

(1) Atmar in ...

the attack will also not harm the bilateral relations between Afghanistan and the United Arab Emirates. The UAE authorities confirmed Wednesday that five diplomats were killed in the attack and the country's ambassador was wounded. The Taliban group rejected responsibility behind the attack. (KP)

(2) World Bank ...

accounting for about 60 percent of global growth for the first time since 2013. The World Bank kept its forecast for China's economic growth unchanged, with the growth for 2017 at 6.5 percent and for 2018 at 6.3 percent. Chinese economy will continue sustainable growth as it is rebalancing from manufacturing to services, despite the reemerging concerns for property markets, said the bank. In contrast to the relatively buoyant growth seen in the emerging market economies, the advanced economies will continue modest growth in the coming years. (Xinhua)

(3) Shafiq-Era ...

which is in the interest of the Afghans and peace in their country."

Shafiq and Iranian counterpart Amir Abbas Hoveyda signed the 12-article agreement and two protocols in Kabul on March 12, 1973. The agreement had specified the amount of water flowing from Helmand River to Iran.

The Iranian parliament approved the pact on September 1, 1973 and ordered the officials concerned to exchange documents, but the coup against Zahir Shah, the last king of Afghanistan, prevented review and approval of the deal. The 1978 coup plunged the country into a civil war and the agreement was not even taken up by parliament during the leadership of former president Hamid Karzai.

About the achievement of Shafiq, Ghani said the former prime minister was a man of pen and action, as well as a great politician. "He was prime minister for a few months and had little time to realise his great dreams. But he was still able to perform vital tasks under his leadership."

Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani said the seminar had been arranged in recognition of Musa Shafiq's services, because knowing him thoroughly could teach essential lessons and one could avail his experience in mapping out future plans.

According to him, this great personality, besides being a writer and poet, was also a committed jurist and intelligent politician. In terms of knowledge and bravery, he was exceptional among his political figures of that era.

He said Shafiq, after the shameful coup d'état by the communists, was martyred along with other academic, national and Muslim figures on April 27, 1978.

He continued Shafiq, in addition to being a political personality, also earned a great place in the history of Afghanistan's literature by leaving behind fictional works in Dari and Pashto languages.

During his job at the foreign ministry and as prime minister, Shafiq built trust between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The current government had been trying to turn Afghanistan into a regional intersection, Rabbani added.

Nations who don't read and criticize their and others' past history and don't learn from previous experiences were always doomed to repeat the bitter historical experiences again and would never find their way to success, he believed. The ceremony was also attended by high-ranking officials, National Assembly member, Kabul-based diplomats, Shafiq's relatives and others. A postal stamp was also introduced in the name of Shafiq. (Pajhwok)

(4) UAE Mourns ...

with UAE Ambassador Juma Mohammed Abdullah al-Kaabi. The attack killed 11 people

and wounded 18, said Gen. Abdul Razeq, Kandahar's police chief, who was praying nearby at the time of the blast.

Razeq said investigators believe someone hid the bomb inside a sofa at the guesthouse. He said an ongoing construction project there may have allowed militants to plant the bomb.

"Right now we cannot say anything about who is behind this attack," he told The Associated Press, while adding that several suspects had been arrested. On Wednesday, broken glass from the powerful blast still littered the blood-stained ground outside of the guesthouse, with thick black soot still visible on the building. Some furniture sat outside, apparently moved as part of the construction. Dubai's ruler, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, who is also the UAE prime minister and vice president, offered condolences for the families of the dead and condemned the attack.

"There is no human, moral or religious justification for the bombing and killing of people trying to help" others, he wrote on Twitter.

On the Afghan side, authorities said the dead included two lawmakers, a deputy governor from Kandahar and an Afghan diplomat stationed at its embassy in Washington.

The Taliban is usually quick to take credit for attacks, particularly those targeting the government or security forces. They claimed attacks earlier on Tuesday in Kabul at a compound of government and legislative offices that killed at least 38 people and wounded dozens. Another Taliban-claimed suicide bombing on Tuesday killed seven people in Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand province.

But on Wednesday, the Taliban issued a short statement blaming an "internal local rivalry" for the Kandahar attack.

The Taliban have denied some attacks in the past that diplomats and security forces later attributed to the group. Other insurgent groups, including an Islamic State affiliate, also operate in Afghanistan.

