

**(1) U.S. Spent \$76B...**

included more than 22,000 Humvees, according to the DOD data.

When the equipment reached Afghanistan, it was divided between the two main security forces: The Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police. The Pentagon has shipped 110 helicopters and 98 plane since 2007, when the Pentagon authorized sending aircraft. These aircraft could have carried the 314,000 unguided rockets, 8,700 "general-purpose bombs" and 1,815,000 helicopter rounds, which was also funded by the Pentagon, according to their data. Even with all of this equipment, Gen. John Nicholson, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, told Congress in February he needs a "few thousand" more troops to properly train and advise the Afghan military so they can eventually operate independently.

Claude Chafin, communications director for the House Armed Services Committee, told CBS News the GAO report was sought as "an objective review of major weapon systems and equipment provided to ANSDF to evaluate the extent to which such equipment supports the ability of ANSDF to provide security for the Afghan people."

Stephen Tankel, an American University professor and adjunct senior fellow at the Center for New American Security, said to CBS News that he agrees with top U.S. commanders that the Afghan military is still unprepared after more than a decade of American military guidance.

The "U.S. continues to spend money every year, our forces continue to die, and the mission continues to drift," Tankel said.

Some in Congress are now calling on President Trump to change U.S. policy in Afghanistan.

Sen. John McCain (R-Arizona), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, announced in a press release Thursday a new amendment to the 2018 defense authorization bill that aims to "strengthen the capability and capacity of the Afghan government and security forces."

While no funding specifics were outlined in the release, McCain said that "adopting a clear policy and strategy in Afghanistan, backed with the authorities and resources necessary for success, would be a critical step toward restoring that kind of leadership, which has been absent for far too long."

The conflict in Afghanistan is still claiming the lives of American troops. A suicide attack in Kandahar killed two U.S. service members last week.

The Trump administration has said it will soon release its plan on the path forward in Afghanistan, but no details have surfaced yet. (CBC NEWS)

**(2) Trump Getting...**

at this as not just a solution to Afghanistan, but also a broader concern that incorporates India and Pakistan as well as a regional solution. We just don't have that plan," she said in response to a question. (Pajhwok)

**(3) Military Operation ...**

three check posts and Taliban has suffered heavy losses in the operation, he said.

Army soldiers said they have a high moral to clear the valley of militants. However, he said, they need air support for their ground operations.

"The battle started on Friday at 5am (local time). The military operation will not have any result if we do not get air support," said Qamaruddin, an army soldier in Sar-e-Pul.

Meanwhile, Sar-e-Pul governor Mohammad Zahir Wahdat confirmed the death of seven insurgents but said that the military operation is ongoing "very slow". Wahdat slammed the forces over lack of senior commanders on the frontline, suggesting that senior officers should help military operation.

"I hope that the senior military commanders speed up the operation and cooperate with the deployment and management of the troops," he said.

Mirza Olang valley fallen to militants earlier this week on Saturday. The Sar-e-Pul governor said the Taliban and Daesh have committed crimes against humanity following the collapse of the valley.

According to Wahdat, the insurgents have shot to death 52 civilians and 471 families were forced to leave their houses in the valley.

Military commanders said they will continue their crackdown until Mirza Olang is fully cleared of militants. (Tolonews)

**(4) Afghanistan Can...**

try to focus on research programs and ask for more views from the audience who monitor the debate from outside," said president Ashraf Ghani's advisor Farkhunda Zahra Naderi.

"One of the important points raised by the President was to focus on the management of waters in zones as the Helmand river zone, the Kabul river zone, the Harirod river zone and the Amur river zone which will help us to construct dams gradually and to utilize our waters." Said Qayoumi.

Currently Afghanistan has the capacity of producing only 500 megawatt of electricity despite the country abundance of natural resources.

The debate was attended by sixty university students and university lecturers. Qayoumi said that the agreement on the establishment of CASA-1000 project will be started in a month.

