

(1) 2015 Civilian...

for "force protection," which can see them engage in self-defensive combat. The UNAMA report highlighted large-scale attacks in the capital Kabul, particularly two suicide attacks on Aug. 7 that it said caused 355 civilian casualties, including 43 dead and 312 wounded. "This was the highest number of civilians killed and injured in one day since UNAMA began systematically recording civilian casualties in 2009," it said. The Taliban's assault on the northern city of Kunduz, on Sept. 28, also caused significant civilian casualties, it said, with 493 civilian deaths and 1,392 injured during weeks of fighting after the insurgents took control. The vast majority of the casualties were the result of ground engagements between the government forces and insurgents between Sept. 28 and Oct. 13, it said. (AP)

(2) Gov't Concerned...

peace and protect their families from harm," the palace said in a statement. Some 3,545 civilians were killed and 7,457 injured as the violence spread in different places of the country last year. The NATO and U.S. forces completed their combat mission in Afghanistan by the end of 2014, after 13 years of military presence in the country. "The Afghan government is particularly saddened by the sharp increase in 2015 of loss of life of Afghan women and girls. The Taliban and their affiliates increasingly trained their sights on Afghan women and girls - maiming them, killing them, and snatching away their constitutional and human rights," the statement reads.

The UN report has highlighted 37 percent increase in women casualties and a 14 percent increase in child casualties last year in compare with 2014.

Some 850 civilians were killed while 570 others were wounded by targeted killings and attack in 2015. The government urged UNAMA's monitoring team to pay particular attention to the increasing number of targeted attacks on civilian personal and institutions, including community elders throughout the country, and especially in the south and southeast. "Our analysts have identified a pattern in the methods in which these violent attacks were carried out and concluded that there is a systematic effort underway to terrorize these communities and intimidate anyone who denounces violence against civilian populations," the statement noted. The UN report has attributed 62 percent of the casualties to the Taliban and other insurgent groups, 17 percent were attributed to security forces while 17 percent of civilian casualties were unattributed and the rest 4 percent were caused by explosive remnants of war. (Xinhua)

(3) Russia Rejects ...

and the fundamentalist took place in July 2015 but were fruitless. At present the Taliban represents a threat also to Pakistan, where the group emerged in the early 1990s in the northern part of the country following the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan in 1989. One of the prominent case, which provoked international outrage and pushed the Pakistani government to take a tougher stance towards the Taliban occurred in 2012, when a schoolgirl, Malala Yousafzai, was shot in the head by the militants on her way home from the school. The girl survived the attack and in 2014 received the Nobel Peace Prize for her "struggle against the suppression of children and young people and for the right of all children to education." (Monitoring Desk)

(4) Ghani, Abdullah ...

to the query whether the Afghan government and the Taliban would come to the negotiating table this month. However, he hastened to add: "We are under no illusion that as soon as we sit with the Taliban, by the end of the day, we will have a settlement out of it. So it's going to be a prolonged process; "I hope not so prolonged that people at the end will lose hope in it, but at least it certainly cannot happen in a meeting or two," the ambassador continued, calling pessimism in Kabul over Pakistan's assistance a challenge to Ghani's renewed outreach to Islamabad. (Pajhwok)

(5) Municipality...

rules or paying government taxes. He said the municipality could not prevent powerful individuals from their illegal constructions and police should deal with them. First district police chief Col. Gul Rahim, who participated in the campaign, said

police were ready to help municipality in the process. "We are ready to stop any powerful individual from illegal activities," he said.

A Pajhwok reporter in the area saw a government delegation tasked with preventing illegal constructions facing a harsh reaction from owners of Zardad Market, thus halting the market's destruction.

Calling 10 percent of Kabul residential buildings as illegal, Mohammad Sarwar said under construction illegal buildings would be destroyed and those already constructed would be registered under a regulation.

Haji Sulaiman, one of the shopkeepers in Zardad Market, said: "Half of Kabul is divided among powerful individuals and they have built tall buildings but no one can ask them, while we have legal documents of our property and the government is stopping us from work."

He said more than 80 shopkeepers had partnership to construct the market and there was no legal issue in their documents. Sulaiman added no one could stop them from work.

