

(1) Kunduz ...

residents say they are happy with the municipality's announcement. Aimal, a resident of Kunduz City, told Pajhwok: "Recruiting unemployed youth is a big step and we support the municipality in this regard". (Pajhwok)

(2) Cool Reception..

receive the guest, the analyst said. Critical of Iran's lukewarm welcome for Ghani, Sateez said sending an ambassador to the reception was a diplomatically flawed act that showed Afghanistan's failure to conduct diplomacy in a proper manner. It is a weak point for the unity government. Ihsanullah Arianzai, another political expert, said the president's reception in Tehran amounted to a big insult. The way it received Ghani indicated Iran's differences with Afghanistan on certain issues, he added.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman could not be reached for comments despite multiple efforts by Pajhwok. Earlier, the Iranian president had said his country had strong reservations about the construction of dams in Afghanistan.

The construction of dams had a negative environmental impact on southern and western Iran, Rouhani claimed, saying the Iranian people would not remain unconcerned or silent on the projects. (Pajhwok)

(3) Nimroz Melon, ...

300 tonnes of watermelon and melon this year. The fruits brought him 200,000 afghanis in income.

He confirmed sufficient water availability that boosted his crop. In 206, the river water was available for three to four months, but this year the rivers and canal were in full flow for six months.

Omaid Baloch, administrative chief of Chakhansor district, said his town had produced a huge quantity of watermelon and melon that were exported to other provinces.

He added that about 30 truckloads of melon and watermelon were sent daily to neighbouring provinces. The price of one kilogram of watermelon decreased from 25 afghanis to 5 afghanis and melon from 30 afghanis to 8 afghanis.

Nimroz province is located southwest of Kabul, bordering Iran. About 80 percent of its inhabitants are farmers, who mostly grow melon, barley and wheat. (Pajhwok)

(4) Only Saudis

millions of Muslims during the hajj and Umrah operations while others could not provide such facilities.

In response to a question, he asked some countries not to link political problems with religious sanctities.

Mualvi Abdul Zahir Haqqani, head of Hajj and Islamic Affairs for eastern Nangarhar province, said Saudi Arabia effectively discharged its responsibility in providing different services to Hajj pilgrims.

He said Saudi did not discriminate against any other Muslim countries and provided them with equal services from land transport to residence, food and other facilities which others lacked the ability to provide.

Hekmat Safi, an advisor to Chief Executive Officer (CEO) also said the Saudi government provided equal services to all Muslims around the world during Hajj.

He accused Iran and Qatar of what he said publishing 'fake news' and disrupting people's minds about Saudi government in treating pilgrims.

Islamic scholar and political expert, Mohammad Hassan Haqqar, also the writer of a book on Mecca and Medina, also appreciated Saudi government for serving pilgrims.

"It is a fact that the services Saudi government provides to pilgrims cannot be provided by any other country," he said.

He said a number of countries who criticized the Saudi government were those whose pilgrims used to create problems for people during the performance of Hajj.

Shah Mahmood, an Afghan who performed Hajj last year, said he did not face any problem while performing the pilgrimage.

"I was wondering how the Saudi government manages the pilgrimage for millions of Muslims and provides them with many services," he said.

On the other hand, the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah of Saudi Arabia has announced its full preparation for this year's Hajj pilgrimage.

According to Saudi Press Agency, the Saudi government prepared some special programs for facilitating pilgrims during Hajj operation. Pilgrims coming from abroad have

been provided with guides in their own languages in Medina city and at Jeddah Airport.

About two weeks back, Afghanistan Hajj and Islamic Affairs Minister Faiz Mohammad Osmani said that all required measures had been taken for Afghan pilgrims in Saudi Arabia.

According to the Ministry of Hajj and Islamic Affairs, 30,000 Afghans are expected to perform Hajj this year. (Pajhwok)

(5) Improved Scanners...

trucks with the scanners.

According to Kabul police, nearly 1,000 trucks get scanned at the Arghandi gateway daily. Drivers have said they are happy that their trucks get checked by the scanner.

"These gateways are very good. Before this it was possible that things like drugs and weapon could pass the gates undetected, but now the trucks get checked by scanners and it figures out what is loaded in the vehicles," Noor Ahmad, a driver said.

