

(1) OBOR ...

Afghanistan ambassador to China Janan Musazai were among the delegation attending the crucial conference.

Chinese President Xi Jinping delivered a keynote speech at the opening ceremony of the Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation.

He said: "The ancient silk routes embody the spirit of peace and cooperation, openness and inclusiveness, mutual learning and mutual benefit," he said.

Four years on: great achievements made under the initiative. The past four years have seen deepened policy connectivity, enhanced infrastructure connectivity, increased trade connectivity and expanded financial connectivity as the vision of the Belt and Road Initiative is becoming a reality and bearing rich fruit, Xi said.

He hailed the fruitful achievements made over the past four years, saying over 100 countries and international organizations have supported and got involved in the Belt and Road Initiative.

China has signed cooperation agreements with over 40 countries and international organizations and carried out framework cooperation on production capacity with more than 30 countries, he said.

To enhance financial connectivity, China has engaged in multiple forms of financial cooperation with countries and organizations involved in the initiative, Xi said.

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has provided 1.7 billion US dollars of loans for nine projects in Belt and Road participating countries, and the Silk Road Fund has also made four billion US dollars of investment, he said.

Steering the initiative toward greater success President Xi highlighted the key principles behind the building of the Belt and Road, and pledged to build it into a road of peace, prosperity, opening up and innovation and a road connecting different civilizations.

"We should foster a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation; and we should forge partnerships of dialogue with no confrontation and of friendship rather than alliance," Xi said.

"Trade is an important engine driving growth," Xi said, saying countries should uphold the multilateral trading regime, advance the building of free trade areas and promote liberalization and facilitation of trade and investment. Concrete efforts to be made under the initiative China will scale up financing support for the Belt and Road Initiative by contributing 100 billion yuan (14.5 billion US dollars) to the Silk Road Fund, Xi said.

The China Development Bank and the Export-Import Bank of China will set up special lending schemes respectively worth 250 billion Yuan equivalent (36.2 billion US dollars) and 130 billion Yuan equivalent (18.8 billion US dollars) to support cooperation on infrastructure, industry capacity and financing, he added. China will provide emergency food aid worth two billion Yuan (290 million US dollars) to developing countries along the Belt and Road and make an additional contribution of one billion US dollars to the Assistance Fund for South-South Cooperation, Xi said.

China will sign business and trade cooperation agreements with over 30 countries and enter into consultation on free trade agreements with related countries, Xi said.

Xi added that the China International Import Expo will be held starting from 2018.

At least 29 heads of state and government are attending the forum, the highest-profile international meeting on the Belt and Road since Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the initiative in 2013. (Pajhwok)

(2) MPs Criticize ...

excluded from that. Considering the ongoing rift between leaders of the national unity government, this issue [appointment of new HPC chief] has been delayed and they have not managed to reach an agreement in this respect," said Nadir Shah Bahr, an MP.

"You know that the High Peace Council is faced with crisis. Some-

times there is no chief while sometimes its activities are facing with problems. It indicates that there is a major vacuum in a body which was established for peace," said Juma-uddin Giyanwal, a lawmaker.

The Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah's office meanwhile stressed the need for someone to be appointed to the position. However, the CEO's office insisted that the absence of a chief within the council has not overshadowed efforts on the part of the council in working towards peace.

"Decision has not been made about the appointment of head of the council so far, but discussions are ongoing by government in this respect," the CEO's deputy spokesman Jawed Faisal said. (Tolonews)

(3) Kunduz War ...

the two sides of the highway, which were used by the Taliban as shields, have been damaged and that threats still remain to the road.

"The clashes started at 5am in the morning and by the afternoon we saw no government forces at the area to come and help the people," said Ahmad Nadir, a resident of Khanabad district.

"We have suffered a lot. Our houses have been damaged. Government should come and assess what we have lost," said Waisuddin, a resident of the district.

Meanwhile, a number of public uprising forces in Khanabad district in Kunduz criticized government's war strategy in the province.

"They [public uprising forces] fought for three days without receiving water and food. What we should do when government acts like this?" asked Zmarai, a member of public uprising forces in the province. (Tolonews)

(4) Country-Wide ...

under five years of age with vaccines, regardless of where they live," he said.

"It is critical that the safety of our committed volunteers and frontline health workers is ensured so they can successfully carry out their important duties in delivering health services to every Afghan household to protect all children from this paralyzing disease."

