

(1) US Ready...

reportedly have to begin negotiating a peace deal with the Afghan government; the deal would also involve a cease-fire and a Taliban renunciation of al Qaeda. But Khalilzad said in his tweet that the US presence in Afghanistan is conditions-based, and any withdrawal will be conditions-based. (Tolo news)

(2) Trump Once ...

made in peace talks between his administration and the Taliban militants.

"We've made a lot of progress. We're talking but we've also made a lot of progress. We're reducing it," he said. "We could win Afghanistan in two days two or three days or four days if we wanted. But I'm not looking to kill 10 million people."

He said that the US "could win that war very easily".

"I could win that war in a week if I wanted to but I'm not looking to kill 10 million people," he reiterated. "Many of them would be innocent people, I'm not looking to do and I'm not talking nuclear by the way."

Trump said he is not talking totally conventional, but he is not looking to kill millions of people in Afghanistan.

Trump made similar remarks late last month, but his statement was strongly criticized by Afghan political elite and members of the public.

The Afghan government had asked Washington to provide clarity on Trump's remarks on Afghanistan.

The US has been engaged in negotiating a peace deal with the Taliban since last September. The last round of US-Taliban talks began in Doha on Saturday with US Special Envoy Zalmay Khalilzad saying that the United States is ready for a "good deal" with the Taliban. (Tolonews)

(3) Nabil Invites Govt ...

Team, invited Abdullah and Ghani for an election debate.

"Has the leading [election] team succeeded in bridging the gaps in social differences and preventing disunity among people? No," he said.

Nabil said the high rates of poverty and unemployment are because of demagoguery and violation of law by government leaders.

"We [Afghans] sacrifice our lives but I don't know why discussions are underway on my country abroad and we are not included," Mr. Nabil said, referring to the start of a new round of talks between the US and the Taliban in Qatar.

Mr. Nabil mentioned that he will not oppose the amendment of the Constitution based on people's will.

Nabil, who has served as the head of National Directorate of Security during former president Hamid Karzai's government, said Afghanistan's leaders who have committed mistakes in the past four decades should apologize to the people and should leave the political arena.

"A president can be elected by two million votes while we have three to four million [drug] addicts. An addict would have been elected as president if he wanted to run [for president]," he said.

Mr. Nabil's running mates Gen. Murad Ali Murad and Massouda Jalal meanwhile stressed the need for a transparent and fair election on September 28.

"Elections are the only legitimate way for peaceful power transition," Gen. Murad said. (Tolo news)

(4) Ghani Urges Army ...

international terrorism.

"No one was even imagining that we would have an air force five years back, but today we have an air force that getting empowered with each passing day," he said.

Ghani stressed that international commitments and agreements regarding the Afghan security and defense forces' support and equipment were still in place and unchanged.

He directed military generals to focus on fighting against the 'enemy' until (intra-Afghan) peace negotiations begin.

"We would reach to stable peace in Afghanistan due to the sacrifices of our proud security and defense forces," he concluded. (Pajhwok)

(5) Olive Gardens...

of the project to other areas is on the cards. Ali Sher, a resident of the district, said people would get more benefits if the project yielded better results.

"Olive could be used in making pickle, oil and medicines. As the people of Zazai Maidan are poor, this project will help them overcome poverty," he remarked.

Noor Wali Shah, another resident, also believed olive plants could help improve the economy of the people.

The Agriculture Department head said he had a plan to improve the cultivation and use of other saplings, including cross-breeding. (Pajhwok)

(6) Mid-Year ...

protection and VIP figures," he added. The draft budget also considered funds for departments which have recently been created but the parliament was yet to approve

that, he said.

"The funding sources of the presidential election are unspecified which is another reason the mid-year draft budget should be rejected," he added.

Haleema Sadaf Karimi, a lawmaker from Jawzjan province, said the draft budget did not reflect the interest of the masses and said personal preferences had been embodied in the draft.

She criticized drawing of funds from education, salaries of teachers, stationary and others and said if the Ministry of Finance reform the budget the house will approve. Zahid Hamdard, secretary ministry of finance, the budget of some institutions had been reduced due to the bad performance of their officials because they were unable to spend their development budget in the past six months.

Regarding the creation of new institutions as single independent budgetary units said funds for these institutions could not be released until they get approval of the parliament.

Shamroz Khan Masjidi, spokesman for the Ministry of Finance, said not personal preferences embodied in the mid-year budget and said the document represented public interest.