"Before this when the security forces got suspicious about the loads of truck, they had to physically check and the trucks that are 20 meters long. Now they check with the machine and it is easy," Najibullah, another driver said.

A number of truck drivers have however complained over what they claim officials at security check-posts take money from them when they want to cross the posts. Insecurity is another problem that they are facing. (Tolnews)

(6) Taliban, Haqqani...

the interview. "He has lifted those restrictions, and you're beginning to see the payoff of that- as well."

"The President has also made clear that he, that we, need to see a change in the behavior of those in the region, which includes those who are providing safe haven and support bases for the Taliban, Haqqani Network and others. This is Pakistan, in particular, that we want to- that we want to really see a change and a reduction of their support for these groups," he said. "I mean, this is of course, you know, a very paradoxical situation, right, where Pakistan is taking great losses. They have fought very hard against these groups, but they've done so really only selectively."

In response to another question: "There have been some hard hits in Kabul. Do you have confidence yourself in General Nicholson, the combatant commander in Afghanistan?"

"Oh, of course. I've known him for many years. I can't imagine a more-capable commander in any in any, on any mission," McMaster said.

The question comes after there were reports that Trump's doubts about the war in Afghanistan has led to a delay in completing a new US strategy in South Asia, and skepticism that included a suggestion that the US military commander in the region be fired.

According to the reports, US officials told Reuters on Wednesday that during a July 19 meeting in the White House Situation Room, Trump demanded that his top national security aides provide more information on what one official called "the end-state" in a country where the United States has spent 16 years fighting against the Taliban with no end in sight.

Another question followed: "You'll recall that President Obama froze, sort of, in his Afghanistan review at the beginning of his administration.

President Trump doesn't want to compare unfavorably with that. When is a decision coming on the "strategy"- to use a quote from George W. Bush on what we're gonna do in Afghanistan?"

McMaster responded: "Oh. Well, the president's already made some important decisions on Afghanistan."

"But, you know, but we're not gonna talk tactics anymore, right? Everything before was, you know, troop levels and very specific details and announcing to the enemy years in advance exactly the number of troops you're gonna have, exactly what they're gonna do and what they're not gonna do. And so the president has said, that "That is not the way to fight a war. It never has been."

He also said: "I think there are two things that the American people ought to understand, and that we all have to talk about. The first is what is at stake? All right, what are the stakes in Afghanistan? And the second is, what is the strategy that secures an outcome consistent with the vital interests of the American people? And an outcome that is worthy of the sacrifices that our servicemen and women are making, and the tremendous efforts, right, and the risks that they take."

He stressed that: "What we've had in Afghanistan for years is a disconnected strategy. What we're doing militarily was disconnected from what we're trying to achieve politically. So, you say to the Taliban, "Hey, let's see what we can do to accommodate some of your concerns, so we can end the violence. And by the way, we're leaving." He added: "And how does that work? And how does it work when- when your enemy believes that they are in the ascendance militarily, if you're trying to negotiate some of an agreement? It doesn't work. You know, and how does it work that you're not connected with what you're doing into inside of Afghanistan to what you want to achieve regionally? And, in particular, to engage other - countries in the region to play a more productive role or a less destructive role in some cases."

He also pointed on September 11, 2001 threats to US and said that: "The mass murder attacks against our nation on September 11th, 2001, originated right from Afghanistan, from a Taliban regime that gave safe-haven and support bases to Al Qaeda."

"And so, there's a recognition that our efforts really to enable to Afghan forces. I mean, Americans don't realize really the Afghan Army suffered 6,700 soldiers killed in action last year. So, who's doing that, who's doing the bulk of the fighting? The Afghans are. The question the president has asked us is, "What more can we do to enable them?" He doesn't want to take over the war," he said.

"The Afghans are fighting a war for their country. And so, what more can we and others do in and what burdens, responsibilities can the United States and allies and partners share such that the Afghan government, the, its security forces can succeed against this enemy of all civilization?" he asked. (Tolnews)

(7) Extra Troops...

and we recaptured the district after paying heavy price for it, we need to expand our deployment and build more strong bases and trenches." Said Assadullah Sherzad, the commander of 303 Spinzer police unit.