The MoPH reiterated the importance of the polio vaccine for ensuring all children are protected from the crippling effects of polio. Most countries are now free from polio as a result of immunization and Afghanistan is one of only three countries where polio still existed. (Pajhwok)

(5) MPs Ask ...

police district of Kabul. Abdullah Qarraq, a senator from northern Kunduz province, expressed concern over the existence of weapons in the private school and said those involved in the crime should be arrested.

Addressing the upper house's today session, he said reports indicated the school belonged to a former member of parliament and the government must reveal his or her name.

He also asked the government to clarify to the people for what purpose the weapons were stored in the school.

First deputy chairman, Mohammad Alam Ezediyar, who chaired the session, said the weapons depot at the private school was large and the government should take action and expose those involved. (Pajhwok)

(6) MoF Adds ...

middle of the year will create challenges. How the money will be spent for the [uplift] projects, how it will be processed and how will the work on projects and plans will progress in such a short time?" he asked.

The national budget for the solar year 1396 (March 2017 to March 2018) is over 429 billion AFs of which 268 billion AFs is part of the ordinary budget and the remaining 160 billion AFs is part of the development budget.

The national budget for the fiscal year 1396 was approved by the Wolesi Jirga (Lower House of Parliament) in January. (Tolonews)

(7) Iran Stresses ...

"Certainly, we shouldn't allow

the terrorist groups to be formed in Afghanistan and disturb the Afghan people and government," he added.

Noting that Tehran respects Afghanistan's sovereignty and people, Qassemi said that Iran will cooperate with Kabul as much as it can as security in Afghanistan is important to Iran.

His remarks came after Iranian and Afghan Foreign Ministers Mohammad Javad Zarif and Salahuddin Rabbani in a meeting in Kabul last Sunday stressed the need for boosting the two countries' cooperation in the fight against terrorism.

"We don't have good or bad terrorists and countries should fight against the terrorist groups in cooperation with each other and security should be established at countries' borders and the terrorist groups shouldn't be able to harm countries' security," Zarif said during the meeting.

Elsewhere, he also underscored the necessity for strengthened mutual economic cooperation within the framework of the full package of economic cooperation earlier agreed between Tehran and Kabul.

Rabbani, for his part, confirmed his country's willingness to cooperate with Iran in campaign against terrorism as well as economic fields, and appreciated Tehran for its aid to the Afghan refugees. (IRNA)

(8) Senators ...

said Senator Rahmatullah Achekzai.

"The enemies of Afghanistan are working for the interest of enemies. They are fabricating conspiracies against Afghanistan's brave, courageous and champion personalities such as Gen. Abdul Raziq," said Gulalai Akbari, member of the Meshrano Jirga.

The UN Committee against Torture in a report accused Gen. Raziq of torturing of prisoners and enforced disappearances.

The UN committee alleged that Gen. Raziq had used different methods of torture against prisoners such as suffocation, crushing the testicles, pumping water into stomach and administering electric shocks.

Gen. Raziq has denied all the allegations and has termed the report unprofessional and unauthentic. The Afghan government also has rejected the allegations and has called them baseless. (Tolonews)

(9) Iran, ...

economic relations over past three years, specially after the nuclear deal between Tehran and major world powers.

"This shows a twofold rise in the volume of trade exchanges between the two neighboring nations," Qoqandi added.

He reiterated that Iran and Afghanistan have also expanded their relations in other areas in the past three years, and said, "Construction of Khaf-Herat railway project is an example."

In relevant remarks in early April, Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Spokesman Seyamuddin Pesarlai underlined that Iran has turned into his country's biggest trade partner.

"Iran is now Afghanistan's biggest trade partner with trade exchanges between the two countries hitting \$1.8 billion," Pesarlai said.

The senior Afghan trade official underlined that 80 percent of the transactions relates to imports from Iran and the rest is related to the export to the country.

Pesarlai, meantime, pointed to the 50 percent decrease in Afghanistan-Pakistan trade ties, and said that the two countries previously had more than \$2 billion trade exchanges, but now it has dropped to \$1 billion. (IRNA)

(10) Mail Receives...

themselves, those that the government cannot afford to support but of late we have changed the strategy and we are looking to see how we can support the food systems," said Angeline Rudakbana, deputy head of WFP operational department. (Tolonews)

(11) Despite ...

alleged the continued payment of salaries, perks and privileges to the senator despite his absence flew in the face of rules and justice.

