By the he leaves the White House, he plans to cut the US troop strength to 5,500.

But Samad urged the US, as indeed the entire global fraternity, to send the Taliban and other insurgent groups a clear message that they continued to stand firmly behind the Afghan people. (Pajhwok)

**(12) Pakistan Opposes ...**

message to the Taliban that a positive environment was the key to any negotiations.

"For this purpose, we told the Taliban delegation that they have to agree on a cessation of violence inside Afghanistan," one Pakistani official was quoted as saying by the daily.

Although the Taliban insisted the delegation's visit was aimed to discuss issues of Afghan refugees and border security, insider said the main objective was to explore the possibility of direct parleys. (Pajhwok)

**(13) Afghan ...**

powerful individuals and government forces used to target journalists in order to force them into self-censorship.

He said the Afghan media faced many challenges including threats and attacks but journalists continued to brave them. (Pajhwok)

**(14) 'Afghan Constitution...**

groups' violent ideology and attacks threatened all Afghans, but the Shi'a Muslim, Hindu and Sikh minorities were especially vulnerable.

USCIRF said that extremist attacks on Shi'a Muslims increased in 2015. Despite a sustained international support effort, the Afghan government lacked the capacity to protect civilians from attacks, it rued.

In addition, the country's constitution and other laws violated international standards for freedom of religion or belief, according to the report, which said based on these concerns, USCIRF again placed Afghanistan on Tier 2, where it has been since 2006. (Pajhwok)

**(15) British MP, ...**

policy on the interpreters. Nearly a dozen interpreters run the risk of being deported after Home Secretary Theresa May won the right to send the Afghans back to their country.

It quoted Lord Guthrie, a former

chief of defence staff, as saying: 'It is shaming for us. The Daily Mail has my full support. I think we are incredibly mean and churlish towards these men who risked our lives to support us.'

Dr. Foxecheoed his view: 'We have a duty of care towards those willing to put their lives on the line for our forces. We should be willing to give sanctuary to those people. They put themselves at risk to guarantee the safety of our soldiers...'

Ex-naval chief Lord West remarked the UK had a debt of honour to a small number of people -- the Afghan interpreters. Britain should not deport them, as it would not send a good message around the world, he observed.

Dan Jarvis, Labour MP and former army major, also called on the Cameron government to compassion to the Afghans who had risked their lives and those of their families to help British forces. (Pajhwok)

**(16) Delegation in....**

told Pajhwok Afghan News the delegation would analyse security situation in the province. Governor Salim Khan Kunduzi updated the delegates on the situation of the province and said security forces in districts regularly attended their duty stations.

The governor said people, youth, religious scholars, tribal elders, influential figures, civil society members and women supported the Afghan security forces and even used to visit checkpoints to praise them. Kunduzi said internally displaced persons had been provided with assistance in-time. (Pajhwok)

**(17) Taliban Control...**

good but forces are fighting against militants but they do not have [offensive] operation orders," Arian said. According to Arian security forces have said that if they are given the order to carry out offensive attacks, they will be able to secure a peaceful environment for the locals. (Tolonews)

**(18) Unemployed...**

into the ranks of insurgents. He lashed out at leaders of the National Unity Government (NUG) for not honoring their promise to create jobs for people. (Tolonews)

**(19) Following ...**

confirmed the provincial head of the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Mohammad Jalal. He asked the government to permit the transfer of wooden furniture and equipment to other provinces to resolve the problem.

Cabinet ministers allowed transferring timber from Kunar to other provinces for three years in 2012, a period that has been expired. But now the ban is in force, according to Director of Customs Wazir Gun Khaksar. (Pajhwok)

**(20) Taliban ...**

quoted him as saying. A four-nation group involving Afghanistan, China, Pakistan and the US, has been trying since January to jump-start peace talks between the Taliban and Kabul. But the rebels refused coming to the negotiating table. (Pajhwok)

**(21) Samangan ...**

destroyed standing crops in the area. According to Fitrat, the early morning flooding had also blocked the Kabul-Balkh highway. Rajab Ali Yousufi, the Afghanistan Natural Disaster Management Authority provincial head, acknowledged losses people suffered due to the flood in Zwand Dara and other areas last night. (Pajhwok)

**(22) Taliban Threats ...**

plastic bag went viral. Ahmadi said that at first he was not sure who was behind all the phone calls, and that he thought it might criminal gangs seeking to extort money and falsely thinking the family might have made lots of cash amid the boy's international popularity. But he said he realized it was the Taliban after he received a call from a local driver in the area who told him he was bringing him a letter. "It was a letter sent by the Taliban," Ahmadi said.

