

(1) Afghanistan...

in Afghanistan to worsen, a serious problem that could not be resolved in a short time.

Yamamoto advised the government not to rely only on military action against militants. Instead it should also seek public support in the area in resolving public problems and improving the security situation, he suggested.

The top UN diplomat supported the peace process and called for women's participation. He said the UN also backed a transparent, inclusive and fair elections process. Hemmed in by huge challenges, the government should be supported by all, he said.

Faryab political parties' representatives, Islamic scholars, civil society activists, tribal elders, women and youths asked Yamamoto to pay attention for improving their security situation, permanent peace, economic situation and education.

Gen. Mohammad Hamayun Fawzi, governor of Faryab, called security of the province worrying and asked the UN diplomat to focus more on improving security and empowering and equipping the local forces.

He expressed satisfaction with the central government's implementation of development projects in Faryab. However, he said around 7,000 internally displaced families were in need of help.

The agriculture sector also needs attention and investment, he believed. The construction of the 50-bed maternity centre had been completed but it still lacked personnel, the governor explained.

Afghanistan Civil Society Forum (ACSF) head for Faryab, Syed Zainuddin Abbas, said the security situation had deteriorated in the province and the Maimana-Jawzjan highway was currently under the Taliban control. Except the district centers, all other areas were under militant control, he claimed.

He asked the secretary-general's special representative to convince government leaders to fight honestly against terrorism, defeat militants and boost security on the Maimana-Jawzjan highway to instill a sense of safety among passengers.

The trip of Tadamiichi Yamamoto to Faryab comes as Afghan forces are busy fighting against militants in several districts of the province. With the Maimana-Mazar-i-Sharif highway also closed for traffic. (Pajhwok)

(2) Sweden Gives ...

projects such as construction and repairing of roads, construction of public services centers like schools and healthcare centers would help create jobs.

The large number of Afghan refugee families returning from Iran and Pakistan and the internally displaced families put a huge pressure on the fragile social and economic situation of Afghanistan, he said, adding that the creation of more jobs were needed for the affected people.

Creating jobs for youths and vulnerable people would prevent them from joining militant groups and violence, Sjoberg said.

"Afghanistan has significant achievements in the past 15 years and Sweden is committed to cooperating with Afghanistan until 2024," he said.

Rural rehabilitation and development minister Eng. Nasir Ahmad Durani said the Swedish aid would be spent through Citizen Charter program that would create temporary jobs for 14,000 affected people in vulnerable areas in 228 villages of different provinces.

He said Sweden had been supporting Afghanistan in areas of development, health and educational since 1980. (Pajhwok)

(3) Privatisation of ...

some contracts with the US military. In line with the suggestion, the private company wants around 5,000 private security personnel and around 100 aircraft to be used in the fight against the militants in Afghanistan.

The security personnel hired on a contractual basis would be recruited from NATO, the US and its allied countries that earlier served in Afghanistan and have fighting experience there.

Qader Shah, spokesman for the National Security Council, said domestic and foreign experts presented new tactics to fight militancy. He added the viewpoint of US security contractors about Afghanistan was their own and had nothing to do with the government's policy.

He said the issue of conflict leadership by Blackwater had not been discussed yet with the Afghan government. The new US strategy for Afghanistan was still under review, he added.

"We have a security cooperation agreement with the US. Military requirements of Afghanistan and US cooperation are discussed within the framework of this agreement," he explained.

The NSC spokesman described that security and political cooperation between Afghanistan and the US a key policy issue.

According to the US media, America's annual spending on war would reduce from tens of billions of dollars to only 10 billion dollars if the Blackwater suggestion is implemented.

Blackwater officials also discussed the issue with the White House and other American officials. The firm has evinced an interest in signing a contract with the US and taking responsibility for the war in Afghanistan.

However, political expert Javed Ghafoor said private companies' leadership of the conflict in Afghanistan would be ineffective. Afghanistan and the US should discuss security, economic and political issues in the framework of their agreement.