Overview of CASA-1000:

The CASA-1000 project will include:

- A 500 kV AC line from Datka (in the Kyrgyz Republic) to Sugd-500 (477 kilometers away, in Tajikistan)
- A 1,300 megawatt AC-DC Converter Station at Sangtuda (Tajikistan)
- A 750 kilometer High Voltage DC line from Sangtuda (Tajikistan) to Nowshera (Pakistan)
- A 1,300 megawatt DC-AC Converter Station at Nowshera

The CASA-1000 project will start from Kyrgyzstan and it will reach Afghanistan through Tajikistan and onward to Pakistan's Peshawar city. The length of the project in Afghanistan is estimated to eventually run for 562km. (Tolonews)

**(5) Taliban, Islamic ...**

Olang has highlighted the dire security situation in many provincial areas of Afghanistan, where the government controls no more than 60 percent of territory and where armed militant groups operate freely in many areas.

Any cooperation between the Taliban and Islamic State would cause alarm in both the Afghan government and the United States which keeps thousands of troops in a counter-terrorism mission in Afghanistan to fight groups like ISIS and al Qaeda.

Villagers who escaped Mirza Olang had previously told reporters that they saw fighters carrying both the white banner of the Taliban and the black banner of Islamic State.

But in a region where different bands of fighters often switch between different militant groups, it can be difficult to establish allegiances with any certainty.

The AIHRC report quoted witnesses as saying the attack was led by a Taliban commander called Mullah Nader and an Islamic State commander called Ghazanfar. However Ghazanfar has previously been identified by Taliban officials as one of their commanders.

The AIHRC report said between 50 and 60 people, including five women and three children, had been killed in the attack, quoting a witness who said victims' hands were tied before they were shot. In addition, three people were beheaded.

It said the insurgents had taken the village after two days of fighting with local security forces and local militia fighters, killing cattle and destroying property.

In total 471 families had fled the village to nearby villages and the provincial capital Sar-e Pul and they required urgent humanitarian assistance, the AIHRC statement said. (Reuters)

**(6) Selling Bullets, ...**

government rebels, he said.

He said: "If the equipment meant for defending people is placed at enemy's disposal and finally used against innocent people, then it is nothing less than a national betrayal."

"When rumours spread about missing shells and bullets, the issue reaches the President, me and the National Security Council. Later on, we receive a report and come to know that the ammunition has been sold. This is very worrying. There is a need for remedial reforms."

CEO asked authorities of security organs to pay serious attention to combating administrative corruption.

According to him, the fight against corruption would be a success when there was a strong political will and the law implemented equally on everyone.

Meanwhile, Farid Hamidi, the Attorney General of Afghanistan, also spoke on the occasion, saying fighting corruption was important for the country; but in security and defence institutions it was 'very important' and the most difficult at the same time.

He said corruption in such organs brought under question the heroism and sacrifices of security forces and it also resulted in people's distrust.

He promised the AGO would fight corruption in all over Afghanistan, particularly in the security and defence institutions with precision, sternness, freely and impartiality.

Hamidi said until the phenomenon of corruption wasn't fought jointly, nothing could eradicate it.

He said the conference was conducted for security, defence and judicial institutions' joint fight against corruption, and reaching an agreement among these institutions would pave the way for their collaborative work against the menace. (Pajhwok)

**(7) New Opportunities...**

government institutions.

Ghani said the government should have reasonable answer to the questions raised by youth to ensure the presence of youth and different places.

Dr. Kamal Sadaat, youth affairs in charge at the ministry of information, Ahmad Nader Naderi, civil services head, Ab. Latif Roshan, acting higher education minister and other high ranking officials were present on the occasion. (Pajhwok)

**(8) Former IT ...**

technology.

The CEO appreciated Wahidi for his performance, acknowledging the former minister's cooperation with relevant organs.

This case would help the government not to treat other officials this way, Abdullah said. Wahidi was suspended in January by Presidential Ashraf Ghani on the charge of manipulating the ministry's revenue statistics. (Pajhwok)

**(9) McCain Unveils ...**

adriht in Afghanistan. President Obama's 'don't lose' strategy has put us on a path to achieving the opposite result. Now, nearly seven months into President Trump's administration, we've had no strategy at all as conditions on the ground have steadily worsened. The thousands of Americans putting their lives on the line in Afghanistan deserve better from their commander-in-chief," McCain said announcing his new strategy.

McCain said adopting a new strategy for achieving America's national security interests in Afghanistan is a decision of the highest importance, one that should be subjected to rigorous scrutiny and debate within the government.

