

(1) Dunford in...

The Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan, the counter-ISIL campaign, regional security challenges posed by Russia and the surge of refugees in Europe, Hicks said. The meeting will host Mediterranean Dialogue counterparts on the topic of security developments in the region and military-to-military cooperation.

According to the agenda, the final sessions of the day will focus on NATO's future strategy and the consensus-based military advice and guidance that will be given to the North Atlantic Council and Defense Ministers in the run-up to the NATO Summit in Warsaw later this year. (Monitoring Desk)

(2) Gilani Being ...

council's affairs for some time before being chosen as defence minister. Earlier, the National Security Council (NSC) decided to appoint Qanuni as the government's chief peace negotiator. But some jihadi and political parties took issue with plans for his appointment.

"Now Pir Syed Ahmad Gilani, former jihadi leader and head of the Mahaz-i-Milli party, has been proposed for the position," one of his close aides confided to Pajhwok Afghan News.

A member of the party, who wished to go unnamed, said the government had offered the former jihadi leader the top HPC slot. The Coordination Council of Mahaz has reportedly asked Gilani to accept the offer. Sources in the unity government claimed Qanuni had demanded the post, which the United States and United Nations wanted to be filled as soon as possible.

If the appointment of the council's chairman was further delayed, the sources said, the US and UN would stop funding the government-controlled peace body. (Pajhwok)

(3) Daesh Emerging...

but that Afghan forces were successful over the weekend against the militant group in the southern city of Jalalabad, Nangarhar.

"They've largely been pushed back to the southern parts of Nangarhar province. That area is very, very rugged, it's very mountainous, it's on the border with Pakistan, and that's where most of the Daesh in Nangarhar currently is," he said.

Daesh also exists in other parts of the country in "small pockets that mainly consists of low-level recruiting and propaganda," said Shoffner. There is not a significant amount of money coming into Afghanistan to support Daesh, he added.

The State Department last week added Daesh-Khorasan as a foreign terrorist organization. The group is the militant's Afghanistan branch based in that country and Pakistan. It consists of former members of Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan and the Afghan Taliban and last year pledged allegiance to Daesh. (Monitoring Desk)

(4) 7 Killed,...

Salangi tweeted that four people were killed and 24 others wounded in the suicide attack in the Alluddin intersection in the limits of third police district.

Earlier, the public relations director of the Ministry of Public Health, Ismael Kawosi told Pajhwok Afghan News that a person was killed and 22 others including a woman were injured in the suicide attack.

According to eyewitnesses, a suicide bomber on a motorbike targeted a civilian coaster in the Alluddin intersection of Kabul, inflicting casualties on the people.

No one has so far asserted responsibility for the attack. (Pajhwok)

(5) Kerry, Lavrov ...

first step in a proposed 18-month political transition for Syria, mired in civil war.

Lavrov, asked before the meeting if the Syria negotiations would begin as planned, told reporters, "We will see, we will see."

Referring to the composition of the opposition delegation, he said, "It's mostly for de Mistura, not for us."

Kerry kept silent.

Russia and Iran, which back Syrian President Bashar Assad, have immense differences with Saudi Arabia, other Arab states, the United States and Europe over which opposition groups should be considered terrorists and therefore excluded from an 18-month political transition process the U.N. has endorsed. (AP)

(6) Ulomi ...

On Sunday night, a rocket hit the Italian Embassy in Kabul and damaged parts of the compound.

Also on Sunday, gunmen torched a girls school and killed the school se-

curity guard in PD12, Arzan Qemat area, of Kabul city. (Tolonews)

(7) More Troops ...

are higher. Sarjang said he was in contact with central authorities in Kabul and was confident fresh reinforcement would be deployed soon.

A lack of coordination between the army and police was also hampering progress in the fight, he told The Associated Press.

The Taliban are making serious stands in seven Helmand districts - Sangin, Gereshk, Khanashin, Musa Qala, Nawzad, Washer and Marjah - and at least three districts of the provincial capital are also under threat, he said.