Saif Ghubash, the UAE's first minister of state for foreign affairs, died after being shot in an October 1977 attack at Abu Dhabi International Airport, an attack that apparently targeted Syrian Foreign Minister Abdul-Halim Khaddam. Khaddam later blamed the attack on Iraq.

In 1984, the UAE's ambassador to France was assassinated outside his Paris home by a gunman. A diplomatic club was named in honor of the slain envoy, Khalifa al-Mubarak, in the Emirati capital, Abu Dhabi, in 2015.

Another Emirati diplomat was wounded in a shooting in Rome in 1984. Reports at the time linked those two attacks to the Arab Revolutionary Brigades, a Palestinian militant group.

Abu Dhabi's powerful crown prince, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, said Tuesday's attack wouldn't stop the UAE's humanitarian efforts abroad.

He wrote on Twitter: "We will not be discouraged by despicable terrorist acts carried out by the forces of evil and darkness." (AP)

(5) High-Ranking ...

- Baz Mohammad Jawzjani, an MP
- Sarajuddin Safari, Herat Senator

In addition, five UAE diplomats were also killed. They are:

- Mohammed Ali Zainal Al Bastaki
- Abdullah Mohammed Essa Obaid Al Kaabi
- Ahmed Rashid Salim Ali Al Mazroui
- Ahmed Abdul Rahman Ahmad Al Tunajji
- Abdul Hamid Sultan Abdullah Ibrahim Al Hammadi

Officials said on Wednesday however, that the death toll could rise.

Among the 16 wounded meanwhile were Hamayun Azizi, the provincial governor; the UAE ambassador; the consul-general of the United Arab Emirates; Hashim Karzai, cousin of former president Hamid Karzai;

Shekib, head of Kandahar governor's office; Siddiq Momand, a local businessman.

According to a source, the explosives were placed in chairs in the meeting room of the guesthouse where the group of officials and diplomats had gathered.

He also said the target of the attack appeared to have been Kandahar police chief General Abdul Raziq, who was not harmed in the explosion.

The Taliban has denied involvement and instead said the reason for the incident was because of internal disputes between local Kandahar officials. (Tolonews)

(6) Taliban Reacts...

12 others were wounded after explosives planted inside the guesthouse of the governor went off on Tuesday evening. A number of senior government officials were also among those killed or wounded.

Provincial police chief General Abdul Raziq confirmed that 11 people were killed and 12 others including governor Humayoun Azizi and UAE's ambassador.

Gen. Raziq further added that the health condition of the Ambassador and governor is satisfactory and are in stable condition.

Kandahar is the birthplace of the Taliban group but the province has been relatively calm during the recent years although Taliban attempt to destabilize the key provinces and cities of the country, including Kandahar. (KP)

(7) Attack on ...

on the ground," he added. The Afghan government and people worked hard to build the capacity of the security forces and consolidate their strengths, he said. The US, he said, had worked to foster an Afghan-led peace process -- the ultimate way forward.

"We encourage that. I don't think we can possibly look at it though and say, you know, mission accomplished. We would certainly not say that. But at the same point, we're not going to encourage any kind of walking away from the situation there," Toner observed. The spokesman acknowledged that continuation of terrorist safe havens in Pakistan was an issue of concern for the US and its neighbouring countries.

"I think we've been very frank and very open about publicly saying to Pakistan that it needs to deny safe haven to groups that will or are intent on carrying out attacks on Afghanistan," he said.

He explained Pakistan had taken some steps to address issue, but the problem persisted and was part of the ongoing dialogue, Toner maintained. (Pajhwok)

(8) MPs Claim ...

ethnicity, whenever someone commits treason, he is supported on the basis of his ethnic affiliation," said MP Sakhi Mashwani.

MPs warned that more attacks could happen in future if government fails to come up with robust and comprehensive security measures for the capital and other big cities in the country. (Tolonews)

(9) Kabul and...

efforts and cooperation for eliminating this menace," their statement read.

The United States' National Security Council spokesman Ned Price said in a statement that the U.S strongly condemns the terrorist attack on parliamentary buildings in Kabul ... An attack on parliamentary facilities and lawmakers is clearly an assault on Afghanistan's efforts to build democratic institutions.

"We also strongly condemn the terrorist attack today in Kandahar," he said.