But Syed Ikhtiar Sabawoon, spokesman for the Mujaddedi-led Jabha-i-Nijat Milli, (National Salvation Front) party, said the ex-president donated some of his salaries to the Red Crescent Society (RCS).

Meanwhile, RCS spokesman Mohammad Miram Sadaqat confirmed Mujaddedi had donated his three-month salaries to the humanitarian organisation when he was Senate chairman.

However, he explained the former president had made no donation to RCS over the past seven years. Sabawoon said Mujaddedi had resigned his Senate seat several times but his resignation was not accepted. (Pajhwok)

(12) 113 Taliban...

killed and dozens others wounded during security forces joint offensive in different areas of Tarinkot and Shah Mansoor locality during the offensive.

He added a notorious Taliban commander was among the dead. Tens of landmines were recovered and defused and 23 vehicles were destroyed during the offensives.

Provincial council head, Amir Mohammad Barakzai, observed the offensive and termed it a failure. He said no progress and success was obtained as a result of the offensive.

Taliban also rejected the casualties claimed by security forces and said security forces made no headway during the operation in Uruzgan.

Taliban spokesman Qari Yousuf Ahmadi said all the roads leading to the area were closed by the group fighters and the provincial capital and districts were under the Taliban siege. (Pajhwok)

(13) Stop ...

provinces for work in poppy fields, a crop prohibited in Islam and the constitution of the country.

The increasing insecurity has resulted in a widespread cultivation of poppy crop in northern parts of the country.

Fazal Haq Andrabi, the counter-narcotics department head for Baghlan province, expressed concern over the increased cultivation of poppy.

He said the illicit crop had been grown in five districts of the province, registering a two-fold increase compared to last year's cultivation. (Pajhwok)

(14) Women's ...

door of this department is closed on women," she said.

Arzo said women's cultural activities would not improve in Khost unless fundamental changes were brought to the women's affairs department.

"We had many programs in the past and women were widely participating, but now the women's affairs department is paralyzed and its activities reduced to almost zero," she added.

However, a civil society activist, Bustan Walizai, said some cultural restrictions and security barred women from partaking in social gatherings in Khost. (Pajhwok)

(15) Ongoing Clashes...

eliminated the Taliban in the area," said Khalid, an Afghan National Army (ANA) officer.

Soldiers battling the Taliban have reiterated that they will continue the fighting until full elimination of the Taliban.

"There are heavy clashes during days and at the end of the day, we won the battle and the Taliban were disintegrated," said another officer, Janan.

This comes as Taliban fighters attacked security forces' outposts in Burka district in Baghlan at midnight on Thursday.

Sources said that at least 30 Taliban militants were killed in the battle.

On Thursday, security officials in Baghlan said Taliban militants have suffered a heavy casualty toll in the province and have been pushed back by government forces in the past two weeks following the launch of their summer offensive.

The officials said the Taliban's offensive in Baghlan has so far failed and the province has become a "grave" for the fighters of the group. (Tolonews)

(16) Threats...

did not receive the polio drops

compared to last year decreased from 70,000 to 7,000 and those 7,000 children are in Pachir Aw Gam, Deh Bala, Achin and Nazian districts," said Najibullah Kamawal, the head of the Nangarhar health department.

Meanwhile religious scholars have called on the insurgents to cooperate with the health department and allow the children to get the anti-polio drops.

"There is nothing wrong or against Islam in polio drops and those who believe it is wrong they are wrong even we have polio in UAE," said Akhund Zada, a religious scholar.

Women's rights activists in Nangarhar also called on mothers to ensure their children get the drops.

"Many women are in trouble with paralyzed people in their homes (because of polio) so mothers must make sure they (children) get the drops," said Torpeka, a women's rights activist.

However, Afghanistan and Pakistan are two countries that still struggle with polio, reported the ministry of public health. (Tolonews)

(17) White Blood...

inside the country and there will be no need for them to visit the neighboring countries for the procedure or travel to other countries. According to Dr. Kamwal, the procedure will be done everyday from 7am in the morning till 2 pm in the afternoon in the provincial hospital.

This comes as the Afghan patients were mostly visiting Pakistan and other regional countries to seek treatment with the officials saying that millions of Dollars were flowing out of the country due to the absence of proper health services inside the country.

The Afghan government had earlier instructed the Ministry of Public Health to take necessary measure for paving the way for the provision of treatment and health services inside the country. (KP)

(18) Rashid Khan ..

Hyderabad against Gujrat Lions earlier last month.