Based on the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA), the US will meet the Afghan forces' requirements -- an issue that should be considered in the US's new strategy, he concluded. (Pajhwok)

(4) 100 Additional...

CENTCOM spokesman Maj. Josh Jacques was quoted as saying.

A spokesman for NATO's Resolute Support mission also verified the deployment, saying the forces would stay in Helmand for a short period of time.

Jacques called the move was a tactical adjustment that was not linked to the Trump administration's new strategy for Afghanistan.

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis was authorised in June to set troop levels in Afghanistan as part of the administration's policy toward the region.

About 8,400 US soldiers are currently stationed in Afghanistan fighting against the Taliban and Islamic State besides training, advising and assisting Afghan forces. (Pajhwok)

(5) Watchdogs Call...

Court should investigate the incident. "Insurgents groups, especially Taliban, carry out targeted killings on specific ethnic and religious groups," Naiem Nazari, a civil society activist said.

"Women, children and elders were shot to dead. A number of bodies have been remained in Mirza Olang. Some have been carried to Sar-e-Pul center where they were buried near a shrine," Murtaza Saram, a resident of Sar-e-Pul said.

Members of the human rights defender organizations said people were shot and others thrown off the mountains of Mirza Olang. Victims of Taliban and Daesh militants included men, women and children. By their actions, insurgent groups want to create fear and ethnic and religious divisions among the people.

"Government is responsible for this massacre," Ahmad Shah Stanikzai, a member of the human rights and civil society organizations said.

According to the organizations, the primary findings of the government task-team sent to Sar-e-Pul province, show that although the central government was warned of threats against the residents of the Mirza Olang village, no action was taken to prevent the tragedy.

"Who is responsible for this? The military corps officials or Mazar police, or was the decision taken in the National Security Council and in the presidential palace? Why such a big and tragedy happened?" Wadood Pedarm, a member of the civil society organizations demanded to know.

Meanwhile Sar-e-Pul residents said approximately 700 families were living in Mirza Olang village, but now all of them have been displaced and Taliban and Daesh have burned down most of their houses. (Tolonews)

(6) Afghan Army ...

are expected to be launched under the leadership of the commander of 209th Shaheen Corps.

This comes as least two hundred and thirty five civilians were rescued from the Taliban and ISIS captivity in northern Sar-e-Pul province of Afghanistan, days after the militants brutally massacred dozens of people

in this province.

The provincial government in a statement said the civilians including women and children were rescued after the local tribal elders intervened for their release along with the central government's efforts.

The statement further added that civilians were kept as hostages for the past four days and since the insurgents captured the key Mirza Awlang area in Sayad district.

The Office of the President, ARG Palace, in a statement said a high level meeting of the security and defense officials was organized in the palace this evening which was chaired by President Mohammad Ashraf.

The statement further added that the meeting focused on the recent security upheavals in the country, specifically the security situation in northern and northeastern provinces, including Sar-e-Pul province.

The security officials were instructed to take immediate steps to bring the situation under the control in Sar-e-Pul, Faryab, Jawzjan and Balkh provinces, ARG Palace said, adding that the necessary instructions were also given to security institutions to suppress the insurgents in Mirza Awlang area in Sayad district of Sar-e-Pul province besides taking immediate steps to assist the local residents.

Other instructions including dispatch of emergency aid to the affected residents in the area were also given to the security institutions during the meeting, ARG Palace added. (KP)

(7) India to Start...

India to landlocked Afghanistan. Indian Road, Transport, Highways and Shipping Minister Nitin Gadkari said the strategic port will become operational by 2018.

"India and Iran have historically shared special ties...We are keen on developing Chabahar Port and are hopeful of starting operations in 12 to 18 months," Gadkari said on the eve of his visit to Tehran last week. (Agencies)

(8) Optimism for...

the mines ministry, currently over 100 factories processing marble stone are slumping," said CEO at ACCI, Atiqullah Nusrat.

According to the survey, growing insecurity and the lack of infrastructure and electricity are the main causes of the business decline in the country.