Helmand is a strategic region for the Taliban, as it borders Pakistan. It grows large quantities of opium, used to produce most of the world's heroin. The harvest is worth up to \$3 billion a year, and helps fund the insurgency.

Taliban gunmen have been targeting districts across Helmand for weeks, meeting government forces that are under-prepared, under-manned and under-equipped, according to civil and military officials.

Sangin district was besieged for weeks until the ferocity of the fight in late December sparked fears that it could fall to the insurgents. The United States conducted airstrikes on Taliban positions, the British rushed special forces advisers to the area, and the Afghan military dropped food and ammunition to soldiers and police who were surrounded in their base.

Abdul Salam, a tribal elder from Sangin district, said that the Taliban were in control of the whole of Sangin, with government forces restricted to their bases. He contradicted claims by Afghan security forces that they controlled the district.

Karim Atal, head of the provincial council of Helmand, said that the lack of coordination between government security forces has given the Taliban the opportunity to gain control of many areas in the province.

He said that unless the government reacts quickly, Lahskar Gar would fall to the Taliban. (AP)

(8) Sweden to

that his country would spend some of his country's assistance in Heart. He said the ambassador had asked entrepreneurs in Herat to develop good links with Swedish investors. (Pajhwok)

(9) Defence...

Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov in Zurich at the same time to discuss Syria.

Moscow's air campaign, which it claims is targeted against IS, has been criticised for focusing on the moderate opposition to Assad.

"I'm increasingly disturbed by the Russian bombing," Fallon told reporters in Paris.

"We've had estimates of several hundred civilians killed now through the use of unguided munitions in civilian areas, clearly aimed at opposition groups that are fighting Assad, and that I deplore," he added. (AFP)

(10) Cabinet Approves...

(AISA) had said that the AGC planned to set up factories producing macaroni, tissue papers, biscuits, chips, packages and printing houses in Kabul. The AISA had said around 13,000 people would be provided jobs directly or indirectly in the factories.

The AGC had asked the government to provide 144 acres of land for establishing factories in Kabul.

Headquartered in Dubai, the AGC has a strong presence in Afghanistan and Turkey. The company is currently producing several kinds of beverages in Kabul, tissue papers and tea in Dubai and processing ghee in Turkey.

According to AISA, over \$10 billion has been invested in different areas across the country during the past 13 years.

However, the agency said a survey would be launched soon to determine the exact amount of investments in Afghanistan.

The Cabinet meeting was also presented a report by Labour and Social Affairs Minister Nasrin Oryakhil about vacancies in government departments, the procedure of recruitment and problems in the employment process. (Pajhwok)

(11) Parliament ...

non-legislative decree, he said. Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahim said the winter recess would start from tomorrow. He praised lawmakers for their remarkable performance with regard to monitoring, making laws, advocacy and others despite

security threats and other issues.

Ibrahimi asked the legislators to visit their constituents during the vacations and share their problems in general sessions after the return from the break.

The parliamentary elections were due in April or May of 2015 under the Constitution, but the government delayed the vote until next year and extended the Wolesi Jirga mandate until the fresh ballot is held.

The election commission had set an Oct 15 date for the long-delayed parliamentary and district council elections, apparently without any coordination with the government. (Pajhwok)

(12) UK Labour ...

have already been established to campaign for Britain to leave the EU - Vote Leave and Leave.EU.

But organisers expect all of them will work together closely as the referendum approaches.

Prime Minister David Cameron wants Britain to stay in the bloc assuming he can secure concessions on issues such as the level of benefit payments to EU migrants coming to Britain, although members of his party have said they will campaign against EU membership regardless. (AFP)

(13) Kandahar ...

other improvement in their activities.

He said the customs department also controlled the quality of goods as they had returned 1,500 packages of low quality medicines imported from Pakistan and destroyed thousands of expired hen eggs.

