

(1) Ghani Suspends...

Development Minister Sayed Sadat Mansour Naderi and Faizullah Zaki, the deputy chief of the National Security Council (NSC). Other members of the commission are Mohammad Akbari, Ahmad Behzad, Qayum Sajjadi, Assadullah Saadati, Barna Karimi - members of the Enlightening Movement, as well as Hasibullah Kalimzai, Almas Zahid and Mohammad Nasir Ahmadi. (Tolnews)

(2) Infant Mortality ...

protection centers in hospitals in the capital and other provinces. He added that 22 protection units have been established at a total cost of \$2 million USD.

Although the infant mortality rate has dropped by 50 percent, Afghanistan still has one of the highest rates of infant mortality in the world.

"Premature delivery, birth defects and infections forms 70 percent of the reasons for infant mortality," said Zelaikha Anwari, a caretaker at a maternal hospital. (Tolnews)

(3) Hakimi Signs ...

briefed the session on the upcoming Brussels Conference on Afghanistan (4-5 October), according to a statement from the Ministry of Finance.

Also a former ambassador, Hakimi presented the new Afghan National Development Framework and highlighted recent economic achievements of the national unity government, the statement added. Mogherini underlined the EU's continued engagement with Afghanistan, both politically and financially with development assistance (EUR 200 million per year until 2020).

She stressed: "Helping Afghanistan not only helps the Afghan people, but it is also an investment in our security and stability in Europe."

During his visit to the EU Council, Hakimi briefed the media on the Afghan government's expectations from the the forthcoming Brussels Conference on Afghanistan.

At a separate meeting, he threw light on the role of civil society organisations in Afghanistan's development. Later in the day, he joined a Brussels-based think tank session organized by Friends of Europe, where he talked about economic opportunities in Afghanistan.

Hakimi signed with the EU Development Coordination Director Pierre Amilhatan incentive programme agreement in the framework of mutual accountability, amounting to EUR 125 million in assistance to the Afghan government. (Pajhwok)

(4) Washington ...

department's spokesman told reporters in Washington.

At a regular media briefing, John Kirby the US maintained a counter-terrorism presence in Afghanistan and continued to work with the government of Pakistan to address the terrorist threat. Washington shared information with Islamabad in this regard, he added.

Kirby said Pakistan and Afghanistan had been working together and communicating to address the threats posed by insurgents. "We want to see that kind of dialogue and cooperation continue and improve," the spokesman continued. Ties between Pakistan and the United States were "complicated at times", he admitted, but Washington still viewed the relationship as vital. "Is it complicated? Absolutely, it is. Do we see eye-to-eye with Pakistan on every issue? No, we don't."

However, he said the two sides had shared threats and shared concerns, and a shared interest in the region. And that was why the relationship mattered a lot, he explained. (Pajhwok)

(5) Ghani Invites....

said the president would discuss with the public representatives a number of issues of national importance, including progress achieved in peace negotiations with the Gulbadin Hekmatyar-led party.

An HIA delegation, authorised by the former prime minister, has been negotiating with the government over the past two months in Kabul. The two sides are understood to have inched their way to a peace deal that is likely to be inked

in a month or two.

HIA delegation head, Eng. Mohammad Amin Karim, told Pajhwok Afghan News during an exclusive interview three days ago that the talks with High Peace Council and National Security Council members in Kabul had come to an end.

A draft agreement was handed over to a government delegation for submission to President Ghani and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Abdullah Abdullah. The draft deal might be shared with Afghanistan's foreign allies and public representatives, the official concluded. (Pajhwok)

(6) Access to I...

as an 'autocratic system' is in power, journalists are faced with a lot of problems in having access to information.

"We are not ready to share information that is not even confidential with journalists. The reason is that the past autocratic system is still in power in Afghanistan," Mostafavi added.

Based on the access to information law signed off by President Ashraf Ghani, people of Afghanistan have the right to access information from state departments.

A number of lawmakers however believe that the access to information law still has some problems. For example article 15 of the law states that giving information is prohibited if it puts someone's life, property, pride or dignity at risk.

The lawmakers believe that words like pride and dignity should not be included.

"What is pride? What is dignity? They are not legal terms. I will definitely lose my pride, if my daughter knows that her father is taking bribe," said Ramazan Bashardost, a lawmaker, citing an example.

Right of access to information is considered as a need for the protection of values like democracy, human rights, freedom of expression and freedom of speech. Journalists in Afghanistan are however faced with a lot of problems in accessing information. (Tolnews)

(7) CEO Abdullah...

president, prime minister and other high-ranking officials during his trip.

