

(1) Watchdog...

and human rights violations and that it has failed to help the commission publicize the report. The AIHRC's calls for human rights protection come just hours after a document revealed that the Afghan government and one of the country's militant groups, Hizb-e-Islami, had mapped out a draft peace deal in which government has committed to providing impunity to the members and leaders of the group and to take steps to remove its leader from the UN blacklist. With the downfall of the Taliban regime and the establishment of a democratic system in Afghanistan in 2001, the Afghan political leadership laid out their vision for promoting human rights and social justice in the war-hit country. As part of government's commitments to the world, the Afghan political leaders committed to do whatever they can to promote justice and bring an end to the culture of impunity. (Pajhwok)

(2) Peace Deal ...

return, the Ashraf Ghani administration has promised the release of HIA prisoners and lifting all restrictions on the group, reads the draft agreement, a copy of which has been obtained by Pajhwok Afghan News. Release of prisoners by both sides, the appointment of HIA supporters to government jobs in line with the law and inclusion of its leadership in the decision-making process on key political issues are among major points of the deal. The two sides have also agreed on making HIA part of the electoral reform process and repatriation of Afghan refugees from the Nasrat Mena camp and other parts of Pakistan. They pledged unconditional adherence to the principles of Islam.

Under the draft agreement, protection of national interest and enforcement of the rule of law will be a joint responsibility of the two parties, which agreed the Afghans could ward off any threat though unity. (Pajhwok)

(3) NUG Worked ...

of many cases now being conducted." Rabbani talked about the challenges the Afghan government still faces amid ongoing violence from Taliban insurgents.

He claimed the militants cannot be fully stamped out without help from neighbouring Pakistan. "As we have stated time and again, terrorism will not be defeated in Afghanistan or elsewhere as long as the distinctions between good terrorists and bad terrorists continues, coupled with the lingering problem of terrorist safe havens and sanctuaries, which remain un-addressed."

He also talked about the management of public finances and said: "We have also taken a series of measures to manage our public finances more effectively. A lack of transparency and the issuance and approval of government contracts over the past several years exacerbated the problem of administrative corruption. As a measure to change this dangerous trend, the unity government established the national procurement commission co-chaired by President Ghani and Chief Executive Dr. Abdullah."

"The unity government is also focused on reforming our electoral law in order to ensure the credibility and transparency of our future elections," he said. (Tolonews)

(4) NUG Leaders....

must demonstrate that they are working together so that the international community trusts them," said MP Shinkai Karokhail. "Disagreements between the two leaders is hindering the CEO from reporting to the president," said MP Farooq Majroh.

In recent weeks, the NUG leaders met at least three times in a bid to resolve their disputes. It is expected that the two leaders reach on a consensus on disputed topics at their next meeting. (Tolonews)

(5) Talks wit...

Blocks for Peace."The 17 goals were unanimously adopted by the 193 member states of the United Nations in September 2015. Every single one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals is perceived a building block in the global architecture of peace. Also on Wednesday, the HIA -- the second largest militant outfit after Taliban -- hoped the peace deal with the Ashraf Ghani administration would be signed in a day or two.

A senior HIA leader, privy to peace negotiations, pledged the party would announce a ceasefire and join mainstream politics once the pact was inked. (Pajhwok)

(6) US Asked ...

Ghani would inform the world about his government's achievements, he said, pledging implementation of the peace agreement with HIA. He welcomed HIA's assurance to cut ties with militant outfits and dismantle its armed wing.

About Pakistan, he said the Afghan government wanted the US to mount pressure on Islamabad to eliminate terrorist sanctuaries on its soil and bring the Taliban to the negotiating table.

Danish said the electoral reforms had been endorsed by the president, paving the way for the selection committee to elect new election commissioners.

Olson commended the Afghan government efforts for bringing reforms to the election system and reaching a peace deal with HIA. He complete consistent support and said his country would announce reaffirm its stance at Brussels conference. (Pajhwok)

(7) Italian Defence....

Italian minister and the delegation accompanying her. Rahimi on behalf of his administration and people conveyed his condolences to the visiting minister over recent earthquake.

Rahimi said they were indebted to Italy for its military support and assistance in the field of development and reconstruction sectors over the past 15 years in Herat.

"Afghan people are fighting against international terrorism and thus defeating terrorism in Afghanistan will be the start of defeating terrorism in the globe."

He asked the international community to provide assistance to Afghanistan in the field of military to eliminate factors behind insurgency and terrorism and bring about peace to Afghanistan.

Rahimi asked Italy to help Afghanistan's air forces target terrorists and drug traffickers. Italy over the past one decade has invested 200 million euro in different fields in Herat, Rahimi said, thanking the country for its new promise of continued support. (Pajhwok)

underway in the district where the security situation would soon be improved.