Meanwhile, Najib Ahmadi, the Kandahar transport director, said his department had collected 150 million afghanis revenue from five ports of the province. He claimed the revenue collected this year increased by 29 percent compared the returns in 2014.

He called proper operations of scales, prevention of overloads, overseeing ports and reforms in the administration of the department as main reasons behind the surge in revenue.

The transport department had closed down eight transport companies after failing to provide standard services, he said, adding that a number of other transport companies providing better travel services to Maiwvad, Zheri, Dand and Shah Wali Kot districts had been registered with the department.

Ahmadi confirmed some problems remained unaddressed in the transport sector and said the Kandahar municipality had promised to build 40 bus stands in Kandahar City for better transport services to citizens. However, some people and businessmen criticised the two departments for what they said poor performance.

Haji Ahmad Wali Hottak, a trader in Kandahar city, said the reward and punishment system had not been used by the two departments whenever their officers had committed any crime.

He said some traders had been importing goods through illegal ways, damaging businesses of other traders.

A civil society activist, who wished not to be named, said the transport department did not control standard and low quality food items from imported to Kandahar. "There is no laboratory to check medicines or food items in Kandahar ports," he added.

In response to people's questions, the Kandahar customs director said checking quality of food items and medicines was the responsibility of the Public Health Department.

Nikzad said the Ministry of Public Health had promised opening a standard laboratory for testing the quality of imported food and drugs but no action had been taken so far in this regard.

"Controlling illegal imports of goods along the 560-kilometer border share with Pakistan is a difficult job, but we in coordination with security forces are trying to control them," the official added. He said officers involved in corruption were being identified and would be taken to justice.

Transport Director Najib Ahmadi said his department in coordination with the public works departments had prevented trucks from overloading.

Governor Hamayon Azizi said people had the right to question the performance of all government officers including him. But he said that the people also have responsibilities. He added the activation of a laboratory was important in Kandahar and the Ministry of Public Health should provide it. If the ministry cannot provide it then the private sector

would invest in it, Azizi added he had noted problems people were complaining about and he would share them with the officials concerned. (Pajhwok)

(14) Plans Devise ...

Taliban and devising a long-term strategy for peace and stability in the province.

Police Chief Brig. Gen. Abdul Rahman Sarjang hailed Qahraman's appointment as the presidential representative and said they would try to implement measures to improve the law and order in the province.

The appointment of Qahraman comes at a time when at least seven districts of Helmand are under Taliban control and clashes in several parts of the province are underway. (Pajhwok)

(15) Ghani Leaves ...

and economic entities to exchange views on matters of mutual interests.

At the sidelines of the meeting, a trilateral meeting between Afghanistan, Pakistan and the United States will be held to exchange views on the situation in Afghanistan, peace and stability in the region and the world, the statement added. (Xinhua)

(16) Rabbani to ...

relations as well as the Year of China-Afghanistan Friendly Cooperation, said Hong.

"We hope that through this visit the two sides could implement the consensus reached by both leaders, outline the development of bilateral ties, and boost cooperation in economic and trade, security, culture and international and regional affairs, to push forward bilateral relations," he said. (Xinhua)

(17) People from ...

civilians were being killed by militants but the government was watching like a silent spectator.

"Honest officials should be praised and officials who are not serious in discharging their responsibilities should be sacked and prosecuted," he told Pajhwok Afghan News.

Another participant, Zabihullah Bahar, said all eastern provinces were insecure and if the situation continued, Kabul would also become insecure.

"If the government doesn't take any steps against Daesh or other militants in the east, the people of eastern provinces would be obliged to take weapons and fight against them," he said. (Pajhwok)

(18) India-Supplied...

security forces and Taliban militants.

The Helmand police chief on Wednesday told a foreign news agency that the police fighting militants were exhausted and were in desperate need of reinforcements.

Wardak told the gathering in Kabul that India would provide the forth copter to Afghanistan in the near future.

He said the gunships would help enhance the morale of the ground forces and would be effective in the war against insurgents.