Security personnel battling the Taliban in the area have said that there is a need for more military equipment and ammunition to be provided to the security forces in Janekhail to fight the militants effectively.

"The security structure of Janekhail does not meet the needs. It is difficult to save the district with the current structure. I expect high level officials to ensure that the security structure for Janekhail is expanded. There is a need for the presence of army and border police in the province to help the police forces in their job." Said Paktia police chief Toryalai Abdiyani.

"The Taliban flag is visible 150 away from this area, all those areas are under Taliban control." Said Khial Mohammad, a member of Afghan border police.

Janekhail district fell to the Taliban twice within a year.

The Afghan security forces recaptured the strategic town from the Taliban militants following a massive military operation. (Tolnews)

(8) 120 Tons of ...

should do business with regional countries based on the WTO's rules.

"Government opens a so-called way for investors in order to give a hope to the people. But at the end of the day, we see that investors bear the brunt of this flawed decision and their fruit wait for cargo flight for many days," said Azrakhsh Hafizi, an economic affairs analyst.

The Ministry of Commerce and Industries would not comment on the WTO's decision to prevent it from giving subsidies to India and Afghanistan.

Spokesman of the ministry, Musafir Qoqandi, said using of the air cargo transport between India and Afghanistan is based on an agreement between the two countries.

"This decision and agreement between the two countries was aimed at boosting trade ties between Afghanistan and India and it will not affect any international commitment of Afghanistan," Qoqandi said.

The air cargo corridor inaugurated in June was a key project agreed on by Afghanistan and India at last year's Heart of Asia Conference. (Tolnews)

(9) Nangarhar Police...

to their owners after producing documents.

Local residents, provincial council members and civil society activists welcomed the campaign and said it

should last long.

Gul Ahmad, a resident of Jalalabad, the provincial capital, said once bikers snatched his cell phone. Ahmad also witnessed gunmen on motorcycles killing a doctor in Angoor Bagh area and fleeing.

Civil society activist Dr. Nimatullah Hamdard told Pajhwok the campaign had proved "very beneficial" for the security of Jalalabad city.

He said security incidents involving motorcyclists had declined compared to the time three weeks ago when almost daily such incidents occurred.

A member of the provincial council, Israrullah Murad, welcomed the campaign but said the drive should continue until the last motorcycle was registered.

Meanwhile, the governor's spokesman, Attaullah Khogyani, said the campaign was being spearheaded by a joint commission.

He said the campaign would continue until documents of all motorcycles were examined. He said besides the crackdown on motorcycles, complete changes had been brought to check posts and check points.

The official said police used to set up mobile check points in order law violators could not escape. (Pajhwok)

(10) Taliban Still ...

area," Nasir Ahmad, a soldier said. Meanwhile a number of Kunduz residents also said they are afraid that once again they may witness war in the province.

Kunduz residents said the fights in the province between the insurgents and Afghan security forces have affected their daily lives.

Abdul Refa, a farmer, said he earns around 250 AFs daily, but the fights in the province have affected his income. "The war in Kunduz continues and we cannot work in war. We want peace and security to live in a peaceful environment and do our work," he said.

Kunduz city in the last two years was fallen to Taliban and the people suffered a lot, but these days the city is secure. Securing the suburbs and areas outside of the city is said to be very important. (Tolnews)

(11) Pakistan Builds...

Spin Boldak district of the southern Kandahar province.

According to the Afghan border forces, the check posts are apparently being built in the controversial villages of Loqman and Jahangir that Afghanistan consider as part of its own territory.

This comes three months after Afghan security forces engaged in a deadly battle with the Pakistani forces in the area after Pakistan military tried to conduct a survey in the controversial villages. Both sides sustained casualties in the fighting.

"The Pakistanis want us to determine the border with them. We are not in a position to do so as that authority lies with Afghanistan's people and the central government," Col. Sharif Gharzay, commander of the 3rd battalion of Afghan Border Police Gharzay said.

Nearly three months ago border forces opened fire on each other across the Durand Line after Afghan authorities accused Pakistani officials of having breached their territory.

Afghan border officials said that Pakistan built dozen of check posts in the Loqman and Jahangir villages of Spin Boldak district of Kandahar province.

