

(1) TUTAP...

for Afghanistan.

Outrage over TUTAP hit new heights this week when the government and power company, Da Afghan Breshna Sherkat (DABS), announced that the project will be implemented through Salang regions in northern Afghanistan.

DABS argued that if the project is implemented through Salang, it will decrease financial pressure on government. However, the decision faced setbacks amid public pressure over the redirection of the project.

Joining the protestors, Haji Mohammad Mohaqiq, the second deputy to the Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, dismissed the cabinet's decision as a historic mistake.

"The people will not accept the recent decision made by the cabinet. They [people] will not remain silent until their demands are met," Mohaqiq said.

The protest organizers accused the National Security Council (NSC) of interfering in the project.

"Our demand from government is to cancel the decision of the cabinet and implement the project in the line with public demand," former Vice President Mohammad Karim Khalili said. Meanwhile, President Ghani's second deputy Sarwar Danish assured the protestors that their reservations will be taken into consideration by government.

"You (protestors) must be assured that no project in the country will be implemented until the people are agreed on it," Danish told the gathering and called the protest as the right of the people.

The protestors set a week deadline to the cabinet in order to review the decision.

"We do not value individual voices which were heard over the project. There is information that the NSC is against the project. People's demand should not be undermined," head of the governing body of Insijam Party, Sadiq Mudabir said.

The NSC has not commented on the issue so far.

Later on, Ghani appeared in the national television, pledging to task a "national commission" to carry out technical assessment into the project. (Tolonews)

(2) Hamidullah ...

that the horrific attack on Rabbani required and still requires step by step and thorough investigation.

The party called on the government of national unity to launch a thorough investigation to find out regarding the 'known and hidden' perpetrators of the attack.

The statement also added that the government should launch an investigation regarding the target killings of Jamiat-e-Islami leaders who were assassinated in the past 15 years.

The government sources unveiled the details of the executed terrorists late on Sunday, hours after they were hanged for terror offences.

Hamidullah was identified as a Taliban group member who was involved in plotting an attack on former president and high peace council chief Burhanuddin Rabbani.

Rabbani was assassinated by a suicide bomber who had disguised himself as a peace messenger, representing the Taliban group. The attack was carried out inside his residence in capital Kabul on the evening of 20th September 2011. (KP)

(3) Nation has...

centralized government and political system where the decision-making is concentrated on by a single person or unit.

"The centralized political system will have negative repercussions ahead, we need to ensure the participation and presence of the people in the system," he said.

While the Taliban and other militant groups still remain a potential threat to Afghanistan's political and security stability, Masoud called for more to be done to curb the influence of such groups that intend to portray threats to the democratic process in the country.

"We should not allow our newly-established democracy to be threatened by extremists. Jamiat supports democracy to be institutionalized in our political system so that there is more balance and better coordination between all bodies of the system," he said.

In reference to the existence of corruption in the country, he called for a wider government and public effort to fight the trend.

"We must seriously combat terrorism and corruption," he said.

Referring to the political role of Jamiat in Afghanistan's politics, Masoud said that Jamiat has played a constructive role in national politics both

in the past and in the present, but pushed for a greater role for Jamiat in politics.

"Jamiat strongly believes in civil goals and has strong commitments to national issues, therefore Jamiat wants to play a broader role in politics," Masoud said.

Masoud also highlighted the main factors that led to the collapse of the government of Sardar Mohammad Dawoud Khan and said that he was surrounded by a number of then extremists who finally dismantled his government.

He said that there is a dire need to maintain political stability in the country, but for that Afghanistan should not allow anyone to manipulate the political power.

Masoud said that all ethnicities in the country must feel their presence in the political system in the country.

On the issue of electoral reforms he said that the people of Afghanistan want transparency in all national processes including the election process and that parliamentary and district council elections must be held.

"Transparency is the basic aspiration of the people in all national processes. The electoral reforms must be in place. The role of political parties in the election system and election law must be defined. Because the people want a strong democracy," he said.

