

(1) US and Taliban...

a cease-fire, intra-Afghan negotiations to follow and Taliban guarantees that Afghanistan will not be a launch pad for global terror attacks.

Previously, Khalilzad has said the intra-Afghan negotiations will be the occasion to work out thorny issues such as constitutional reforms, the fate of the country's many militias and even the name for Afghanistan, as the Taliban still refers to it as the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.

It was not immediately clear when a deal might be reached after both the U.S. and Taliban earlier this month signaled they were nearing one. President Donald Trump, who wants to bring home at least some of the 13,000 troops he says remain in Afghanistan before next year's election, was briefed on the negotiations Friday.

This week, Trump said it was "ridiculous" that U.S. troops have been in the country for almost 18 years. Two U.S. service members were killed on Wednesday, joining more than 2,400 U.S. service personnel who have died since the U.S.-led invasion in 2001 to topple the Taliban, whose government had harbored al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden.

Trump this week also said Afghanistan remains dangerous and "we have to have a presence" — a stance that could complicate talks with the Taliban, whose top demand has been the departure of all U.S. and allied troops, which number close to 20,000. A Taliban spokesman said the commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, Gen. Scott Miller, was at the negotiations in Qatar on Thursday.

The U.S. and NATO formally concluded their combat mission in 2014, but American and allied troops remain, conducting strikes on the Islamic State group and the Taliban and working to train and build the Afghan military. The prospect of a troop withdrawal has created widespread concern that another civil war in Afghanistan could follow as various armed parties jostle for power.

Afghanistan was the world's deadliest conflict in 2018, and the United Nations has said more civilians died there last year than in the past decade. Over 32,000 civilians have been killed in Afghanistan in the past 10 years.

The Taliban, which now control roughly half of Afghanistan and are at their strongest since their 2001 defeat in the U.S.-led invasion, have dismissed the Afghan government as a U.S. puppet but have repeatedly offered talks with anyone who comes to the table as an ordinary Afghan. (AP)

(2) US-Taliban Talks ...

The event was first addressed by Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) head Abdul Matin Baig who said the Afghan people were real heroes of independence of Afghanistan.

He said Afghans protected their country for centuries against foreign invasions and resisted against aggression.

Princess Hindia, daughter of King Amanullah Khan, who also spoke at the event, said, "The first words of King Amanullah Khan after the independence of the country were 'drop weapons and take pens because an illiterate country cannot get freedom.'"

"The biggest wish of my father was building schools for both boys and girls and my mother, Malaka Soraya built Masturat High School which was later renamed Malalai High School", she said. Hindia said that her father was a strong Muslim who loved his people and was a kind father. "I thank the president who reconstructed this palace which is a national symbol for all Afghans," she said. President Ashraf Ghani, talking at the event, said: "We rehabilitated the ruined palace of Darul Aman. This great historic palace has an amazing similarity with the revival of this nation."

"This palace is an example of the history which shows we owned state and dignity", he said.

"Terrorists were able to delay the day of our independence celebrations, but they would be never able to detract us from the route of development and change," he said.

Ghani said, "We will continue our struggle. We will never surrender to a small minority who is the enemy of our history and development."

Enemies of Afghanistan tried a lot to destroy its historic monuments but they failed for hundreds of years and the Af-

ghans raised their heads again and again from the rubbles of aggressions, he said.

"Our heinous enemies destroyed our Buddha statues to cut us off from the old civilization by explosions, but they failed", he said.

"They stole historic monuments of Nangarhar and Paktia and displayed them in their homes in Punjab, they did it to remove history from these two provinces and take them as their own territory," he said.

About peace, he said, "We want a peace in which our dignity is protected and our nation's voice not lost and our daughters go to school without fear and our women have high participation in government, economy and society." He said he would not let any group destroy the Afghans national identity.

"Negotiations between the US and Taliban have been under our watch. We do not share information on this regard because no direct talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban have begun. Once the US and Taliban reach an agreement and we start negotiations with the Taliban, then we will share details with the people," he said.