In response of lawmakers remarks, he said every change in line with the law will be brought to the draft budget to ensure transparency and fairness. (Pajhwok)

(7) UN Mission ...

for Afghanistan.

"I call on all parties not to ramp up military operations thinking that doing so will give them a stronger position in talks about peace," said the envoy, who is also head of UNAMA.

"Escalating the conflict will have one primary result: greater loss of civilian life. Now is the time to demonstrate restraint and real respect for the lives of ordinary Afghan civilians."

UNAMA documented an increase through July in the number of disproportionate and indiscriminate Taliban attacks in urban areas against the Afghan military and security objects and personnel. These attacks caused great harm to civilians.

On July 1, Taliban claimed an attack on an Afghan Army logistics centre in Kabul, killing seven civilians and injuring 144 others. The Taliban also claimed responsibility for the July 18 attack on a Kandahar police facility, resulting in seven civilians killed and 72 others injured.

In Ghazni, on July 7, the militants attacked a National Directorate of Security (NDS) facility, resulting in 174 civilian casualties, the vast majority of whom were injured. More than 80 of the victims were children. UNAMA said it remained gravely concerned by the harm to civilians from AGE attacks involving improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

The use of IEDs by AGEs was responsible for more than 50 percent of civilian casualties in July.

The UN said it was particularly appalled by numerous incidents when AGEs deliberately targeted civilians. Daesh/Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKAP) claimed a July 25 suicide attack in Kabul against a Ministry of Mines and Petroleum bus and an explosion targeting first responders. Seven civilians were killed, including six women and a three-year-old boy, with 32 others injured.

On July 19, eight civilians were killed and 36 injured when attackers focused on civilians at Kabul University. Deliberate targeting of civilians or civilian objects amounts to a war crime.

There were several high-profile attacks in July for which no party claimed responsibility, such as the 28 July complex attack that used remote-controlled and suicide IEDs against the Green Trend offices in Kabul.

In this attack, which targeted the Afghan electoral process, at least 21 civilians were killed and 50 others injured.

Other types of AGE-employed IEDs that caused significant loss of civilian life during July were victim-activated pressure-plate IEDs (PPIEDs) that are inherently indiscriminate.

On July 15, 13 civilians were killed and 40 others injured – mostly women and children – when a minibus ran over a PPIED near Kandahar.

On July 30, at least 24 civilians were killed and 18 more injured when a PPIED detonated against a bus on the Kandahar-Herat highway.

Civilian casualties from operations by pro-government forces (PGFs) remain at concerning levels, mainly from air and search operations, including by NDS Special Forces that are supported by International Military Forces.

In Maiden Wardak overnight from 8 to 9 July, NDS special forces entered a medical clinic and interrogated health workers. NDS special forces shot and killed three civilian males, two of whom worked at the clinic and one was accompanying a patient. UNAMA voiced its deep concern about the incident and reminds all parties of the special protection afforded to health facilities and personnel under international humanitarian law.

manitarian law.

In addition, UNAMA reiterated that the killing, by any party to the conflict, of persons taking no active part in hostilities is explicitly prohibited by Common Article 3 at any time and any place, and may amount to a war crime.

On July 19, in the Bala Murghab district of Badghis province, pro-government forces conducted an airstrike that hit a residential home and resulted in the deaths of seven civilians, including three children and one woman, with three more civilians injured. Parties must ensure compliance with their obligations under international law. In the conduct of hostilities, parties to the conflict must refrain from directing attacks against civilians and civilian objects.

UNAMA urged all parties to the conflict to strengthen their engagement with the United Nations and reminds them of their responsibility to protect civilians.

UNAMA is mandated by the Security Council to report on the protection of civilians in the Afghanistan conflict.

It is impartial and independent in its work that is focused on helping all parties better protect civilians from the armed conflict. UNAMA's civilian casualty documentation is one of a range of measures in which the mission is engaged to assist in limiting harm to civilians.

Its findings are shared with the parties to help them better understand the impact of their operations on the civilian population so that they may address the harm they cause and implement measures that will better protect civilians going forward.

It remains a matter of concern to UNAMA that all parties to the conflict have a poor track record on investigating, publicly reporting their findings and taking appropriate follow-up measures to address incidents in which civilians are killed or injured.

UNAMA urged all parties to put in place more effective procedures for them to obtain accurate information about the harm their operations cause civilians and to be more open and honest with their public statements concerning civilian casualties.

UNAMA recognised that in the context of the war in Afghanistan, all parties were prone to issue tendentious pronouncements.