Brig. Gen. Narayan said he was happy to transfer the promised helicopter gunships to the Afghan army. He said the gunships would help protect Afghan security forces on the battlefields.

Deputy Defence Minister Maj. Gen. Ghulam Sakhi Ahmadzai thanked the Indian government for the delivery.

He talked about Indian-funded projects in Afghanistan such as Salma dam, the parliament building and now the Mi-24D copters.

Wahab did not say how many fighter helicopters the Afghan Air Force possess. India has earlier provided three fighter jets Cheetal to the Afghan Air Force.

Also the US has provided four A29 helicopters to Afghanistan recently. (Pajhwok)

(19) 14 Rebels ...

the rocket struck the truck and both heavy vehicles turned into ashes.

He said the crane belonged to Khalifa Sarwar, who was a poor man, and held by the Taliban last year in the same locality.

The Taliban shadow district chief said the group released civilians, but any body found helping security forces or was among the security forces the group would decide about them. (Pajhwok)

(20) Militants Storm...

border with Afghanistan. A security official said the death toll could rise to as high as 40 at Bacha Khan University in the city of Charsadda. The army said it had concluded operations to clear the campus six hours

after the attack began, and that four gunmen were dead. (Reuters)

(21) Major Kabul...

where she was recently operated upon. She was personally satisfied with the behaviour of doctors and hospital management. But Muzhgan's sister Aqila grumbles: "Midwives are a real nuisance. Female cleaners are also problematic and pay no attention to meeting patient needs until you pay them." She hit out at staff for refusing her entry into the ward. Additionally, the attendant grumbled, the cleaner did not bring the clothes of her sister and the baby until she was paid.

Aqila claimed paying the cleaner 100 afghanis each time to only for handing her sister's clothes outside in the sun. The cleaner also sought cash when a patient was discharged from hospital, she added. Another woman under treatment in the same ward, requesting not to be named, said cleaners remained unconcerned even if a patient died.

Once paid, they did care for a while, she observed, citing the famous proverb: Money makes the mare go. "However, the sister-in-law of a doctor was virtually pampered like a queen when she recently delivered herself of a baby here. Regrettably enough, other patients are treated like animals," the woman remarked. On the other hand, cleaner Pari Gul vehemently denied her colleagues or she herself had ever received illegal payments. Working at the hospital for several years, she said some attendants voluntarily offered them money in return for their services. "No one is mad to misbehave with patients. Nonetheless we have to react when four to five attendants accompany a single patient," Gul remarked, dispelling the impression that visitors were given short shrift. Surprisingly, patients themselves tended to avoid speaking out against the hospital administration. Unlike their relatives, they somehow pretended to be satisfied with the overall state of affairs.

Lying on one bed along with her baby, Mariam described the attitude of nurses and doctors as satisfactory. No one had asked her for money, said the 25 years old, who indicated cleaners and nurses might have been paid by her husband. The Isteqlal Hospital's waiting room, with an unreliable heater, looked in pretty disorganised shape. At night, scores of female attendants sleep inside this shabby facility. (Pajhwok)

(22) Peace in

demned the attack, terming it "against Shariah a conflicting statement shortly after Mansoor's claim.

Sources added that the four attackers were wearing suicide vests but were killed by security forces before they could detonate their explosives. KP chief minister Parvaiz Khattak said terrorism continued to threaten the northwestern province and expressed his concern over latest terrorist attacks, saying strong, serious and collective measures were needed against terrorism.

Khattak said peace in Pakistan was linked to peace and stability in Afghanistan and until peace was not restored in the neighbouring country, peace would continue to elude Pakistan. He said instability in Afghanistan had a direct impact on Pakistan. (Pajhwok)

(23) Yemeni Citizen...

against coalition forces in Afghanistan," said Assistant Attorney General John Carlin. "With this plea, he will be held accountable for his terrorist activity, including conspiring to kill members of our military," he added. According to court papers, in early 2008, al-Hamid travelled to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan to join al-Qaeda. He received training in the use of weapons, explosives and detonators. During late spring and summer of 2008, he moved to Afghanistan to fight the US forces there. (Pajhwok)

(24) Weapons...