"We commend the Afghan police and other security forces who bravely responded to these attacks, and fully support Afghan efforts to bring those responsible to justice. The United States stands with the people and government of Afghanistan as we work together to build a more secure, stable, and prosperous Afghanistan." By Wednesday the casualty toll in both the Kabul and Kanda-

har attack had risen.

By mid-afternoon the Kabul death toll was over 50 and more than 150 wounded, while Kandahar death toll was officially 11 but was expected to rise. The number of wounded in that attack was 16.

The U.K envoy to Kabul, Dominic Jermy, meanwhile made it clear that the attacks were unacceptable.

Taking to twitter he said: "Disgusted by attacks today. Strongly condemn them - deepest sympathies with all those affected. #Afghanistan"

UNAMA also issued a statement condemning the Kabul and Kandahar attacks.

UNAMA said of the Kabul attack that a Taliban suicide attacker detonated his vest outside the Parliamentary Administration Compound. Shortly afterwards, the Taliban detonated a vehicle packed with explosives, impacting a civilian bus, parliamentary staff, bystanders, security guards and those responding to the first attack.

"While authorities confirmed two National Directorate of Security (NDS) officials were killed and four injured, preliminary information indicates the majority of the casualties were civilians. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack, stating that they were targeting the NDS. The Taliban also acknowledged that they had deliberately timed the second blast to take place as first responders attended to persons caught in the initial explosion," read their statement. "Such unprincipled, unlawful and deplorable attacks cause immense human suffering and make the peace that Afghans need and deserve even more difficult to achieve," said Pernille Kardel, the Secretary-General's Deputy Special Representative for Afghanistan.

"Those responsible for these attacks must be held accountable," said Kardel, who is also acting head of UNAMA. President Ashraf Ghani meanwhile has appointed a task team to investigate the Kandahar incident. His national security council chief Haneef Atmar is heading the team and arrived in Kandahar early Wednesday.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the Lashkargah and Kabul explosions but denied involvement in the Kandahar attack. They implied that internal disputes in local government led to the incident. (Tolonews)

(10) 5 Suspects...

governor's house from the back side and all officials were scanned twice while entering the facility.

He said reconstruction works at the governor's house were underway and militants might have used the opportunity to plant explosives in the guesthouse.

Earlier Raziq told Pajhwok Afghan News the explosives were in couches and that Pakistan's spy agency and the Haqqani Network might be behind the incident. (Pajhwok)

(11) Large Swaths ...

of Mazar-i-Sharif. PC member Shujaiddin Shuja said the provincial council was responsible to retake the usurped land from its illegal occupants.

Local residents also said the government had failed in recovering usurped land. A resident of Chamtal district, Haji Jamal, told Pajhwok Afghan News meadow measuring hundreds of acres of land in the Alberz mountains had been occupied by powerful people since decades.

He said many complaints regarding the issue had been lodged with the government, but in vain.

The governor's spokesman, Munir Farhad, acknowledged the issue of land grabbing but said thousands of acres of usurped land had been retaken from powerful individuals as well.

He said the government's efforts at recovering usurped land were not confined to the provincial capital alone, but the noose around land grabbers had been tightened across the province. (Pajhwok)

(12) Loosely-Run ...

attorneys' offices.

He said without law taking a decision was impossible and listening to prisoners' issues and finding a way to resolve them was his duty and responsibility. He asked prisoners to help him prevent corruption. Currently 1,500 prisoners are held in the Nangarhar prison. They include 31 women. The inmates are busy undergoing professional, religious and school studies until 9th grade. Computer is also taught to them. (Pajhwok)

(13) Joint Chamber ...

economical route for transit trade for Afghanistan.

But Iran's facilitation of Afghan businessmen was pulling the business away from Pakistan, he explained -- a view shared by Suddle and other delegates. (Pajhwok)

(14) Computer ...

said different software and the use of internet would be taught to the students in the course.

Tamana, 21, one of the participants, said: "I am really happy to see computer learning opportunity had been provided to us. The environment here is suitable for girls and could learn a lot." (Pajhwok)

(15) Nangarhar Blasts...

Police officials in Bihsud district.

Governor Spokesman Attullah Khogyani said no casualties resulted in the blast.

There was no claim of responsibility for the Nangarhar blasts. (Pajhwok)

(16) Heroin Factory...

resident of the area, confirmed the deaths and said one of the victims was the mother of a police officer, who had been killed in a similar bombing in Shakh Bala area some days ago. (Pajhwok)

(17) 45 Killed, ...

and avoid high speed.