Marshal Amin, a tribal elder, expressed concern over the security situation and said security organs especially the Ministry of Interior should seriously pay attention to the province.

He said the deteriorating security situation had forced businessmen and entrepreneurs into leaving the province, resulting in poverty, unemployment and forcing the youth to swell insurgent ranks. (Pajhwok)

(9) Govt. Optimistic...

said Sayed Ahmad Ahmadi, political commentator.

"They [NUG leaders] have not succeeded to make a team in order to assess internal and external challenges. We would have stability today if the team was formed," said former commerce minister Mohammad Amin Farhang. (Tolonews)

(10) Pasaband Road...

two-week long operation, three security personnel and one Afghan National Police commander were also killed and three others suffered injuries.

He said the provincial natural disaster management authority had decided to provide victim families with food and non-food items in cooperation with the rural development department.

Hamidullah Mutahid, a member of the provincial council, expressed his happiness over the reopening of the road and said Taliban still existed in some of areas around the Pasaband district.

He asked the government to conduct a massive operation on the outskirts of the district centre to eliminate the threats and prevent more insecurity. There has been so far no word from insurgents on the reopening of the road. Pasaband district is located 170km south of Feroz Koh city, Ghor's capital. (Pajhwok)

(11) Salient Features

United Nation Security Council (UNSC) to lift restriction on the HIA as soon as possible.

The government recognised the HIA right to a political struggle and would pave the way for the

group's participation in the election reform process.

Article 9 of the agreement says: "Jihad leader Gulbadin Hikmatyar, through a special presidential decree, would be given an extraordinary honour and privilege for his effort for peace and stability in the country."

It added the HIA leader could choose two or three areas for his resettlement in the country and the government would provide all expenses of his living in addition to ensuring his security.

The government assured HIA it would make all possible efforts for the return of Afghan refugees return from Pakistan and Iran. (Pajhwok)

(12) 40 Schools, ...

locality of Zankhan district, Sharifullah, said schools in the district were closed only in those areas where insurgents ruled. "When fighting erupts schools in entire Zankhan get closed." Sharifullah criticized people for not cooperation with the government in reopening of schools.

Naemullah, a student from Giro district, who goes to Shams-ul-Arifeen School in Ghazni city, said: "There is war in our village, all schools there have been closed and we have come to Ghazni City and I and my brother have rented a room and continue our studies here."

However, Taliban's spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the insurgents were in favour of reopening the schools.

"The government should negotiate and sit with us through tribal elders, so jointly a good solution could be found to the problem."

Mujahid claimed schools in Nawa district had been closed because they lacked facilities. Though religious seminaries are open but they lacked facilities as well, he added. There are 600 schools in Ghazni province where 500,000 students are enrolled. (Pajhwok)

(13) Uruzgan Raid:

been carried out against security forces in the past as well.

The MP claimed America's raids had not helped in improving the security situation in Uruzgan. The Uruzgan-Kandahar highway was often blocked for traffic by the Taliban, he alleged.

Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahim, condemning the attack on security officials, remarked apologies alone could not compensate the losses of the policemen.

He said the president and security officials should deal with the matter in line with national and international laws. The speaker asked the US to make condolence payments to the policemen's families.

Earlier, the Meshrano Jirga, or upper house of parliament, also condemned the airstrikes, calling for holding accountable the military personnel involved in the incident. The Ministry of Interior (MoI) has tasked a delegation to investigate how the incident took place. (Pajhwok)

(14) Pak-Afghan...

Hidayatullah Satenkzai underscored the need of screening all mobile population for polio vaccination as over one million population cross the border formally.

He highly appreciated the joint team work of Pakistan and Afghanistan polio teams and emphasized polio eradication as a collective responsibility over and above any political difference.

In her opening remarks, Prime Minister's Focal Person on Polio Senator Ayesha Raza Farooq stressed on improving the campaign quality, coverage of high risk mobile populations and surveillance quality.

"Potential missed children and missed polio circulation should be taken as a serious risk to our goal," said Senator Farooq.

Sharing the updates from the program, she apprised the meeting on latest expansion of community-based vaccination as planned in Karachi, Peshawar/Khyber and the Quetta block covering almost 3.3 million children.

She also informed about launch of the Mobile Team Action Plan in northern Sindh, parts of Karachi and southern KP to further strengthen all aspects of micro-planning, team selection, composition and work burdens and supportive supervision before during and after campaigns. Dr. Rana Muhammad Safdar, National Coordinator, NEOC raised his concern on the immunity gap in North and South Waziristan and South Eastern Afghanistan that allowed the virus to transmit over a wide

geographical area between Hangu through D.I. Khan up to South East Afghanistan.

Dr. Rana Safdar also highlighted that all polio cases in South Waziristan and South Eastern Afghanistan are zero dose and are among the mobile populations, especially the returning displaced populations.