Another shopkeeper, Shafique, said earlier shops in the market were not built from concrete and were reduced to ashes in a recent fire incident. "Therefore we want to reconstruct the shops from concrete."

"The government did not help us when our shops were gutted, but now it prevents us from reconstructing our shops," he said.

Some three months ago, nearly 80 shops were torched in a fire in Zardad Market and caused millions of afghanis loss to shopkeepers. (Pajhwok)

(6) Mujaddedi Warns ...

into leaving the country and now we are proud of our freedom," he said, adding the Russian troops had unleashed cruelty on Afghans during their occupation, something that was clear to the people and the world.

The invaders destroyed Afghan cities, villages and all infrastructure in addition to killing and injuring millions of Afghans, he said.

"Now Allah may save us from our enemy Pakistan which wants to kill our people in the name of Taliban," he said. "Taliban enter Afghanistan from Pakistan borders and make us suffer from their insurgent activities. We would be obliged one day to declare war against Pakistan the way we declared the holy war against the former Soviet Union," Mujaddedi said.

About his fatwa for jihad against Pakistan, he said the president had told him to wait because the peace process with Taliban was ongoing.

"Pakistan has weapons and modern equipment which Afghanistan lacks, but we have our Allah and we can defeat Pakistan as we did the Soviets," the former president said.

While optimistic about the peace talks, he thanked the leaders of the unity government for struggling to bring peace and stability to Afghanistan and asked them to appoint educated, experienced and honest people on government positions. (Pajhwok)

(7) Ghani Marks ...

said government welcomes any group that wants peace. "We ask all insurgents to join the peace process. We believe in peace."

In conclusion, Ghani urged the Taliban to come in from the cold and take part in the rebuilding of the country. He said: "I am calling on the Taliban to say yes to peace. Continuing the war will affect the people and the country." (Tolnews)

(8) MoPH Introduces...

with the USAID funded HEMAYAT project and UNFPA. In his opening remarks, Public Health Minister Dr. Ferozuddin Feroz said he would like to reiterate the commitment of the ministry and the unity government to ending preventable maternal and child deaths in Afghanistan.

"As part of the commitment we recognise that midwives are vital in achieving the continued progress and sustainable development in the reduction of maternal, neonatal, and child mortality and provision of quality accessible, affordable and easily available, maternal, neonatal and child health services," the minister added.

Greg Adams, USAID's Health Director, said in his speech that USAID was glad to stand with the Ministry of Public Health to assist in implementing a new framework which will help bring sustainability in meeting the health care needs of Afghanistan. Ms. Frances Day Stirk, President of the International Confederation Midwives, said she was delighted to have the interest of the Afghan Ministry of Public Health in the Midwifery Services Framework. The framework is designed to assist countries to strengthen the midwifery workforce and quality of midwifery care and the International

Confederation Midwives team looks forward to meeting midwives, Ministry officials, USAID, HEMAYAT, WHO, UNFPA and other stakeholders to share the framework to improve care to women and babies of Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

(9) EU Seeks ...

UNAMA report lists 11002 civilian casualties in 2015. One in ten civilian casualties was a woman and one in four a child. Ground engagements continued to cause the highest number of civilian casualties. (Pajhwok)

(10) 1st Phase of ...

of the programme, the minister said. He also the programme included training in irrigation methods and marketing of agricultural products.

The minister, however, didn't mention costs of the other phases of SNaPP2, but said IFAD had pledged to support the other phases for 10 more years in other provinces of the country.

IFAD agricultural section head in Afghanistan, Qaim Shah, said the organisation was committed to supporting the programme for the next 15 years in order to improve living condition of households in remote areas of Afghanistan.

MRRD deputy minister Mohammad Sharif said, calling the programme as effective said his ministry would fully cooperate with the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock in properly implementing the SNaPP2.

Earlier, some joint programmes of the two ministries had flopped due to a lack of cooperation between the two entities, but now they would struggle to successfully implement programmes, he said. (Pajhwok)

(11) Insecurity Seen ...

everyone as the government refused to take decisive action against abusers of women rights, and let them off the hook by not pursuing cases against the accused.