On the political role of Jamiat in the formation of the National Unity Government (NUG), Masoud said that Jamiat played a key role in this respect and that is how they agreed on 50-50 power sharing agenda. (Tolonews)

(4) UN Mission ...

alleged perpetrators of serious crimes and crimes against civilians," a statement by the mission said.

The United Nations, noting the absence of what it called a conclusive evidence of the deterrent value of the death penalty, argued the use of the capital punishment did not contribute to public safety.

UNAMA said it encouraged the government of Afghanistan to expedite legal reform, which would allow death sentences to be commuted to life imprisonment.

The militants executed included a Haqqani terrorist member as well as an Al-Qaeda affiliate who were mainly involved in high profile attacks including the assassination of former president Burhanuddin Rabbani. (Pajhwok)

(5) 19 Military ...

improved substantially this past year and that between 150 and 180 air operations are carried out on a daily basis.

In the meantime, Sediq Sediqqi, a spokesman for the Ministry of Interior (MoI), on Monday acknowledged the security threats in Helmand are higher than in other provinces.

In response to a question by reporters over the increasing of US troops' combat role against insurgents, he said that Afghanistan needs the cooperation of foreign troops in combat against al-Qaeda, Haqqani, Taliban and other insurgent groups.

This comes as the Taliban's insurgency in Helmand is on the rise – but military leadership still appears reluctant to implement an important order issued by President Ashraf Ghani two weeks ago giving a free hand to security forces to fight militants from a harsher standpoint.

Two weeks ago, Ghani said during an address in parliament, that the military leadership must carry out large scale offensives against militants raging war in the province.

However, the order has still not been implemented. The reasons are unclear but this is putting a burden on the shoulders of overstretched Afghan forces, said critics.

Critics also believe the delay in implementing the order is enabling the Taliban to expand its attacks on embattled Afghan security forces who are fighting the Taliban on multiple fronts and in some key districts in the province. This in turn is threatening the security of the provincial capital, Lashkargah city. (Tolonews)

(6) Afghans Stage ...

Shinwari, said they wanted to convey their message to the world. "The ongoing war in Afghanistan is a proxy war, but its victims are the Afghans. The Afghans should no longer be killed for the benefits of others."

Shinwari criticised the US and other western countries for giving hundreds of millions of dollars in aid to Pakistan while the Afghans were bearing the brunt of the international war on terrorism.

He said they would continue their protests in various European countries until the international community imposes sanctions on Pakistan and Iran. (Pajhwok)

(7) Balkh Governor...

Constitution and shuns violence without any concession-seeking conditions, I had supported them, I support them and I will support them in future."

However, Noor said after the last meeting of the peace talks between the government and the HIA some issues had surfaced.

But the issues didn't mean the government had retreated from the peace process. The government welcomed the HIA but just presented its conditions, he added. Noor said it was awaited how the HIA would respond to the conditions. (Pajhwok)

(8) 35 Taliban ...

kidnappings on the highway. Vice President Dostum said security posts will be established in the highway similar as the other regions cleared of the militants in a bid to prevent the return of terrorists in the area.

He said the Taliban group has suffered heavy loss and has been defeated in the battle ground as the Afghan forces continue to chase the remaining militants hiding in their safe havens.

The statement by the office of the Vice President said the local residents did not suffer any casualties during the operations. (KP)

(9) Mixed Martial...

Eagles" contest which was organized by Absolute Championship Berkut and received 7,516 votes during the contest.

His emphatic triumph was acclaimed by a large number of Afghans, including government officials, politicians and youth. His photographs have gone viral on social media networks. (Pajhwok)

(10) Haqqani Network...

network has ties to Pakistani military-intelligence. The group has fought along side the Taliban in the 15-year Afghan conflict, but mostly operated independently, until last year when its fugitive chief Sirajuddin Haqqani was named deputy to Taliban leader Mullah Akhtar Mansoor.

Officials at NATO's Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan last week also warned of the Haqqani network, describing it as "the most lethal" and "most competent" terrorist organization in the area.