A resident of Barak-i-Barak district said his five family members were killed when their car crashed into an Afghan National Army pick up in Zahid Abad locality of Pul-i-Alam, the provincial capital. A member of the provincial council, Hassibullah Stanikzai, said after the conflict, traffic accidents was the second leading cause of deaths in Afghanistan.

He asked traffic department officials to install traffic signs on main highways and punish violators. (Pajhwok)

(18) 6 Shut Schools...

a building. He promised tents and other facilities would be provided to the school.

According to him, nearly 300 students attended classes at the newly reopened school. The students were also distributed with books and stationery.

Samimi said Maiwand district was home to 17 schools; however two of them still remained shut due to insecurity.

With this the number of reopened schools reached to six in Kandahar. Earlier, two night schools and a madrasa was reopened in Khandahar City and two more schools were reopened in Spinboldak district.

As many as 460 schools in Kandahar had been registered with the education department of which 144 had been closed due to insecurity, and lack of qualified teachers in some areas.

Abdul Ghafoor, the resident of Nawabad area, said officials honoured public demands for the establishment of a school but there were no building and professional teachers.

Education official said they had been working for the development of education in the province but the volume of problem was more than their capacity.

Lack of teachers, building for 70 percent schools, books and other materials were the problems being faced by the provincial education department, the officials said. (Pajhwok)

(19) 3 of a Family...

investigated. Akbarullah, a resident of the area, said the attacker was a drug addict and the incident was a result of family violence. Police have not yet shared information regarding the issue.

(Pajhwok)

(20) US Drone...

the locality, who wished not to be named, said the drone fired a missile at the vehicle in the area, but he had no information about casualties.

On Tuesday, a well-placed security source said the Haqqani network suicide bombing expert had been detained in a Special Forces raid in the district. (Pajhwok)

(21) 3 Iranian ...

insurgent in Herat, as they would face shamefully fail in achieving their goals.

But Mahmood Afkhami, Iranian consul general in Herat, denied his country aided insurgents in Afghanistan. Iranian authorities condemned terrorists, no matter where they came from, he remarked.

"Anyone, hailing from any country, should be punished and tried according to Afghanistan's Constitution for committing terrorist activities," the diplomat said.

He said Iran supported peace and stability in Afghanistan and had never tolerated attempts at disrupting security in the neighbouring country. (Pajhwok)

(22) New UN ...

Sudan, Syria, and Yemen proved to be difficult to resolve.

Noting that too many prevention opportunities have been lost because member states mistrusted each other's motives, Guterres said "prevention should never be used to serve other political goals."

"In taking preventive action, we need to avoid double standards," said Guterres. "But that does not mean that there are no standards at all." (Xinhua)

(23) Kerry Warns...

you were, where we had pressures on us to go bomb Iran. Believe me, there were pressures," the top U.S. diplomat said. "So it doesn't make sense, and I believe reason will win out."

U.S. President-elect Donald Trump repeatedly criticized the Iran nuclear deal during his campaign last year, calling it "the worst deal ever negotiated." He also suggested that he would force Iran to return to the negotiating table or risk the accord being dismantled.

Bob Corker, Chairman of Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said last week that he didn't expect Trump to abruptly "tear up" the Iran nuclear deal after taking office on Jan. 20. (Xinhua)

(24) Temperature ...

fewer offspring," said Rhonda Snook from the University of Sheffield, who is one of the authors of the study.

Meanwhile, the extent of such effect could vary in different regions.

Insects which evolve in high-latitude countries are more vulnerable to rising temperature, than those at low latitudes, according to the study. (Xinhua)

(25) 1,000 People ...

are also seeking shelter with friends and family members in neighbourhoods further east of frontline areas," he added.

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), almost 140,000 people have fled Mosul and its adjacent districts since military operations to reclaim one of the Islamic State's (IS) last strongholds began in October 2016.

Most of the displaced (78 percent) have found refuge in formal camps with the rest finding shelter in private settings, emergency sites and critical shelter arrangements.

Supported by Kurdish Peshmerga fighters, Iraqi troops kicked off operations on Oct. 17, 2016 to recapture the city which fell into IS hands in June 2014 after government forces fled. (Xinhua)

(26) JCPOA Parties...

the Iran Sanctions Act (ISA)... as being a reintroduction of sanctions. I think the joint commission took Iran's concern very seriously," Araqchi said. (Daily Iran)