As an impartial and independent body, the mission said it would continue to establish reliable data that it would share with parties and the public as part of an advocacy-orientated approach to reduce civilian casualties to zero.

UNAMA noted the Taliban, the Afghan government and USFOR-A routinely challenged its findings concerning civilian casualties.

The UN encouraged parties to enhance their cooperation and work more constructively with it to establish facts around civilian casualties.

"If any party has information to help establish the facts around incidents involving civilian casualties, they are encouraged to share it."

For more than a decade UNAMA has employed a consistent and rigorous methodology in its documentation of civilian casualties.

The process, which is fact-based and requires multiple independent and credible sources for verification, is run by a dedicated team of experts who carry out research to ensure the documentation is accurate.

UNAMA encourages other parties to establish similar systems with such a robust methodology.

Peace remains the best protection for civilians affected by armed conflict. UNAMA calls on all parties and those who can influence them to work toward political solutions to end the conflict. (Pajhwok)

(8) No Ghost ...

forces would continue operations in the Eshkemish district of Takhar and Kajran district of Daikundi province.

He said fighting between security forces and insurgent was underway in Kajran district and heavy losses were inflicted on the insurgents. (Pajhwok)

(9) Daikundi Residents ...

Mothers of Daikundi are appalled by the killing of their children and residents tired of carrying coffins of youth."

The protestors, carrying bodies of the victims, placed one casket in front of the police headquarters and the governor's office.

She claimed militants had been staging attacks in Kajran and Patu districts for the last one month. But no action had been taken yet to prevent the violence, she regretted. Earlier, several residents set up a protest camp as well, demanding stability and security in the province, she recalled.

More than 100 security personnel suffered casualties in rebel assaults this last month, she informed. Mohammadi accused the government of double dealing and discrimination: "It would hear our voice if the government is not biased." She said they would continue their protest as long as stability was not restored to the province. (Pajhwok)

(10) 123 groups ...

registered 541 crimes since August last year

and arrested 644 individuals in connection to these crimes while 96 more incidents were under the detective personnel watch. Agriculture Department and Cultural Affairs Department also provided information regarding their annual performance. Serajuddin Qani, one of the participants of the gathering, termed the annual performance reports as expository and said some officials tried to mislead the masses with their unnecessary remarks.

Rabia, another participant of the event alleged there was no transparency in Jawzjan government institutions. (Pajhwok)

(11) Nearly 200 ...

Pajhwok only 18 Taliban militants had been killed within the past month in Ghazni.

But he claimed inflicted heavy casualties to security forces in the same period by Taliban. (Pajhwok)

(12) 'No Winners...

also follow the path of "restraint and responsibility."

Whether there will be a new arms race or not, "the choice is in the US hands," Ryabkov said. However, the Pentagon has already announced it would "pursue the development of... ground-launched conventional missiles" that were outlawed by the treaty.

Among other things, Washington justified its withdrawal from the INF by claiming that the Russian 9M729 cruise missile, mounted on launchers also used by Iskander-M ballistic systems, was produced and fielded in violation of it.

Ryabkov says the US never explained how it came to such a conclusion, adding that the short-range missile was never even tested at intermediate range.

Moscow insists the American accusations were needed to distract attention from Washington's own non-compliance with the treaty, pointing out that American MK-41 launchers, which were deployed in Romania in 2016, can be used to fire mid-range Tomahawk cruise missiles, creating a real threat to Russia's national security.

Ryabkov also warned that pulling out of the INF "is just one element of a series of similar efforts by the US to withdraw from international treaties, agreements and arrangements in the area of arms control and nonproliferation."

"We should focus on keeping the rest of the international arms control architecture intact, first and foremost the so-called New START treaty on strategic nuclear weapons," he added. (RT)

(13) 'It Was Genius...

who was the first British politician to meet Trump after his victory at the 2016 election, said that while Trump's ways are often inexplicable, he has proven to be "a remarkably effective operator."

Trump's remark has spawned accusations of racism and resulted in several Republicans breaking ranks and joining the Democratic outrage over the comment. The US House of Representatives passed a resolution condemning Trump's words with Democrats insisting on formally labeling the tweet "racist."

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who previously had been wary of the freshmen representatives pushing for a progressive agenda, was the leading force behind the condemnation, personally vouching for strong language to be included in the resolution.

The scandal has propelled the 'Squad' to the front lines of the Democratic opposition to the president and saw the party fully embracing them, with squabbles around Israel and other issues seemingly forgotten. Meanwhile, Trump's base consolidated and he emerged polling higher after the "go back" scandal than he did before. (RT)

(14) Beijing Says...