"Siraj Haqqani, has been named the number two for the Taliban. And we think that he is increasing really, his day-to-day role in terms of conducting Taliban military operations," says U.S. Army Brigadier General Charles Cleveland, deputy chief of staff for communications for NATO's Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan.

"And we think that he is trying to exert more influence really, on the leadership with some of these shadow governors in some of these other places [in Afghanistan]," Cleveland noted. But he underscored concerns about the Haqqanis branching out from their traditional area and then focus on high profile attacks like the one that killed nearly 70 people in Kabul last month.

Tensions with Pakistan The Haqqani network's growing role is likely to fuel Afghanistan's tensions with Pakistan. Kabul has consistently pressed Islamabad to crackdown on the group, claiming it has evidence showing Haqqanis were behind the April 19 deadly bombing in the Afghan capital.

Pakistani officials dismiss allegations the network is still operating from their territory. A senior foreign policy aide to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif last week urged Afghans to share the evidence, saying Islamabad's probe into the violence has established it had nothing to do with it.

Despite emerging new security challenges, Afghan officials claim their forces have inflicted heavy casualties on the insurgents since the Taliban launched its so-called spring offensive last month.

Kabul's ambassador to Islamabad, Hazrat Omer Zakhilwal, tells VOA the battlefield successes have boosted moral of Afghan forces, which have received far less casualties than the previous fighting season.

"There were a lot of expectations within the Taliban and the supporters of the Taliban that their spring offensive would result in significant advancements for the Taliban and that there would be collapse of a few provinces by now," Zakhilwal said. "The complete opposite happened. The Taliban received and are still receiving tremendous casualties. They did not make any advancement. They are struggling right now with respective their spring offensive and objectives." Afghan officials say U.S air support

has been sought in certain cases, but foreign troops are not involved in ground combat.

Cleveland says about 75 percent of the Afghan Special Operation Forces missions are conducted independently, with no coalition assistance whatsoever.

"Out of that remaining 25 percent, a percentage of that, we're not going into the field with them, we're just essentially helping them with the planning and intelligence and advising and those types of things," he said. Afghan forces

Independent Western security experts like Ted Callahan, who is based in northern Afghanistan, also agree with Kabul's assessment of the fighting.

Callahan says support from international forces has played a key role in operations Afghan National Defense and Security Forces have conducted, particularly in northern provinces, including Kunduz, which the Taliban had briefly overrun in 2015.

"I would say the mood of the local population is much more optimistic than we have seen for several months previously. But at the same time the question is how sustainable is this current model, because if you look it is really dependent on having international forces and their assets present," said Callahan.

Afghan forces have intensified counter-insurgency operations after the April 19 Kabul attack that officials blamed on the Haqqani network.

A Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, has dismissed as propaganda claims the insurgent group has suffered massive casualties and failed to achieve its objectives.

"Our spring offensive is not a week long or a moth-long activity. It is a full one year operation and our mujahideen will prevail as they did last year," Mujahid asserted.

Analysts believe the intensifying Afghan conflict means further deterioration of the country's relations with Pakistan.

A four-nation process, involving the United States, China, Afghanistan and Pakistan, to promote talks with the Taliban as well as Kabul's normal ties to Islamabad are now "practically hostage" to Afghan expectations of a direct Pakistani action against the Haqqani network, says an Afghan presidential aid, speaking to VOA on condition of anonymity. (VoA)

(11) Calls Mount...

said university lecturer Faizullah Jalal.

Meanwhile, government officials said they are committed to executing terrorists as it would enhance the morale of security and defense forces on the battlefield.

"What should the punishment be for those who kill the people of Afghanistan? The Afghan government never executes anyone without any reason," said Defense Ministry spokesman Dawlat Waziri.

A number of Kabul residents also called for the execution of more terrorists in order to boost the morale of security forces and strengthen law-and-order in the country.