"There are lots of problems and because of these problems there is not much difference between the figures of the last quarter compared to the current figures. Corruption exists and although the business license distribution process became easier, numerous problems still exist," ACCI Deputy Head Khan Jan Alokozay said. Manufacturers experiencing problems say that power shortages are a major challenge in this sector.

"The power supply is not stable and we cannot use the electricity because we are afraid that our machine may burn out," said Mohammad Zahir, a worker at one of the factories. Officials at the ACCI said that the lack of bilateral and multilateral, transit and trade agreements with a number of countries in the region has slowed down trade with these countries. Officials said while Afghanistan has access to global transit routes, the country cannot use those routes. (Tolonews)

(9) Photo Exhibition ...

the United Nations. Afghanistan, as a member of the United Nations, has committed to achieve 17 sustainable development goals by 2030.

Organizers of the exhibition said the top photos show where Afghanistan is in terms of development and what the Afghan government has done to bring changes to the lives of its people.

"We had a national photography contest and that our visitors were from all the provinces. We had photos from Badakhshan to Bamian, from Bamian to Ghor, Badghis, Kandahar and Nangarhar," Hafizullah Hasif, a public relations officer of SDG said. Visitors of the exhibition said they hoped such an exhibition would show a positive picture of Afghanistan.

"A number of these photos make us hopeful about future," Wahid Abdullah, a resident of Kabul said. The United Nations, after three years of discussions, on September 2015 finalized 17 sustainable development goals with 169 objectives.

According to the plan, the world's countries are expected to invest \$7

trillion US in Afghanistan to achieve the goals by 2030. (Tolonews)

(10) Taliban Free ...

information was gleamed after some of the freed villagers told local media that they saw both the Taliban white banner and the Islamic State group's black flag flying together during the attack.

Zabi Amani, spokesman for the provincial governor, said the civilians were released after negotiations between the Taliban and tribal elders. The insurgents were still holding an unknown number of civilians, he said. Most of the civilians are staying in local mosques and some are with relatives in the city, and provincial officials are trying to provide food and other necessities for them before finding a long-term solution, he added.

Amani also said that since the insurgents took control of the area, 52 civilians, including women and children, have been killed in the village of Mirzawalang in Sayad districts. The victims were mostly Shiites and minority Hazaras.

Qari Yusouf Ahmadi, a Taliban spokesman, confirmed the insurgents had seized the area but denied civilians were killed in Mirzawalang.

So far, the Islamic State group has not commented on the attack or said whether it had joined forces with the rival Taliban.

There have been reports of battles in the past months between the Taliban and the IS affiliate in Afghanistan in several provinces. Afghanistan's IS affiliate is made up mostly of disenfranchised Taliban.

In Sari Pul, the insurgents defeated Afghan local police forces after almost two days of intense fighting and took control of the area early on Aug. 5, Amani said. He vowed that Afghan security forces would begin an operation to retake the Mirawalang area soon.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani condemned the killings in Sari Pul.

"I will promise that our brave security forces will take revenge," Ghani said during a ceremony at the presidential palace, broadcast live on TV.

Meanwhile, gunmen opened fire on a group of four women employees at the Bagram airfield, the main U.S. military base in the country, killing one and wounding a second woman, said Gen. Zaman Mamoza, the provincial police chief.

The attack took place on Wednesday afternoon near the U.S. base in Bagram district in Parwan province. Two of the four women escaped unhurt, added Mamoza.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the shooting. In June, Taliban insurgents gunned down six Afghan security guards of the base while they were on their way to work for night shift duty. (AP)

(11) Women Work ...

low salary," said Bibi Gul, an asthma patient. She deplored her 160 afghani daily income was not enough to allow her to visit a doctor.

Mother of Ali Ahmad is another woman working in the same wool company from the past four years. "I take 160 afghanis everyday which is nothing but I have no other option," she said. Ahmad's mother said she felt pain in the knees and back, but still she had to come and work.