"But we must face facts: we are losing in Afghanistan and time is of the essence if we intend to turn the tide," McCain said after he filed an amendment to the defense authorization bill that outlines the strategy US need to achieve its national security interests in Afghanistan and the wider region.

McCain said the goal of this strategy is to ensure that Afghanistan never again becomes a sanctuary for terrorists to plot and conduct attacks against America, its, or its interests.

"America's Armed Forces in harm's way in Afghanistan deserve leadership from Washington worthy of their service and sacrifice. Adopting a clear policy and strategy in Afghanistan, backed with the authorities and resources necessary for success, would be a critical step toward restoring that kind of leadership, which has been absent for far too long," he said. The strategy calls for bolstering the United States counterterrorism effort in Afghanistan by increasing the number of U.S. counterterrorism forces, and providing the US military with status-based targeting authorities against the Taliban, the Haqqani Network, al-Qaeda, the Islamic State, and other terrorist groups that threaten the United States, its allies, and its core interests.

McCain calls for pursuing a joint agreement to secure a long-term, open-ended counterterrorism partnership between the United States and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, which would include an enduring U.S. counterterrorism presence in Afghanistan.

It calls for improving military capability and capacity of the Afghan National Security and Defense Forces (ANSDF) against the Taliban and other terrorists groups by establishing US military training and advisory teams at the kandak-level of each Afghan corps and significantly increasing the availability of U.S. airpower and other critical combat enablers to support ANSDF operations. And in the long term, it calls for providing sustained support to the ANSDF as it develops and expands its own key enabling capabilities, including intelligence, logistics, special forces, air lift, and close air support.

McCain has also called for imposing graduated diplomatic, military, and economic costs on Pakistan as long as it continues to provide support and sanctuary to terrorist and insurgent groups, including the Taliban and the Haqqani Network, while simultaneously outlining the potential benefits of a long-term U.S.-Pakistan strategic partnership that could result from Pakistan's cessation of support for all terrorist and insurgent groups and constructive role in bringing about a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

**(10) ADB Appoints New ...**

and improve livelihoods."

An Indonesian national, Tumiwa joined ADB in 2001 and has since held numerous leadership positions. Prior to the latest appointment, he served as principal energy specialist in the Central and West Asia Department, where he led the design and implementation of solar power development projects in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

From 2011 to 2016, Tumiwa was the deputy representative of ADB's North America Representative Office in Washington, DC. He holds a Master of Arts degree in International Affairs from Ohio University in the United States.

Tumiwa replaces Thomas Panella, who served in Afghanistan since 2014, and who has now returned to the ADB Headquarters in the Philippines. Afghanistan is a founding member of ADB, and, to date, it has received over \$4.7 billion in grants and loans. (Pajhwok)

**(11) India, World ...**

of clean drinking water to the residents in the capital city. The dam will be constructed on the Kabul river in Chahar Asyab district.

"The Indian government, based on the aid it has provided, is willing to take part in the construction of this dam. Currently the negotiations are going on. The World Bank has also shown interest in participating in the construction of water supply facilities, purification systems and rest of the phases. We are now in talks with India and the World Bank in this respect," said Osmani.

Economic experts have said that with the consideration of the reduction of underground waters, the government must step up the efforts for the earlier start of work on the dam project to overcome the water shortage in the capital city.

"One of the advantages of Shahtoot Dam is that this will help provide clean drinking water to nearly two million residents of Kabul who are facing water shortages due to the reduction of underground water in the capital." Said economic expert Samim Sarem.

Osmani said that the construction of Shahtoot dam will cost nearly \$260 million. (Tolonews)

**(12) ACCI Voices...**

that the Chamber of Commerce was created 80 years back and functioned in different forms as government and semi-government institution.

He said the chamber initially had been limited to commerce and but after the endorsement of the new constitution, it was privatized.

After lengthy discussions with the private sector, a unified body, the ACCI, was created and until now traders and investors discharged their activities under a single roof.

Alokozai said trade was not possible without investment and separation of the industry from the chamber was not a wise decision. (Pajhwok)

**(13) Thousands Attend ...**

Religious scholar Mualvi Qadirullah called upon the Afghans to strike unity in their ranks and put aside their differences. "The Afghan society should be ashamed of their differences. Come and end differences in order to build a society and create jobs for people to work for their country's rebuilding." (Pajhwok)

**(14) 3 Killed, 11 Injured...**

the imam continued to lead prayers, triggering a clash between the two sides on Friday. The clash is still ongoing, Taimur said.