Safar demanded a thoroughgoing investigation of the Farkhunda case, saying they would continue organising similar events in collaboration with other civil society organisations to seek justice over the high-profile murder. Khumari Haidari, the Independent Afghanistan Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) chief for Balkh, said 135 incidents of violence against women had been registered in the ongoing solar year, showing a 20 increase. Also Shahla Hadid, the women affairs director, admitted insecurity contributed to fuelling violence against women in the northern region of the country. Poverty, lawlessness and ignorance also among the factors behind the violations of women's rights. She said the ministry concerned, in coordination with civil society organisations, had been working hard to improve the overall women's rights situation and promote awareness in this regard. (Pajhwok)

(12) Stop Using...

"We are suffering from the aftermath of the Soviet defeat in the form of widespread insecurity." Hailing the jihad against the Soviet troops as a great achievement of the entire Afghan nation, he suggested it would be wrong to ascribe that victory to a handful of individuals.

Hundreds of thousands of Afghans were killed during the war that forced millions to migrate to other countries, the CEO recalled, regretting the country remained in the grip of conflict even today. Abdullah made clear all Afghans desired peace with dignity. Afghanistan, being a peace-loving nation, never committed aggression against country in the region.

"We are trying to achieve peace and stability. People's role in the peace process is vital. Mujahideen can help us realize this objective," remarked the former foreign minister.

Speaking on the occasion, ex-president Sibghatullah Mujaddedi paid glowing tribute to the martyrs and eulogised the holy warriors for their religious spirit and patriotism. In the same breath, he lambasted Pakistan for interfering in Afghanistan's internal affairs and aiding the Taliban as well as other militant organisations. (Pajhwok)

(13) War Veterans ...

war. Five Tajik nationals were given the title of Hero of Soviet Union; one of them - Alexander Mironenko was given this title posthumously. Soviet forces were brought into Afghanistan in the summer of 1979. The war was known as Soviet war in Afghanistan (also known as the Soviet-Afghan War or the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan) was a nine-year conflict involving Soviet Union troops supporting the Marxist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) government against the Islamic mujahideen resistance. The

latter group found support from a variety of sources including the United States, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and other Muslim nations in the context of the Cold War.

The Afghan government repeatedly requested the introduction of Soviet forces in Afghanistan in the spring and summer of 1979. They requested Soviet troops to provide security and to assist in the fight against the mujahideen rebels.

(Asia-Plus)

(14) The Situation in...

RFE/RL's Turkmen Service assembled a panel on February 10 to discuss the recent developments in northern Afghanistan and how these developments are impacting neighbors to the north.

Azatyk director Muhammad Tahir moderated the discussion and its participants included Obaid Ali of the Afghan Analysts Network from Kabul, Helene Thibault, professor at the University of Montreal's School of Public and International Affairs (Canada), and Bruce Pannier, RFE/RL correspondent covering events in Central Asia and energy issues.

The panel first listened to an audio recording of Imomuddin Kureyschi, the head of the Imam Sahib district in Kunduz Province, who spoke with RFE/RL at the start of February.

"The people who make explosives and carry out suicide bombings are organized by Tajik and Uzbek militants. According to reports we have received from the intelligence [service], their numbers are about 200 in Imam-Sahib and Dashti Archi districts," Kureyschi said. (Asia-Plus)

(15) Sayyaf Suggests ...

a part in defending the country in order to help thwart threats against the political system and the country.

Sayyaf said that if the government does not allow the Mujahideen to help defend the country, then the Mujahideen will intervene, a move which according to Sayyaf would have negative consequences.

The gathering was also attended by several other Jihadi figures. In their speeches, they accused the government of pushing the Mujahideen to the sidelines, which according to them has also led to an unprecedented surge on security threats.

"The security situation is getting worse day by day. The system must take our calls into consideration as it is failing to maintain security and failing to push the enemy back. This is just because they (government) have tightened the hands of the Mujahideen deliberately or in ignorance," Sayyaf said.

He said that the continuation of the current situation could pose serious threats to Afghanistan's stability. He also announced that a plan has been formulated by the Jihadi commanders for security and economic development. This will be shared with the people and the government in the near future, he said. (Tolnews)

(16) Afghan Official ...