Bilateral issues, trade, economic cooperation and a memorandum of understanding (MoU) would be inked during the visit, Faisal added. The CEO will also deliver a speech at a Chinese university.

Ministers of foreign affairs, agriculture, trade, urban development, communications and businessmen are accompanying the CEO. (Pajhwok)

(8) Almost Half...

most schools in the district had no buildings and students sat under sizzling heat.

"When there is raining and wind-storm, our schools are closed," the resident said and complained about a lack of professional teachers in the district.

Giru district resident Naeemullah told Pajhwok Afghan News the education process in the district faced multiple problems despite the fact the Taliban had stopped creating hurdles to schools, teachers and students.

He also said most schools in the district were without buildings and people had dedicated their homes to schools.

"But the homes people have given schools cannot be called buildings because most of their rooms have no roof."

Naeemullah said only two buildings for schools had been constructed in the Giru district during the past 15 years and the same structures now needed rehabilitation.

Similarly, a student at Shamsul Arifin school in Ghazni City, the provincial capital, Mohammad Ibrahim, said: "I would go to school in Ghogyani district but there were no teachers, teaching stuff would not reach us in-time and schools were without buildings and that was why I came to Ghazni City and got admission here."

He said Khogyani was not the only district where such problems existed, but several others districts had the same problems. But not everyone could afford studying in Ghazni City due to economic constraints, he added.

A tribal elder in Rashidan district, Khalil Hotak, said students in the

district faced problems due to a shortage of teachers and textbooks. "Here we have no teachers and if there are teachers, they are less educated, they have only studies till sixth class."

He said there was no significant security problem in the district, but most schools were without buildings and students were taught under the open sky.

Juma Khan, a resident of Ab-i-Band district, said schools in government controlled areas were operational, but most of them lacked buildings.

"Most of the teachers in our district have not completed 12 grade education and they cannot teach to class 10th, 11th and 12th."

Juma Khan said every three students had been given one book of all subjects. He urged the education authorities to send professional teachers to the district and resolve other education related problems.

Likewise, a resident of Deh Yak district, Hamidullah, said the Taliban had told families to send their children to schools.

"The Taliban have said girls should get education up to 10th class and their teachers should be given salaries by parents not the government. The rebels have fixed an amount of money paid to teachers by families."

The residents said Taliban's 'education officials' used to visit schools and insist on increased teaching of Islamic books.

Provincial council member Hassan Raza Yousafi also confirmed problems plaguing the education sector of Ghazni.

He said 50 percent schools in the province lacked buildings and students in these schools were taught in the open.

"I understand the lack of school buildings is a nationwide issue, but the issue has no limit in Ghazni."

He said the Ministry of Education had many times approved construction of buildings for schools but the projects could not be implemented due to a lack of interest on the part of provincial officials.

The provincial education officials acknowledge the mentioned problems. Education director Mohammad Abid Abid said there were more than 600 schools across Ghazni and 299 of them had no buildings.

"We also don't have tents to provide to these schools in order children could be protected from heat and rains."

The director said they were planning to absorb nearly 50,000 children in schools this academic year, but the shortage of schools was a hurdle in the plan's implementation.

He said the issue had been shared with the ministry concerned and soon a solution would be found.

Education Ministry spokesman Kabir Haqmal also confirmed these problems in Ghazni and said the lack of school buildings was a national issue.

"Schools without buildings are in such a high number that they cannot be constructed in one or a few years. Therefore every year each province is allocated budget under special plans to construct school buildings."

He said the Ministry of Education was addressing all these problems under an organised plan.

Ghazni education officials say half a million children, including girls, are enrolled in schools in the province taught by 8000 teachers, with professional teachers making 30 percent of them. (Pajhwok)

(9) ANSF Push...

when the Taliban overrun several villages and security outposts, residents and insurgent sources said.

The hostilities temporarily closed the main highway, which links the national capital of Kabul with eight northern provinces as well as neighboring countries.

After security forces led successful counterattacks and forced the rebels to retreat, the road was reopened, provincial officials said.

A Taliban spokesman in a statement sent to reporters denied official claims and alleged the Afghan government was trying to hide its "defeat and losses" through such propaganda.

Insurgents in recent months have repeatedly seized control of parts of the more than 2,000-mile-long Ring Road network, which con-

nects major Afghan population centers. The seizures occasionally disrupt traffic.

Peace talks

Meanwhile, government peace negotiators have concluded weeks of talks on a peace deal with another insurgent group that has for years fought alongside the Taliban.