Zahra Gul, a 60 years-old wool worker, also complained of too much work. "I am obliged to work or remain hungry."

About her and her colleagues' health, she said all women cleaned the wool suffered from problems in their feet, back and breathing.

"These women have been working here for years. Despite problematic environment, they receive very less income."

Crak Ziaratjah, the wool cleaning company in the Herat industrial park, has hired 12 men and 90 women.

Abdul Wahed Habibzada, owner of the company, confirmed worked endured hard labor and were paid a small salary. But he said his company provided two times meal to the workers free of cost.

"These women are old and cannot perform other tasks, the salary we pay them is more compared to their productivity," he said.

Provincial Independent Human Rights Commission (IHRC) head, Abdul Qadir Rahimi, told Pajhwok that the government should resolve the problem immediately.

"Unfortunately, we don't have a mechanism so far for a fair calculation of salaries of workers based on work-

ing hours, that is the reason employers misuse economic needs of workers," he said.

Herat labor and social affairs head, Abdul Qayum Afghan, said they always watched working conditions of female employees at factories. "If the working condition is hard, the companies and factories are treated based on the law", he said.

Provincial deputy public health director, Mohammad Asif Kabir, said wool cleaning could cause skin diseases and tuberculosis. "Those who work in wool cleaning or involved in similar activities are prone to a lot of health problems," he said.

According to Afghanistan's labor law, employers should provide all necessary materials including special clothes, footwear, masks, eyeglasses, gloves and other protection tools to workers free of cost. (Pajhwok)

(12) Iran Vows to ...

this dangerous threat".

Insurgents attacked a village in the Northern Afghan province of Sar-e-Pul, killing as many as 50 people, including women and children, according to officials.

The militants attacked a security outpost in the Mirza Olang area of Sayad district overnight, torching 30 houses, Zabihullah Amani, a spokesman for the provincial governor said.

He said fighting was still going on but as many as 50 people, including children, women and elderly men, most of them members of the largely Shiite Hazara community, may have been killed, according to village elders.

"They were killed in a brutal, inhumane way," he said. Seven members of the Afghan security forces were also killed as well as a number of insurgents.

Many details of the attack, including the identity of the insurgents, were not immediately clear. Amani said they were a mixed group of Taliban and ISIL militants. However, the Taliban denied involvement, dismissing the claim as propaganda.

Although the Taliban and ISIL are usually enemies, the allegiance of their forces is occasionally fluid, with fighters from both groups sometimes changing sides or cooperating with militants from other groups.

Four days later on Monday, some two hundred and thirty five civilians were rescued from the Taliban and ISIL captivity.

The provincial government in a statement said the civilians including women and children were rescued after the local tribal elders intervened for their release along with the central government's efforts.

The statement further added that civilians were kept as hostages for the past four days and since the insurgents captured the key Mirza Awlang area in Sayad district. (IRNA)

(13) Nimroz Women ...

Sheema Mohammadi, an official at the agriculture department, commended the project as beneficial for poor women. She hoped the project would help women find sources of income, contribute to their economy and halt violence.

Governor Mohammad Sami termed the programme effective for the economic development of poor women and said the initiative reflected the will of the government to work for the development of the province.

Zahra, one of the participants of the course, said the training was effective because most of the women were illiterate and training was necessary for them to get awareness about home gardens. (Pajhwok)

(14) Road ...

supply schemes will be signed with the RRD. The projects will be executed in Dur Baba and Rodat districts at a cost of around 13 million afghanis. The RRD head said after approval from the minister, about 14,000 families would benefit from the schemes. (Pajhwok)

(15) 11 Taliban ...

injured in a land explosion in Khangali locality.

The Taliban also confirmed the clashes in Gomal. Their spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told Pajhwok Afghan News the fighters had closed all roads to the Gomal district over the past nine days.

Paktika security officials said 100 Taliban and six security forces were killed in nine days of clashes in Gomal district. Another 10 security men and scores of Taliban were injured, they added. (Pajhwok)