Presenting the guiding principles to progress the current situation, Dr. Rana Safdar shared that full-time vaccinators (CHWs) will now cover 100 per cent of target population in Quetta block and Khyber-Peshawar, and 67 percent of Karachi.

This will be in addition to the nine BOPV SIAs planned, full-dose combined BOPV/IPV round to be implemented in Jan/Feb 2017 in both 'core reservoir and high risk districts, strengthening of Routine Immunization to further decrease fraction of under-immunized children.

"PTPs have been prioritized with especial focus given to trans-national and interprovincial posts while monitoring and evaluation activities including expanded LQAS, third-party pre/intra/post-campaign monitoring are further enhanced," Dr. Rana Safdar added. "Under our Surveillance for Eradication plan, the programme is improving surveillance by focusing attention on "missed AFP" cases and "missed transmission", Dr Rana Safdar said.

The meeting also led to operational discussion among regional and district teams agreeing on common strategies during upcoming campaign as well as the optimal vaccination of high risk mobile population. (APP)

(15) Officials Speak...

Attaullah Khogtani.

The Ministry of Defense meanwhile said they believe that Daesh is no longer a serious threat to Afghanistan's security.

"Daesh is now active in Achin and Kot districts, but their presence is not at the level that was expected," said Habiburrahman Afzal, deputy spokesman for the defense ministry. (Tolonews)

(16) Most Schools...

and charity organizations to pay attention to the issue.

He said a large number of students had left school and there was the possibility of more students to do so if the infrastructure issue was not resolved.

Nizamuddin, a 5th class student at Kaghani primary school, said their school had no building and students attended classes under trees.

"The distance between our school and home is so long, there is no discipline in our school and students cannot be controlled in an open space." He said their schools remained shut when it was raining.

Rahimullah Qasemi, the education officer for Darqad district, acknowledged most schools in the town were without buildings.

Of the total 18 schools in the district, 13 are without buildings and some 8,000 students in these schools attended lessons in the open, he said.

"Some schools that have buildings lack other facilities such as chairs, blackboards and bathrooms," said the education in-charge of the restive Darqad district.

"We have approached government and private organizations to help us promote education, but due to the district's geographical location and growing insecurity, no one is ready to make investment in the sector," he said.

There are a total of 683 schools, seminaries and professional institutes in Takhar and of them only 35 percent have buildings. (Pajhwok)

(17) Jawzjan's

enable them to prevent pests and diseases from attacking their farms. Jawzjan's land is suitable for growing different varieties of melon such as Arkani, Chitari and others, according to Rasheed, who said the fruit was cultivated in Aqcha, Mangajik, Mardian, Khamyab, Qarqin, Faizabad, Khwaja-do-Koh and Qush Tapa districts.

A number of melon sellers in Shiberghan city, the provincial capital, said they were pleased with the sales, but the fruit price had declined compared to last year's.

Pir Mohammad, a melon seller in the provincial capital, said currently a 7kg of high quality melon was sold for 70 afs per kilogram while the same amount was sold for 100afs last year. He said the hike in melon harvest resulted increased sales and reduced price which enabled everyone to easily buy the fruit. According to the agricultural

department, Jawzjan's melon harvest is also transferred to capital Kabul and southern and eastern provinces. (Pajhwok)

(18) ANP Stresses....

with the government in Kabul.

The party denounced terrorism as the root cause of the problems being faced by Pakistan and the region at large. It warned against the wave of anti-Pakhtun terrorism, saying the nation was specifically targeted by terrorists in Pakistan and Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(19) First Pistachio...

situation of its neighbouring countries, third is transport system and fourth heavy transit cost."

He said it had been observed many times that despite having good relations with neighbours, landlocked countries faced problems in their exports. Internal bad political and security situations often resulted in losses to exporters.

He said the lack of a proper transport system which delayed transfer of goods made it impossible for a landlocked country to compete on international level.

Helmandi did his research on these factors in Afghanistan and reached the conclusion that cops on which these factors have little or no impact should be promoted.

Based on his research, Helmandi established a pistachio orchard in Kandahar four years ago when he brought the world's famous California pistachio trees to Afghanistan.

He said pistachio trees did not need to be watered for 10 days and the trees grew well in areas having scarce water. The expert said pistachio trees started giving harvest after six years of their plantation and each tree could produce yield worth \$100 per year, compared to \$4 to \$20 income from per pomegranate tree. He also said the first pistachio farm in Kandahar produced 2,000 kg of pistachio last year and each kilogram sold for 600 afghanis in the local bazaar.

"My work is not confined to this farm, we established 115 pistachio farms last year in Zheri, Panjwai, Maiwand, Takhta Pul, Argistan and Spin Boldak districts and we plan to plant 240 more orchards this year in areas where water availability is insufficient."