"positive" cooperation for rekindling hopes for Afghan peace.

Unlike his predecessors, Zakhilwal has arrived in Islamabad with the additional responsibility of having "full political authority" and backing of Afghan politicians "across the board" to win Islamabad's consistent and crucial support for ending the 15-year-old Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan.

A four-nation cooperation group of senior Afghan, Pakistani, American and Chinese officials, at their latest meeting in Islamabad, agreed on a "road map" for peace and announced that direct talks between the warring Afghan sides were expected by the end of February.

"I am very positive that we will," Zakhilwal said when asked whether the Afghan government and the Taliban will both come to the negotiating table this month. (VoA)

(17) Stop Privileging ...

what did those who call themselves jihadi leaders?" he asked.

Ibrahimzada said northern provinces were becoming insecure day by day because leadership of security forces lacked capacity.

A resident of Mazar-i-Sharif, Husain, said he lost his one leg during the jihad against the Soviet invasion. He said they did jihad to please Allah but they were disappointed by their so-called leaders. (Pajhwok)

(18) Peace Talks ...

he said, adding the talks were held with group leaders and field commanders of the Taliban.

Qahraman said he had exclusive meetings with 4,500 individuals who were now assisting them in ending the conflict. "Now we are implementing two policies. First we will convince the opponents through dialogue to shun violence and second

we will reorganize our security apparatus and will try to establish a better management."

Qahraman said there had been a huge gap between the government and the people in the past and the insurgents had fully capitalized on the opportunity.

To a question, he said no deal was going to be struck on Helmand and nothing as such had been discussed with anyone, but fruitful talks with religious scholars, tribal elders and jihadi figures on ending the conflict had been held. (Pajhwok)

(19) Pakistani Envoy ...

MoFA received by Pajhwok Afghan News said Deputy Foreign Minister Hikmat Khalil Karzai expressed his concern over Wahidi's disappearance in Islamabad to the Pakistani ambassador, Ibrar Hussain.

Karzai condemned the incident and said: "We regard Wahidi an important Afghan personality who has been kidnapped in the Pakistani capital. We want the Pakistani government to use all resources at its disposal to identify the kidnappers and rescue Wahidi." Meanwhile, the Afghan Embassy officials in Pakistan said they had contacted Pakistani police about the issue. The police claimed having achieved a breakthrough in their search for Wahidi, who was kidnapped in the Rana Market area of Islamabad. The Afghan embassy lodged a case with the Kohsar Police Station. (Pajhwok)

(20) Rights Body ...

and said that last year they recorded the highest number of civilian casualties in a single year in Afghanistan. The annual report, produced by UNAMA in coordination with the UN Human Rights Office, shows that increased ground fighting in and around populated areas, along with suicide and other attacks in major cities, were the main causes of conflict-related civilian deaths and injuries in 2015.

Nicholas Haysom, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan and head of UNAMA said in a statement: "This report records yet another rise in the number of civilians hurt or killed. The harm done to civilians is totally unacceptable."

He went on to say: "We call on those inflicting this pain on the people of Afghanistan to take concrete action to protect civilians and put a stop to the killing and maiming of civilians in 2016." (Tolnews)

(21) Two Soldiers ...

several militants were also killed and wounded during the exchange of fire," district governor Nasruddin Sahadi Nazari told Xinhua. The injured were shifted to an army camp for treatment, the official added.

The province bordering Tajikistan, some 250 km north of Kabul, has been the scene of heavy clashes between security forces and Taliban since late last year. (Xinhua)

(22) 2 Killed, 3...

three others were wounded and were rushed to hospital as a result of the clash, he said.

Balkh police spokesman Sher Jan Durani confirmed the clash, saying they had no exact report about casualties.

He said they had sent an investigation team to the scene and the team had launched its investigation. (Pajhwok)

(23) 1,700 Officers ...

join the peace process, or be suppressed. "I call on militants to join the peace process, or we will eliminate them," said Sayed Ebrahim, a newly graduated army officer. Ebrahim said that they will fight insurgents. The 16 female officers are expected to be appointed in administrative positions within the national army. (Tolnews)

(24) Real Mujahideen...

the ANYA, said the Jihad against the Soviets was the victory of Afghanisthan people and the credit went to them.