The Taliban have not commented the case of the 5-year-old Murtaza and their spokesman was not immediately reachable for comment.

The Ahmadi family first traveled to the Pakistani capital, Islamabad, but couldn't stay there long because of the high cost of living. They later moved to Quetta. (AP)

**(23) Taliban Com...**

District of Zabul province, yesterday evening. The anti-government armed militant groups including the Taliban insur-

gents have not commented regarding the report so far.

Zabul is among the relatively volatile provinces in southern Afghanistan where anti-government armed militant groups are actively operating in a number of its districts and often carry out insurgency activities. (KP)

**(24) Foreign ...**

from NATO-led troops in Afghanistan said that they were aware of the reports, adding "US Forces-Afghanistan and Afghan forces were conducting a joint operation to dispose of old ordnance on the East side of Bagram Airfield." (Pajhwok)

**(25) New Building ...**

"The project would take four months to complete, the building is of great importance because it is in a secure area and suitable for people to visit." Meanwhile, IEC local office head Abdul Rahman Mohabbat said the building would help resolve problems they currently faced. The election officials currently performed their duty from a rented house, he added.

"We are obliged to rent a house for our office sections amid security concerns." (Pajhwok)

**(26) Russia-U.S. ...**

maybe even in the next few hours," Lavrov said, noting that the two countries are making joint efforts to ensure a "broadened and consolidated" truce regime in Syria.

On the Geneva Intra-Syrian talks, Lavrov urged the United States to use its influence over opposition forces, put an end to the use of ultimatums as well as prevent the "brute-force scenario." (Xinhua)

**(27) EU to Grant ...**

many countries have concerns over human rights in Turkey.

"The Commission will put forward a plan to include Turkey in the list of countries exempted from visas," a European source told AFP, adding that "only 64 out of the 72 criteria are fulfilled" and that the offer, therefore, remains conditional. (AFP)

**(28) EU Gives ...**

and to allow medical items through in aid convoys," added the Commissioner.

This funding is part of the 445 million euros in humanitarian aid, announced at the London donors' conference, that the Commission would provide in 2016 for the crisis in Syria, according to the Commission. (Xinhua)

**(29) Stability...**

manning checkpoints and restricting passage of thousands of people wishing to cross border.

Simicsko said Hungary was ready to assist Macedonia by sharing information and, if necessary, by providing additional border-control forces. Hungary has also offered to train Macedonian military personnel, he said. (Xinhua)

**(30) 27 Pct Drop ...**

passage linking North Africa with Italy this year.

A further 376 have died on the eastern Mediterranean route separating Turkey and Greece, while five have died on the Western Mediterranean and Western African routes. (Xinhua)

**(31) Former ...**

the final appointment, according to the Bonn-based Secretariat.

Earlier on Tuesday, outgoing UN climate chief Christiana Figueres made the same announcement on twitter. Laurence Tubiana, French ambassador for climate negotiations who was speculated to replace Figueres after she steps down in July, also wrote a Tweet to congratulate Espinosa. (Xinhua)

**(32) Kurdish Forces...**

sporadic clashes continued with the extremist militants in small pockets, the source said.

Meanwhile, dozens of IS militants attacked Khazir area in northeast Mosul, which itself located some 400 km north of the Iraqi capital of Baghdad, but the Kurdish troops repelled their offensive, killing and injuring a number of them, the source added. (Xinhua)

**(33) UN Demands...**

governments and fighters that under international law any intentional attack against hospitals and places where the sick and wounded are collected is a war crime.

The resolution follows last Wednesday's bombing of an important hospital in the Syrian city of Aleppo that killed more than 50 people including patients and the only pediatrician in the area. In Aleppo Tuesday, a maternity hospital was struck by rocket fire killing at least 4 people. (AP)