Negotiators of the militant Hezb-i-Islami faction, which is led by fugitive Afghan warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, remained in Kabul to conduct further meetings. However, officials cautioned it may be weeks before an agreement is reached.

But rights activists and many Afghans have criticized President Ashraf Ghani's reconciliation attempts with Hekmatyar.

The 68-year-old former prime minister is best known for allegedly killing thousands of civilians and committing human rights abuses during the Afghan fighting of the 1990s.

Hekmatyar's whereabouts Afghan authorities believe that Hekmatyar is hiding in neighboring Pakistan. The United States has designated him a terrorist and his name is also included in a U.N. blacklist.

"You don't make peace with your friends. You make peace with your enemies," Afghan first lady Rula Ghani said in responding to the criticism while speaking at the United States Institute of Peace in Washington on Friday.

Rula Ghani defended her husband's peace bid, saying he is not giving away any kind of "privilege or concession" on peoples rights.

"These [Hekmatyar] are now old people. They are ending their lives and they want to come to Afghanistan and finish their lives where they were born. ... So it is a hard one to swallow, I agree, [but] ... we need to move on," she said. (VoA)

(10) Alabaster...

Mazlumy, information and culture director, expressed concern over the poor state of historical sites and monuments in the province. He said the history of the province was being damaged but no steps were taken to protect historical sites.

But Governor Hayatullah Hayat claimed devising effective plans to crack down on illegal excavation of minerals. He sought public help in preventing land-grab, deforestation and unauthorised digging of minerals. (Pajhwok)

(11) Afghans Mark ...

"When someone accompanies his wife, family or sister, they hear some bad words which are shameful for a civilized citizen," said another resident, Nazar Mohammad Anwari.

"People must be accommodated while having picnics," a restaurant owner at Qaragha lake, Mohib, told TOLOnews on Sunday.

Meanwhile, some residents have said that financial problems is another factor which prevents families from going out for the day.

"Prices are high, my friend and I paid 1000 Afs for our lunch here. If a six member family comes here, how can they afford it," another Kabul resident, Ahmad, said.

The International Day of Families is observed on the 15th of May every year. The Day was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 1993 and reflects the importance the international community attaches to families. The day provides an opportunity to promote awareness of issues relating to families and to increasing knowledge of social, economic and demographic processes affecting families. (Tolnews)

(12) Kabul Police ...

the High Council of Jihadi parties Pir Syed Ahmad Gilani warned that the country could face riots and violence if the issue is not resolved immediately.

In the meantime, thousands of protesters demonstrated in support of President in southeastern Paktika and Khost provinces.

The protesters supported President Ghani and endorsed the government's decision to implement the project through Salang. They also shouted slogans against Vice President Sarwar Danish and Deputy Chief Executive Officer Mohammad Mohaqiq as well as Karim Khalili for sparking ethnic tensions.

On the other, President Ghani said last week a commission will be given the task to review the power

project, emphasizing that there are different views regarding the route through which the project should be implemented. (KP)

(13) Govt. to ...

should eliminate the long-term reasons of war. Our aim is to ensure a lasting peace," said Karim Amin, member of Hezb-e Islami.

The draft agreement also calls for the release of Hezb-e Islami prisoners over a period of not more than three months. This part of the draft deal does not include the party's prisoners in jail on civil charges.

Regarding the families of fallen Hezb-e Islami fighters, the draft agreement says: "The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan shall take necessary measures to address the plight of families of dead Hezb-e Islami members and disabled persons from the party as it does for other martyrs and disabled persons in the country."

"Our troops are killed and wounded on a daily basis, their families are living in a bad condition but government does not pay attention to them; and on the contrary, it pays attention to Hezb-e Islami [party]," said Kawa Jibrin, a university lecturer.

Other parts of the agreement discuss details of Hezb-e Islami's role in political issues and Hekmatyar's future.

It says that the Hezb-e Islami party will be part of a consultation process for giving orders and implementing government's important policies, will have a role in government organizations and will participate in all elections.

Other main points of the draft agreement include removing the names of key Hezb-e Islami members from the international black list and providing two or three proper places for Hekmatyar's residence.

Another part of the document, which is highlighted, says: "Afghanistan's jihadi leader, Mr. Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, will be specially respected by Afghan president like other jihadi leaders through a special decree for ensuring peace in the country and for his efforts for Afghanistan's freedom."

"So far, we have not faced any reason that push us to say that the negotiations will fail," said Mohammad Ismail Qasimyar, international relations advisor to the High Peace Council.