He said the next presidential election would be held for survival of the republic system and measures for the process had already been taken. (Pajhwok)

(3) Ruling Tickets ...

"All people want to know whether peace or election is the priority of the Afghan government and the international community", he said.

"If is peace coming people should how and under what conditions? Or if election is a priority then there should be explanation about its conditions", he said.

The government was currently emphasizing on election while politicians and the international community preferred peace and there were some circles who wanted election and peace simultaneously", Shinwari said.

The ninth round of peace talks between the Taliban and US representatives in Qatar is expected in near future as the two sides have agreed over some issues in previous meetings.

Shinwari said peace talks would affect the election process and taking the two processes forward together would not be possible. "If the same situation continues, the election will not be held or only a limited people would participate in it and it would also lack political legitimacy", he said.

He called the ongoing electioneering of candidates as unjust and said, "Our findings show the two ruling electoral teams (Ashraf Ghani and Dr. Abdullah Abdullah), illegally use government resources for their campaigns."

Enayatullah Osmani, head of Women's Research Organization for Peace and a member of EON, said that election commissions' officials were not neutral about election and they supported some specific candidates sometimes.

He said the Afghan people wanted the election on its schedule, September 28, and the date should not be changed.

Anisa Taiba, EON spokesman also said the Afghan government and the international community should clarify whether election or peace was their priority. (Pajhwok)

(4) Partial US Troop...

Force, and other Defense and Security Forces and will help the Resolute Support to continue [its mission in Afghanistan]," Mr. Ghani said.

He said that he does not believe in his previous comments that the country will fall in six months after withdrawal of foreign forces. He added that he has brought reforms in Afghan forces which will help them to defend the country against any types of threats.

Mr. Ghani said the barrier on the way of direct talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban is the presence of the international forces but the Taliban's relations with Pakistan and terrorist networks and drug trafficking groups is another issue in this respect.

The Afghan president said his government has initiated the peace efforts and the talks between the US and the Taliban. "The talks between the US and the Taliban would have not been impossible without the initiative of the Afghan government," he said. "This includes unconditional talks and ceasefire and convincing of the international community." Mr. Ghani said that the US Special Rep-

resentative for Afghanistan Reconciliation was appointed after consultation and agreement of the Afghan government.

He mentioned that at this point, the presence of the Afghan government in the talks between the US and the Taliban is not necessary.

"Our presence is not necessary there [in Doha]. Our presence is required in the direct negotiations," Mr. Ghani said, reiterating that a peace deal will only be signed by the Afghan government.

"The agreement between a government a group does not have a legal ground," he said, referring to a possible peace deal between the US and the Taliban which is expected to be signed within the next few days.

According to him, the details of the peace agreement will be disclosed after it is finalized and shared with the Afghan government.

Negotiating Team

Last month, the Afghan government announced that a 15-member negotiating team has been finalized which will conduct direct negotiations with the Taliban in the near future.

Mr. Ghani said the team will be finalized as soon as the next few days.

The Afghan president did not provide details about members of the team but said it will be announced close to start of direct negotiations.

"I am not announcing the team to make sure that the crisis of the UAE is not repeated," Mr. Ghani said, hinting at the formation of a 250-member team who were supposed to attend talks with the Taliban in back June.

In response to a question that whether he is ready to postpone the election in exchange for a ceasefire, Mr. Ghani said Taliban is part of the country and they are not supposed to determine the fate of the country.

"Election is the right of the people of Afghanistan and they will decide to have a legitimate government," he said.

Mr. Ghani said the Afghan government will appear from a strong position in negotiations with the Taliban.

"We will meet the Taliban with dignity, power, and strength and will hold serious negotiations with them," he reiterated.

"If the US president wants to withdraw, it is their national decision. My national decision is to maintain Afghanistan's republic [government]," Mr. Ghani said.