Wang said he hoped China's relations with Australia could be back on track as soon as possible, according to a statement from the Chinese foreign ministry.

Both countries have no historical grievances and fundamental conflicts of interests and their interests are highly complementary, said Wang.

China is Australia's major trading partner and while there are difficulties in bilateral ties, Australia is willing to strengthen dialogue and communication with China on the basis of mutual respect, the statement cited Payne as saying.

Australia has banned Chinese telecommunications equipment-maker Huawei from supplying its 5G mobile networks over security concerns and is seeking to counter China's emerging influence in the South Pacific islands. Australia will make its own decisions and won't discriminate against any particular country or company, Payne was quoted as saying in regard to the Huawei issue. (Reuters)

(15) Snubbed by...

he would not be seeing the North Koreans. "I wish they'd have come here. I think it would have given us an opportunity to have another set of conversations, and I hope it won't be too long before I have a chance to do that."

Yet despite what he and other U.S. officials say are ongoing lower-level contacts with Pyongyang, there is no date or venue set for a resumption in negotiations more than a month after President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un met at the De-Militarized Zone separating the two Koreas. At that time, administration officials said they believed a new round of talks was just weeks away.

Four senior U.S. officials accompanying Pompeo to the annual Association of Southeast Asian Nations regional security forum said North Korea's decision not to attend the conference, which has in the past served as venue for high-level engagement between the two countries, had been a surprise to both the Thai hosts and the other participants. One of those officials said the North's absence was mentioned by every delegation that Pompeo and top U.S. envoy Stephen Biegun met with in Bangkok. "Unfortunately, the North Koreans missed this opportunity," said the official, who like the others was not authorized to discuss the closed-door discussions publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity. The official added that the North's absence "probably hurts their own interests" and that its failure thus far to agree to a new round of negotiations "is not a positive or constructive response by them." (AP)

(16) Russian Police...

non-governmental organisation that operates a hotline for detainees.

Lyubov Sobol, an ally of key opposition leader Alexei Navalny, was detained as she set off for the rally. "Why are you detaining me?" she shouted as a riot police in helmets dragged her out of a taxi. Ms Sobol is on the 21st day of a hunger strike that she began after authorities barred her from running in the polls and was visibly weak.

A heavy police presence, metal barriers and empty buses used to transport detainees lined the boulevards, and mobile internet was down in central Moscow. Some shops and cafes were shut Saturday following warnings by city authorities.

About a hundred people were pushed out from central Trubnaya square by a line of riot police. Several hundred more were spread out along the boulevards.

"I'm here because I want them to let candidates take part in the elections," said 22-year-old artist Varvara. "I want there to be big changes... now there is an atmosphere of total control."

Candidates for September elections needed to collect signatures from city residents to stand in the polls but officials said they were disqualified because some names were forged. The opposition insists it was blocked from running arbitrarily, and the whole vetting process was skewed against them. (The Telegraph)

(17) Iraqi, Egyptian...

will also exchange views and ideas on important issues of common concern and evaluate the latest regional developments, according to the statement.

The meeting also aims to build on the outcomes of the previous tripartite summit held in March in Cairo, which is attended by Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi, Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi and Jordanian King Abdullah II, the statement said. (Xinhua)

(18) Maduro Says...

United States has applied sanctions and diplomatic pressure to try to get Maduro, whom it accuses of human rights violations and stealing the Venezuelan election last year, to step down.

On Thursday, when asked by a reporter whether he was considering such a measure given involvement by China and Iran in Venezuela, Trump said: "Yes, I am." He gave no details.

On Friday, a senior U.S. official said Trump's word on the issue should be taken "very seriously" but that the administration did not want to give away "the element of surprise." (Reuters)

(19) Sudanese Activists...

followed by a civilian leader for the next 18. There would also be a Cabinet of technocrats chosen by the protesters, as well as a legislative council, the makeup of which would be decided within three months.

Ebtisam Senhoury, a negotiator for the protesters, told a press conference that the pro-democracy movement would choose 67% of the legislative body, with the remainder chosen by political parties that were not part of al-Bashir's government. The military would select the defense and interior ministers during the transition.

The two sides had been divided over whether military leaders would be immune from prosecution over recent violence against protesters. It was not immediately clear whether they had resolved that dispute.

The two sides came under renewed pressure this week after security forces opened fire on student protesters in the city of Obeid, leaving six people dead. At least nine troops from the paramilitary Rapid Support forces were arrested over the killings. (AP)