Meanwhile, a number of analysts have criticized government for giving these privileges to Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Islami and say they are concerned about consequences of such a move by the Afghan government. "The privileges are very dangerous. It will intensify tempers among lots of militant groups particularly Haqqani network and they [other militant groups including Haqqani] will call for more privileges in the future," said Ahmad Ershad Khatibi, a university lecturer.

The draft agreement has three chapters and 25 articles.

According to officials, a commission will be assigned to assess the implementation of the agreement. (Tolnews)

(14) 8 ISIS ...

airstrike but both the Afghan Air Force and US forces are routinely targeting the loyalists of the terror group in this province.

The Afghan forces have stepped up operations to eliminate the loyalists of ISIS in Afghanistan amid concerns the terror is attempting to expand foothold in the country.

A spokesman for the US-led coalition forces in Afghanistan earlier said the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group has the potential to be an 'enormous' threat in Afghanistan.

The US forces in Afghanistan have also increased airstrikes against the loyalists of the terror group with the chief of communications for the coalition, Brigadier General Charles Cleveland, earlier saying the United States has carried out 70 to 80 airstrikes against ISIS in Afghanistan. (KP)

(15) Fapped Taliban ...

him to intensify attacks on Afghan security forces posts which leads to almost a quarrel between the two. The commander on the ground insists that the fighters have lost almost all their ammunition besides suffering heavy loss and losing moral to fight the security forces.

The conversation ends between the two as they do not reach to an agreement despite the leader in-

structing the commander on the ground to start their offensive, emphasizing that additional forces and equipment would be deployed to them. (KP)

(16) Pakistan Blames...

-terrorism operations. Pakistan "remains a duplicitous and dangerous partner for the United States and Afghanistan, despite \$33 billion in American aid and repeated attempts to reset relations on a more constructive course," according to the Editorial. It also added that the Senate foreign affairs committee chairman Bob Corker had "widely" put a hold on American funding for subsidizing the sale of eight new F-16 fighter jets to Pakistan - it will have to pay the full amount of \$700 million for them, instead of the \$380 million it would have paid earlier. (KP)

(17) G7 Ministers...

nations. The declaration as well as other pertinent action points will be used for the main G7 summit, which will be held in Mie Prefecture, also in central Japan, and hosted by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, on May 26 and 27. (Xinhua)

(18) Jordan, U.S....

on the key role Jordan plays in regional stability and fighting terrorists and radical groups.

Jordan is part of the U.S.-led international coalition to fight the IS, which controls large areas in Iraq and Syria. (Xinhua)

(19) Kerry Holds...

last week's reaffirmation of the cessation of hostilities," a US spokesman said.

"The secretary also gave an update on Libya," he said.

In talks with his Saudi counterpart Adel al-Jubeir, Kerry discussed "regional issues... mainly developments in Syria," the official Saudi Press Agency reported. (AFP)

(20) French Minister ...

group of 300 people destroyed public buildings and shop fronts in response to riot police operation to clear up a city hall building occupied by opponents of labor reform since May 1.

Defying authorities' order to ban protests in the western city, hundreds of people marched through Rennes streets to denounce police violence. After a short stand-off, police fired tear gas to disperse the crowd. (Xinhua)

(21) Death Toll...

nearby military hospitals and medical centers, according to the sources.

Meanwhile, witnesses told Xinhua that the commander of Hadramout's police forces Brig. Mubarak Obthani escaped a roadside bomb near his office in Mukalla. (Xinhua)

(22) IS Attempts ...

the image of the Syrian government and portrayed it as a guardian of the cultural heritage, in contrast to the IS, whose fighters have wrecked havoc in Palmyra, destroying several centuries-old monuments and antiquities.

On May 5, the Russian Mariinsky orchestra played for the first time in the ancient Roman amphitheater in Palmyra since the IS was defeated. (Xinhua)

(23) Poland's Defense...

for the president, an ally of the ruling Law and Justice party, denounced the letter as a "tool of the opposition" being used in a "political fight."

The letter was signed by former Defense Ministers Janusz Onyszkiewicz, Bronislaw Komorowski, Radoslaw Sikorski, Bogdan Klich and Tomasz Siemoniak, and former deputy defense minister Janusz Zemke. (AP)

(24) Iraq Swamped...

gunmen in a civilian car attacked a popular cafe in Iraq's northern town of Balad after midnight, killing 13 people and wounding 25 others.

The attacks followed a series of car bombing in Baghdad on Wednesday that have killed at least 96 and wounded 171.

On Wednesday morning, an IS militant detonated his car bomb in the predominantly Shiite district of Sadr City, leaving at least 64 killed and 87 others wounded. (Xinhua)