Syed Abdullah Hashami, ANYA chief, said the day of Soviet Forces' withdrawal from Afghanistan was a historic moment and unforgettable day in the history of Afghanistan. He said the then world's strongest army faced defeat at the hands of Afghanisthan people, who had been left with no option but expel the foreign troops. (Pajhwok)

(25) New Kunduz...

my ability, I need your support in resolving problems in Kunduz province," he said. Omorkhel said improving security, agriculture and economy of the province would be among his priorities, stressing that he would never accept corruption; a phenomenon he said would be completely removed from Kunduz under

his leadership.

Mohammad Yousuf Ayubi, the provincial council head, welcomed the appointment of Omorkhel as the governor for Kunduz and asked him to prioritise dealing with major problems of Kunduz residents. (Pajhwok)

(26) Migrants...

untold hardships in Europe decided to return to Kabul. "My son left [to Europe] through Iran and Turkey and when we found out that he is going across the sea to Greece, we could not sleep at night. After reaching Europe and experiencing such difficulties, he decided to return," said Abdul Saboor. Abdul Wahid, another member of the family, also wanted to leave for Europe, but after the bitter experience of his brother, decided to stay and cope with hardships in Kabul. (Tolnews)

(27) Commander ...

Taliban commander, Jan Agha, was killed along with three others and another three militants were injured as a result of an airstrike during the operation. The militants were trying to flee when they were hit, he said. (Pajhwok)

(28) Security Forces...

Kohestani, an officer said. Police in Baghlan said that at least four Taliban militants have been killed in the fighting and six others wounded.

"The Taliban have received heavy casualties, four militants were killed and six others wounded. The main hurdle before us are landmines," said Abdul Rashid Bashir, security chief at the Baghlan police headquarters. (Tolnews)

(29) Farmers' Anti...

about three years to recover, as foreign clients turned to other markets.

For the time being, the Greek Exporters' Association estimates that blockades which are causing long delays in the transport of products and force companies to seek alternative roads may be costing up to 30 million euros (34 million U.S. dollars) a day. (Xinhua)

(30) Opinion Poll ...

accounts of her party. The poll shows that the votes lost by the PP would cost them four seats in a theoretical new Congress, with 119 members rather than today's 123. Their support would go to the center-right Citizens, who would have 44 members rather than today's 40. (Xinhua)

(31) Presidential ...

what was termed as technical challenges, but no violence was reported. Central African Republic is trying to turn the page after three years of unprecedented violence since the March 2013 overthrow of Bozize by Michel Djotodia, leader of ex-rebel group, Seleka. (Xinhua)

(32) Bosnia Applies...

in 2008 when it signed a Stabilization and Association Agreement with the bloc, 13 years after the end of the bloody conflict that left the country ethnically divided. But unresolved wartime quarrels have hindered the necessary reforms as Bosnian Serbs feared for their autonomy within Bosnia. This frustrated the Muslim Bosniaks and some Bosnian Croats, who felt they were hostages to the Serb lack of will to reform the country at least enough to attract foreign investments that would kickstart the economy. (AP)

(33) Missiles Hit...

have fled to the town, the last rebel stronghold before the border with Turkey, from towns and villages where there is heavy fighting between the Syrian army and militias.

"We have been moving scores of screaming children from the hospital," said medic Juma Rahal. At least two children were killed and ambulances ferried scores of injured people to Turkey for treatment, he said. (Reuters)

(34) Ukraine Bans...

"Unfortunately the Ukrainian government is incapable of restoring order. The fact that some thugs are holding up trucks with firearms, means that there are no authorities in Ukraine," Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said. (Reuters)

(35) Student Leader's ...

strike on campus and very few students attended classes. Over the weekend thousands of students and teachers from several universities and colleges across India held protest rallies. (AP)

(36) ADB to Help ...

ADB assistance for 2016 is expected to be \$70 million in support for rehabilitating the Dushanbe-Qurghon-Teppa road, and improved water resource management. (Asia-Plus)