The remarks come after six terrorists were executed by hanging at Pul-e-Charkhi prison in Kabul on Sunday morning on President Ashraf Ghani's orders. (Tolonews)

(12) Herat Youth ...

allege the situation has changed for the worse – two years after the inauguration of the unity government. They are worried about the capital flight and growing unemployment. Ghulam Rassoul, one of the youngsters, told Pajhwok Afghan News: "There is no work; I have been in quest of a job for weeks. My family is in need of food." Non-availability of eatables to the masses in this age is a matter of egregious shame for the rulers of any country, he remarked.

Aziz Ahmad, another young man who was graduated from the Faculty of Arts at the Herat University, is driving a rickshaw to feed his family. He observed even a university graduate could not find a job. Dozens of other graduates like him are jobless and have nothing to do.

He added unemployment had become the second biggest challenge after insecurity and violence. Herat is considered to be one of the peaceful and populated provinces of the country. Most of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) have sought refuge in Herat.

But Director of Works and Social Affairs Wakil Ahmad Sohail said the ministry concerned was working on some projects that would help generate job opportunities. Dispatching of labourers to Saudi Arabia and generation of work opportunities on TAPI are among the projects.

Moeed-ul-Haq Mowahidi, a social affairs expert, believed creating jobs

was possible only through the implementation of long-term projects. He hoped the TAPI project would help generate jobs in the country.

According to the Central Statistics Organisation (CSO), unemployment has increased from 15 to 40 percent in the past two years when most of foreign troops left the country and many businesses were closed. (Pajhwok)

(13) Baghlan Women ...

Baghlan women said they faced discrimination in government offices. They asked government leaders to be committed to their promises towards increasing women's role in government offices.

Mohammad Usma Sherzai, a member of Baghlan Civil Society Institutes Network, also confirmed women had a weak presence in government offices and asked the government to fulfill its pledges in this regard.

However, Baghlan administrative reforms and civil services director, Izzatullah Tawhidi, said women in Baghlan had no interest in working at government offices.

"Whenever a vacancy is announced, women do not apply, they only apply for jobs that belong to education department," he said.

Tawhidi added 70 vacancies were recently announced but not even a single woman had applied. (Pajhwok)

(14) Nabil and Saleh ...

and endorsing the move as legitimate, moralist and legal right of the government.

He said several members of the Afghan National Security Forces have lost their lives in arresting the terror convicts, insisting that the implementation of law against such individuals is a national need considering several civilians and security personnel killed in terrorist activities of the convicts. According to Saleh, the security personnel has never abandoned post unless they have been stabbed in the back politically.

Saleh called for national mobilization to boost the moral of the Afghan security forces who are fighting the militants in a sensitive period of time. Meanwhile, Nabil said the government should act decisively against the terrorists as they do not recognize any nation, religion or humanity and the enemies of humanity, Islam and the Afghan nation.

Nabil said he is hopeful that the decision by the government to hang the terrorists will also apply on other terror convicts who have committed atrocities against the Afghan nation.

The ARG Presidential Palace issued a statement following the execution of 6 terrorists in Pul-e-Charkhi prison of Kabul today, saying President Ghani is committed to ensure justice is served and to punish those involved in terror and criminal activities.

The execution of militants follows over a week after President Ghani received a list of militants sentenced to death which followed after a deadly attack on VIP protection unit in capital Kabul last month leaving at least 64 dead and 347 others wounded.

President Ghani vowed to continue suppressing the militants following the deadly attack emphasizing that the government has done what it could do to end the violence through reconciliation. (KP)

The deadly attack emphasizing that the government has done what it could do to end the violence through reconciliation. (KP)

(15) Afghan Interpreters ...

counterparts, who were all given assistance when their lives were endangered by their work with British forces in Iraq.

But Lady Justice Arden, Lord Justice David Richards and Sir Colin Rimer threw out their case and refused permission for appeal to the Supreme Court, according to the Belfast Telegraph.

The Afghans prayed scheme should cover "locally engaged staff" employed by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in Afghanistan before the 2012. (Pajhwok)

(16) 6 Afghans ...

that the truck had been spotted in a desert by security forces. When the driver refused to stop, the forces on patrol chased the vehicle.