He had secured three wickets and was awarded the man of the match award for his astounding performance.

Khan had also during the opening match of the SunRisers Hyderabad against Royal Challengers Bangalore on 6th April.

He had taken two wickets during his debut of the Indian Premier League. (KP)

(19) Paikan be ...

continue until action was not taken against Paikan.

Fareed Nizami, One of the protesters, told Pajhwok Afghan News his brother assassination was ordered Zamari Paykan nine months ago at a time when his arrest warrant was issued but the interior ministry failed to put him behind the bars.

He said Paykan was dismissed from his duty after he was found involved in the murder of some people but he was still benefited from government's privileges.

Earlier, Paikan was removed from his post in line with Presidential Decree. His son was accused of a murder. (Pajhwok)

(20) Afghan Boy ...

However, the suspect took reportedly out his pistol and shot him before fleeing the crime scene.

The suspect allegedly locked the door of his flat and managed to escape, leaving behind the injured Afghan boy at the doorstep of his flat. He was rushed to Abbasi Shaheed Hospital where doctors pronounced him as dead.

Azizabad police have registered the murder case against the suspect on complaint of the victim's brother, Umer, while Efforts are underway for the arrest of the culprit. (Agencies)

(21) Two Top ...

Security officials said there were no casualties among security forces and but the insurgent group sustained a number of casualties. (Tolonews)

(22) NDS Rescue...

Mohammad Zarif son of Mohammad Shafi, and Fahima daughter of Akbar.

NDS further added that Abdul

Farid was in charge of taking care of the minor girl after she was kidnapped from the city. (KP)

(23) Taliban's...

during the recent years however the insurgents have increased their attacks in several southern provinces, including Helmand that resulted into the deteriorating security Kandahar.

This comes as the Afghan security forces are busy conducting counter-terrorism operations to suppress the insurgency activities of the militant groups who are attempting to expand their insurgency as part of their spring offensive.

The Taliban group announced their spring offensive last month and vowed to carry out more attacks across the country. (KP)

(24) Kunduz...

that room. It was dark and I killed both." The police official said the real motive behind the double murder was yet known.

Elsewhere, a woman was killed by her brother-in-law in Samangan province, police spokesman Munir Rahimi told Pajhwok on Sunday.

The 30 years-old, Friba, a resident of Guzar Sia area of the first police district of the provincial capital, was stabbed to death on Saturday night, he said, adding initial investigation showed the incident resulted from domestic violence and poverty.

Rahimi said police had arrested husband of the slain woman, who was a vendor in Aibak city.

A doctor at the provincial civil hospital said the woman had sustained stab wounds on her face, head, chest, stomach and other parts of her body.

Khadija Husna, the provincial women's affairs director, condemned the incident and said such crimes against the gender were a result of poverty, lack of awareness about women's rights and consequences of the war in the country.

She said violence against women had increased and three to five women were daily subjected to violent acts in Samangan. (Pajhwok)

(25) Top ASEAN ...

will chair the five-day meetings. The ACDIFIM is an informal networking and confidence building platform among ASEAN chiefs of defense forces. It has since developed into an important avenue for ASEAN militaries to build capacity and strengthen practical cooperation.

Beyond the ACDIFIM, he said, ASEAN senior operations and intelligence officers will convene for this year's ASEAN Military Operations Informal Meeting (AMO-IM) and ASEAN Military Intelligence Informal Meeting (AMIIM). (Xinhua)

(26) Financially ...

or spending more. But clear majorities of them now have become preferring saving to spending.

The steadfastness of the post-recession preference for saving is striking when contrasted with the fluctuations in other measures of Americans' attitudes about the economy and their personal financial situations, Gallup said.

Gallup has asked Americans about their attitudes toward spending or saving more than nine times since the recession, and the majorities preferring saving have never dipped below 58 percent. Other attitudes, however, shifted significantly in the years right after the recession, only to return to pre-recession levels by 2017 as key economic and personal financial measures returned to or exceeded pre-recession levels, according to Gallup. (Xinhua)

(27) Merkel's Party ...

, Martin Schulz, could be fizzling out. The SPD had been ailing nationwide but saw a surge in support in February when Schulz took over. But that enthusiasm failed to translate into votes in the last two state elections, when the CDU won comfortably. (AFP)

(28) Trump Says...

undermine an ongoing FBI investigation into alleged ties between the Trump campaign and the Russian government, an accusation the White House denied. (Xinhua)