Mr. Ghani said the Taliban is a "platform for international terrorism". "Without this platform, terrorists were not able to find a footprint among Afghans," he said. (Tolo news)

(5) In Support of Peace...

The World Bank is inviting comment on three documents published on its Afghanistan website: A two-page consultation note; A short consultation presentation; and A full technical report.

Consultations are expected to continue until a peace agreement is achieved and new programming decisions are made.

The public was asked to share comments and questions throughout the process via email or through comments on the relevant website. (Pajhwok)

(6) Kabul Says Ready ...

"In partnership with our international partners, we are fighting ISIS and other terrorist groups. We are working together with the United States and NATO to eliminate ISIS havens," he said. (Pajhwok)

(7) Afghan Ambassador ...

Humayun and Wing Commandant Col. Faisal. The Afghan delegation was informed about the current security situation at the border.

Local authorities also briefed the visiting team on the steps taken by the government for the smooth arrival and departure of Afghan citizens.

The envoy also visited offices of National Logistic Cell, immigration and other related sections at the border. He was apprised of Pakistan's plan to keep the border open round the clock. (Pajhwok)

(8) Countries Close...

The comments come a day after Trump indicated the US forces would not completely withdraw from the war-torn country and America would make sure the Taliban do not regain control. (Pajhwok)

(9) Pakistan Not ...

and Pakistan got better after President

Ashraf Ghani's second trip to the neighboring country, but the Afghan government says Pakistan does not act on its promises.

The Afghan government has recently increased its criticism of Pakistan.

On the other hand, Pakistan condemned recent explosions in Kabul and Nangarhar provinces.

Pakistan's foreign ministry said they supported efforts for peace and stability in the region. (Pajhwok)

(10) Canada Honours Its ...

and Commander-in-Chief of Canada; the Honourable Harjit Sajjan, Minister of National Defence; Ms. Jody Thomas, Deputy Minister of National Defence; General Jonathan Vance, Chief of the Defence Staff; and Mrs. Anita Cenerini, the 2018 National Silver Cross mother.

"The Afghanistan Memorial Hall stands as a tribute to those who gave their lives in service to their country during our mission in Afghanistan. Today, we honour and remember those fallen in Afghanistan and their family and friends. We will always remember their strength, courage and sacrifice. They will never be forgotten," said Harjit S. Sajjan, Minister of National Defence. (Pajhwok)

(11) Nangarhar Poultry ...

PFU spokesman Syed Rahim Khan Babakarkhel told Pajhwok that poultry farm owners had inadequate access to the market and feed.

"Pakistani chickens are still being sold in the market because they are cheaper. Raising chickens here in Nangarhar is a more expensive option," he said.

Babakarkhel called the lack of chicken-producing factories another problem as they brought newborn chickens from Pakistan.

"Another problem is a shortage of feed; we have only one factory that produces feed. It meets only 60 percent of our needs," he continued.

He said poultry farms might not survive if the government, particularly the Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), continued to ignore the industry.

But Dr. Abdul Hadi Babar, livestock manager at the Nangarhar agriculture, irrigation and livestock department, said poultry farm owners faced no problem in finding market for their products within the province.

"The poultry farms in Jalalabad, as indeed across Nangarhar province, accept grown-up chickens that come from Pakistan. All sizes of chickens are grown in Nangarhar, from where they are supplied to northern provinces and Kabul," he said.

Babakarkhel added efforts were being made for building chicken producing factories and problems regarding poultry feed production has also been resolved to some extent.

The All Afghanistan Federation of Trade Unions (AAFTU) says poultry farm owners should take care of the health of workers and the government should also support the business.

Dr. Mohammad Liaqat Adil, head of the union, said poultry farm workers remained busy day and night but they were paid only for eight hours. He denounced the toil and low wages of poultry farm workers as sheer injustice.

Thousands of youth would get work opportunities if the government paid adequate attention to the poultry industry, he believed.