"Pakistani forces took advantage of the cease-fire and forced residents of the villages to leave the areas and they built check posts in their houses," Gharzay said.

"After the clash they [Pakistan] offered a ceasefire and we accepted. That ceasefire is still in place and we pulled back our forces by order of our police chief," Gharzay said.

Although no new clashes have occurred between the two countries forces, Afghan forces have said that they are prepared to respond any action by Pakistan in the area.

"We are ready and if Pakistani forces act in any way, we will respond in no uncertain terms," one of the Afghan border police soldier said.

Nearly three months ago, when Pakistani forces wanted to build check posts in the Loqman and Jahangir villages, they faced Afghan border forces who responded forcefully. In the clash that lasted for 12 hours both side suffered casualties.

Afghan border forces said that Pakistani border forces build the check posts at night.

According to international and border laws, Pakistani and Afghan military personnel are not allowed to stay within to two kilometres of the zero

line and should be positioned two kilometres away from that line.

After the establishment of the check posts by the Pakistani border forces, Afghan border forces have also been moved to the zero line.

A TOLONews reporter from the area said that the residents of both villages left their homes because both countries forces built check posts in the resident's houses.

"Pakistani forces forced residents to leave their houses and they built check posts in the residents' houses. The people came and asked us for help and we have sent their request to the government," Gharzay said.

"Most of the residents came to the Afghanistan side because most of them are Afghans," He added. (Tolnews)

(12) ISIS Arrests Woman...

administrative chief Baz Mohammad Dawar confirmed the incident and said preliminary reports indicate the woman is being kept as a hostage in Sardara area, which is under their control.

This comes as reports emerged earlier today suggesting that scores of people were shot dead by the militants affiliated with the terror group in northern Sar-e-Pul province.

Earlier reports suggested that 26 farmers were shot dead by the Taliban insurgents after they captured a key area in the restive Sayad district.

The anti-government armed militant groups including the Taliban insurgents and ISIS loyalists have not commented regarding the two reports so far. (KP)

(13) Taliban Besiege ...

Warmami district is also ongoing. Sadozai, a soldier in the district, told Pajhwok that Taliban begun attacking security posts on Saturday. He said clashes were ongoing in Kamki Zaghman, Loy Zaghman, Manay and Hindi areas.

The highway lining the district with Sharan, the capital of Paktika, has been closed. A number of the district security personnel have been stuck in Sharan, he said. "We haven't received air support yet."

Deputy Governor Attaullah Fazli confirmed fighting in Warmami district, saying the security forces were bravely defending their bases.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid also verified clashes in the district but he had no casualty figures. The clashes have been ongoing in Paktika for several days. (Pajhwok)

(14) ISIS Claims...

The Taliban insurgents group has not commented regarding the report so far. Ghor was among the relatively calm provinces in northwestern parts of the country but he province has started to witness growing instability during the recent years as both the Taliban insurgents and ISIS loyalists attempt to expand their foothold in this province.

The Taliban launched a coordinated attack on security posts of the Afghan security forces in Taywaara district last month and managed to take control of the district for a few days but the Afghan forces reclaim its control after launching a major operation. (KP)

(15) Daesh Prisons ..

in the air strike.

There has been so far no word from insurgents in this regard.

Last month, Daesh group head for Afghanistan, Abu Sayed, was also killed in an airstrike in Kunar. (Pajhwok)

(16)Russia's Lavrov..

topics, from the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula to coordination plans between Russia and the United States to withstand attacks.

"We felt the readiness of our U.S. colleagues to continue dialogue. I think there's no alternative to that," Lavrov said. (Reuters)

(17)Airstrikes Kill..

group, according to the statement. The helicopter gunships and the troops targeted IS militants who infiltrated into the opened areas near the western bank of Shirqat from the IS-held eastern bank of the town across the Tigris River, which bisects the town.

In September 2016, the Iraqi forces recaptured the western bank of Shirqat from IS militants during the troops advance northward to dislodge IS militants from the northern province of Nineveh and its capital Mosul, some 400 km north of Baghdad.

On July 10, Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi officially declared Mosul's liberation from IS after nearly nine months of fierce fighting to dislodge the extremist militants from their last major stronghold in Iraq. (Xinhua)