Helmandi hoped he would be able to extend the pistachio promotion process to other parts of the country and eventually turn Afghanistan into a big pistachio export country. He said Iran's second largest export was pistachio after oil.

He also mentioned olive orchards that had good outcome in Kandahar. He said previously olive orchards did not exist in the province. Ghee factories owners in Nangarhar were all praise for olive produced in Kandahar as enough quantity of oil was extracted from it, said Helmandi.

He said olive orchards were good news for Afghanistan because the plants did not need water even for a month and gave enough yield.

The expert has been working and doing research on plans and policies which could help Afghanistan take the path of becoming self-sufficient in the area of agriculture.

Besides doing work on several other tasks, Helmandi said had been tasked with increasing wheat production by the president. He said his research on wheat had been endorsed by the president and would be implemented as a national policy.

He said wheat accounted for 75 percent food of Afghans and wheat was each year exported to the country against \$1 billion which was a huge amount. "The problem in wheat production is that our land is not level, we use enough water but our harvest remains low. In other countries, 2.5 acre of land produces 15 tonnes of wheat but in Afghanistan, the same land does not produce one

tonne. "He said the salient features of his research in this regard were that agronomy subjects and laser land leveling technology should be considered for wheat production. He said furrows in fields should be done away with because it would help save 50 percent irrigation water from being wasted. He said the removal of furrows could increase arable land by 15 percent and increase the production by 30 percent.

His another research is about preservation of underground water. He says Afghanistan has the capacity to preserve 16 billion square metres water, while 90 percent of Afghanistan's water flows into neighbouring countries. He said if rainwater was preserved underground, the country would not face water scarcity if rains did not fall for two years. Helmandi also stressed the use of machinery in agriculture and said it was unfortunate that Afghan farm-

ers used tractors only for ploughing while a tractor could be used for 35 purposes.

He said the country's situation had changed with the increase in population. In the past, a farmer had to feed 10 other persons in his family, but the figures had increased to 120.

He said the majority of Afghans were associated with farming, but the yield remained low. He said he had opened an agriculture research centre in Kandahar where farmers were trained on how to properly use tractors. (Pajhwok)

(20) 3 Border...

their safe havens across the border. Meanwhile, the Taliban claimed that security personnel suffered casualties as the fighters captured one post and a security headquarters in the area. Qari Yousaf Ahmadi, the group's spokesman, said many policemen were killed during the gun battle.

The bodies 10 policemen including a commander were still lying at the scene, he said, adding the attackers captured two posts and 14 weapons. But security officials rejected the claim. (Pajhwok)

(21) Obama Draws...

particular, seven countries -- Romania, Portugal, Spain, Czech Republic, Italy, France, Luxembourg -- committed to resettle or admit at least 10 times more refugees than in 2015, according to US officials. (Monitoring Desk)

(22) British Statistics ..

"Information so far generally covers short-term indicators with other important information not yet available. Nevertheless, there has been no sign of a major collapse in confidence and, within the data that is available, some indicators of strength."

The EU referendum vote had an immediate impact on the stock market and currency as expectations about Britain's trade position and wider economic relations with the EU and the rest of the world changed significantly. (Xinhua)

(23) Europe Sees...

Investment Partnership (TIIP), a proposed trade agreement between the EU and the United States.

Guillaume showed leaflets in his hand and expressed his anger. "It gives much power to lobbies and these lobbies, unexpectedly, will have access to co-write and revise the law." Like several young people on spot, Guillaume's biggest concern was about job hunting in the future. He feared that TIIP would undermine Europe's already subdued labor market and lower employees' working conditions. (Xinhua)

(24) US Sends...

was staged just eight months after the fourth in January.

The fifth test was seen as the most powerful nuclear detonation ever by the DPRK as it produced an explosive yield of 10 kilotons, stronger than 6 kilotons recorded in the previous test. Pyongyang said Tuesday that it tested an engine jet on the ground of a carrier rocket for geo-stationary satellite, which Seoul military saw as a long-range missile. (Xinhua)

(25) Syrian Warplane...

second warplane downed this week. On Sunday, a government warplane was shot down by IS militants in the eastern province of Deir al-Zour; the pilot died. (Xinhua)

(26) China-Japan...

services, communication and information, and that more Japanese enterprises are welcome to seek market opportunities in China. (Xinhua)

(27) China, France...

on the nuclear power program while at the same time calling for China and France to boost their cooperation. Beijing attaches great importance to its nuclear power partnership with Paris, said Li. In response, Hollande said France is ready to step up its cooperation with China in nuclear power and third-party markets. He also hailed the importance of the Hinkley Point project and expects that all sides can come together to ensure the program's success. (Xinhua)

(28) UN Women...

sexual violence including a first response mobile app. University of the Witwatersrand has created a Gender Equity Office that has developed a comprehensive system to report, predict, prevent and address gender-based