Despite creating jobs for thousands of people, poultry farm-owners in Nangarhar warned the industry could collapse if the government did not pay it due attention. (Pajhwok)

(12) Casualties ...

A local resident, who declined to be named, said the clash took place about 500 meters away from the district center. He said the incident also involved an insider attacker who fled along the Taliban taking away some weapons.

However, local officials did not comment if any insider was involved. (Pajhwok)

(13) China Announces...

strategy they see as a path to prosperity and global influence.

The talks are deadlocked over how to enforce any deal. China insists Trump's punitive tariffs have to be lifted as soon as an agreement takes effect. Washington says at least some have to stay to ensure Beijing carries out any promises it makes.

Trump announced plans to raise tariffs Sept. 1 on \$300 billion of Chinese products after talks broke down in May. Increases on some goods were postponed to Dec. 15.

Trump escalated "trade frictions" that are "seriously threatening the multilateral trading system," the Finance Ministry said. "China was forced to take counter-measures."

A separate statement said tariffs of 25% and 5% would be imposed on U.S.-made autos and auto parts on Dec. 15. Beijing announced that increase last year but suspended it after Trump and his Chinese counterpart, President Xi Jinping, agreed at a meeting in December in Argentina to put off further trade action while they negotiated.

Trump and Xi agreed in June to resume negotiations. But talks in Shanghai in July ended with no indication of progress. Negotiators talked by phone this month and are due to meet again in Washington next month.

Trump already has imposed 25% tariffs on \$250 billion of Chinese products. Beijing retaliated by imposing its own penalties on \$110 billion of American goods. But their lopsided trade balance meant China was running out of imports for retaliation.

Friday's announcement, if it applied to goods not already affected by Chinese penalties, would extend tariff hikes to everything China imports from the United States. That would match Trump's hikes, which cover almost all of what Americans buy from China. (AP)

(14) Putin Orders...

prospective similar site in Poland could also be loaded with missiles intended to hit ground targets instead of interceptors. Putin has previously pledged that Russia wouldn't deploy the missiles previously banned by the INF Treaty to any area before the U.S. does that first, but he noted Friday that the use of the universal launcher means that a covert deployment is possible.

"How would we know what they will deploy in Romania and Poland — missile defense systems or strike missile systems with a significant range?" Putin said.

Russia long has charged that the U.S. launchers loaded with missile defense interceptors could be used for firing surface-to-surface missiles. Putin said that Sunday's test has proven that the U.S. denials have been false.

"It's indisputable now," the Russian leader said.

He added the missile test that came just 16 days after the INF treaty's termination has shown that the U.S. long had started work on the new systems banned by the treaty.

Putin said Russia will continue working on new weapons in response to the U.S. moves, but will keep a tight lid on spending. (AP)

(15) Amazon Fires...

counted 47,155 wildfires as of Tuesday, an 84 percent increase compared to the same period last year.

Bolsonaro, who admitted that farmers may be intentionally setting the fires to clear land, admitted his country does not have the resources to control the fires, Reuters reported. He lashed out a Macron for what he said is an attempt to "make personal political gains in an internal matter for Brazil and other Amazonian countries."

He added that calls from Macron to discuss the fires at the G7 summit in Biarritz evoked a "misplaced colonialist mindset". Brazil is not part of the G7.

Reuters reported that farmers in Brazil — if not outright — had "tacit" encouragement from Bolsonaro who has maintained that the Amazon should be utilized for Brazil's economy. The news agency reported that a so-called "Fire Day" was designated to show the president that farmers were eager to work. Bolsonaro's office has denied claims by the EU that deforestation is at historic levels, but did mention the difficulties of policing an area of land "bigger than Europe."

"How will you fight criminal fires in such an area?" he asked. About 60 percent of the Amazon is in Brazil. It is home to more than 30 percent of the world's plant and animal species. Macron appeared to take the EU's position and stressed the urgency of the matter. (Fox News)