The governor's spokesman said security forces had been sent to the area to help stop the fighting. However, he said the security forces might not be able to disarm illegal gunmen.

Commander Qanat told Pajhwok Afghan News that his men wanted to show their opposition to the imam but they were attacked by the rival side.

He said Mualvi Mehfoozullah had announced jihad against him last night. He said civilians were safe during the clash. A resident of the area, Shukrullah, confirmed the imam had declared jihad against commander Qanat a few days ago. He said the clash was ongoing and many worshippers remained trapped inside the mosque.

Takhar security officials said they had called a security meeting to find solution to the situation in Chah Ab district.

Commander Bashir Qanat is a Hezb-i-Islamic Afghanistan commander, who often gets engaged in armed clashes with Jamiat-i-Islami rivals in the district. (Pajhwok)

**(15) 16 Civilians ...**

were buried in bags.

A resident of the area, Samim, said 16 people, including women and children,

were killed in the airstrikes by foreign forces.

The foreign forces have so far said nothing about the latest civilian casualties in the conflict. (Pajhwok)

**(16) 15 Taliban Killed, ...**

Border police commander in Paktika Raz Mohammad said several areas had so far been cleared of militants as a result of the operation, which he said was moving fast.

The Taliban have said nothing about the operation in Gomal district, but they had a day claimed killing four ANA soldiers, including an officer, in a roadside bomb attack in Khoshmand district. (Pajhwok)

**(17) Protestors Say ...**

homes and firing at them.

Malak Gul, another protestor, asked the government to punish the police officials who fired at the civilians. He said the dead and wounded were shifted to hospital after their homes had been demolished.

Luqman, who has been living in the area for the past 15 years, said he was not home when their house was demolished by security forces.

"I had gone to find work and earn some money to feed my family. When I returned, I found my family in the open and my home razed to ground."

He said Daesh and Taliban were not allowing them to live peacefully in their own areas while the government was expelling them from places where they took refuge.

Stranded passengers lashed out at the protestors, saying they were victimizing people for something that belonged to the government. (Pajhwok)

## No Alternative to Unity Government: Local Reps

KABUL - Some heads of Provincial Councils (PC) have believed no alliance could become alternative to incumbent government, said a statement from Presidential Palace on Thursday.

During a meeting with President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani here, local representatives talked the role of local bodies as it were effective in reducing gap between the government and people and could develop strong communication and contact.

The Afghanistan PC Coordination Council Head Farid Pakhtawar, Parwan PC Head Ghulam Bahauddin Jelani, Baghlan PC Head Raes Asadullah Shabaz, other local representatives and officials were present in the meeting.

They informed the president about their issues and declared their support from security forces. The visiting local representatives told the president to strengthen contact between Presidential Palace and provincial councils and stressed no alliance could replace the unity government.

The statement said that Abdul Matin Big, head of the Afghanistan Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) briefed the president regarding the relationship of his department with PC. Baig stressed greater role of PCs for bring stability and ensuring rule of law in the country.

New political alliances, among them the prominent is Turkey-born alliance created by Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabani, Balkh Governor Atta Mohammad Nor, deputy CEO Haji Mohammad Mohaqis, first Vice President Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum and others claiming Afghanistan's salvation. The main architectures of the alliances have been major stakeholders in the incumbent unity government and at the same time strong critics.

The president thanked the PC heads for their support and said he in the past believed that PC could play vital role in the country's politics.

He said: "Our country is the home for consultation thus we prefer to consult to everyone."

The president stressed government was ready for reforms and there was need for PC members support in this regard.

Ghani recalled government achievement in revenue surge, investment attraction, good governance and believed the government was fully ready to introduce reforms and sought the PC members support.

Ghani said Baghlan province would be converted in to electricity supply centre and other parts of the country would also be developed.

He said with the construction of Mazar-i-Sharif-Herat City railway line the economy of the region would develop, adding changes in the cabinet was being made and Afghanistan would have young cabinet in the region. He directed the IDLG head to admire positive activities of PC members. (Pajhwok)