The major shooting erupted when the driver ran into policemen, who had blocked the road ahead of him. Iran hosts over 1.5 million registered Afghan refugees, and as many illegal Afghans. (Pajhwok)

(17) 36 Insurgents...

in Takhar. Another two fighters were killed and seven wounded in Sari-Pul while one militant was eliminated in the Dand-e-Ghori district of Baghlan

According to the MoD statement, five 5 armed militants including commander Alef were killed and three others wounded in the Deh

Rawud district of Uruzgan.

Six fighters were killed in the Andar district of Ghazni and Zurmattown of Paktia, where four others were wounded. (Pajhwok)

(18) Bicycle ...

eight others injured.

Meanwhile, Sayed Aqa Andarabi, the police chief of Faryab province when approached by Xinhua, confirmed the blast, but without giving details saying investigations have been initiated into the case. (Xinhua)

(19) Ex-Mayor ...

locality of Dawlatabad district.

In Andkhoy district, police commander Ismail was wounded after militants ambushed his vehicle on the Andkhoy-Maimana highway. Ismail came under attack at 8:00am, a security official said. (Pajhwok)

(20) Cameron Fears...

leaders. Former London Mayor and leading Brexit campaigner Boris Johnson said later: "The principle guarantor of peace and stability on our continent has been NATO, and what worries me now is that it is the European Union's pretensions to run a foreign policy and a defense policy that risk undermining NATO. (Xinhua)

(21) EU Commissioner...

come tax reforms Greek legislators voted for were "very important steps."

"We should today recognize that this effort has been taken. It represents a number of very strong measures, and with that, Greece will be on its way to recover growth," he said. (Xinhua)

(22) Lavrov, Kerry ...

of hostilities," the ministry said, adding that Lavrov and Kerry also noted the decisive role of close cooperation between the Russian and US servicemen within the framework of a joint operation center in Geneva.

Lavrov reiterated to Kerry "the necessity of swift separation of Washington-oriented anti-government formations from terrorist groups, as well as cutting off supply of extremists through the Turkish territory." (Agencies)

(23) ASEAN Drills...

to Singapore's Ministry of Defence. Minister Ng described the multinational exercise as "sizable commitment", which sent out "very clear and strong signal", after he viewed ADMM-Plus Special Forces Take Down Terrorist Hideout on Monday at a SAF training area near Lim Chu Kang. (Xinhua)

(24) Russia Showcases ...

reinforce national identity, for geopolitical point scoring, and to underscore the importance of having a strong military to protect the country's borders. (Reuters)

(25) Refugee ...

-- which has since reintroduced temporary border controls and taken other steps to contain influx of new migrants -- and in eastern Europe, where several Balkan countries in March shut their borders to refugees flocking in from Greece. (Xinhua)

(26) UNHCR ...

refugee registration. Kibicho also said the government would close refugee camps "within the shortest possible time" because of national security concerns.

He said Kenya had hosted more than 600,000 refugees for over a quarter of a century and had shouldered "a very heavy economic, security and environmental burden" and asked for the support of the international community to expedite the process. (Xinhua)

(27) BBC Correspondent ...

prevented from boarding that flight, taken to a hotel and interrogated by the security bureau here in Pyongyang before being made to sign a statement and then released, eventually allowed to rejoin us here in this hotel," Sudworth said in the report. (Reuters)

(28) Suspected...

subject to any investigation on suspicion of terrorism in Slovenia. The Slovenian police also stressed that it has "in the recent period not obtained relevant data suggesting any such criminal activity being committed or prepared on Slovenian territory. (Xinhua)

(29) Tajikistan

led to the arrest of Tajik national Duston Menglikulov on his arrival in Dushanbe from Moscow on May 6.

The tip off came after police in Moscow detained several Central Asian migrants on May 2 on suspicion of preparing a series of terrorist attacks in the Russian capital. (Agencies)