Meanwhile, a policeman was killed in a militant attack in Nuristan's neighboring Kunar province last night. An official said a group of insurgents armed with heavy and light weapons launched attack on a security post in Ghazi Abad District. According to the official, the attack was rebuffed by security forces but one policeman embraced martyrdom in the gunbattle. Abdul Habib Sayedkhalil, police chief of Kunar province said four Taliban were also killed in the clash. (KP)

(25) ANA Recruitment...

ANA offered attractive salaries and allowances to enable soldiers meet their family needs and motivate

them to work with a sense of commitment, he added. "Joblessness, poverty, insecurity and Taliban's cruelty in my area made me join ANA ranks," commented another resident of Warduj district, Naqibullah (25). A member of provincial council, Ahmad Javed Javed, also noted insecurity and joblessness as the main factors behind recruitment. Even the educated youth are turning up for tests/interviews. "Dozens of people from different parts of the province have been swelling the ANA ranks daily this year, with the number of recruits indicating a 20 percent, according to the public representative. "Their high sense of patriotism encourages youth to join the security forces and fight against terrorists," believed a civil society activist, Syed Omar Bahir. (Pajhwok)

(26) IS Releases ...

mostly women and children, and tossed their bodies in the Euphrates River in the countryside of Deir al-Zour, near Iraq. The IS attack on the neighborhood was carried out earlier on Saturday, with several suicide bombers blowing themselves up at government forces' positions. (Xinhua)

(27) Kurds Destroy...

Response Advisor, who carried out the field research in northern Iraq. "The forced displacement of civilians and the deliberate destruction of homes and property without military justification, may amount to war crimes," Rovera said. Amnesty report is based on field investigation in 13 villages and towns and testimony gathered from more than 100 eyewitnesses, and is also corroborated by satellite imagery revealing widespread destruction of homes in villages and towns in the provinces of Nineveh, Kirkuk and Diyala. (Xinhua)

(28) German President...

is different from setting limits, he said, urging supporters of democracy to take ownership of the debate rather than give ground to the extremists. (AFP)

(29) Netherlands Says

she added that "what the experts are telling me gives me the certainty at the moment that the Doel plant is safe."

Belgian Interior Minister Jan Jambon told the same press conference that Belgium's seven reactors - at Doel and at Tihange further south - were all safe despite the recent problems. (AFP)

(30) Red Doors...

with the local police, and they are actively considering any appropriate steps," he added.

The Times identified 168 properties run by Jomast, 155 of which had red front doors. The newspaper contacted the residents of 66 properties, 62 of whom were asylum seekers. (AFP)

(31) Ukraine Expands...

forced him into self-imposed exile in Russia. The Moscow-backed leadership's downfall effectively burst Russian President Vladimir Putin's dream of enlisting Ukraine in a Kremlin-led alliance that could counterbalance the European Union and potentially even the NATO military bloc. Ukraine's February 2015 revolution was followed two months later by a pro-Moscow eastern uprising that Kiev and its Western allies accuse Russia of both plotting and backing - a charge the Kremlin denies. (AFP)

(32) China, Saudi

of the committee, the two countries will follow the general direction of this partnership to greatly promote all-round cooperation," he said. The foreign ministries of the two countries will later discuss the specific matters on setting up the high-level committee to implement the consensus reached by the two heads of state, he added. (Xinhua)

(33) Faced with EU...

point diplomats and human rights groups frequently make, identifying the fact that Palestinians are subject to Israeli military law as part of Israel's 49-year occupation, while Israeli settlers are subject to civil law. (Reuters)

(34) Pakistan Not...

surprised some countries, saying their names had been included without their knowledge. "As per my understanding, a collective effort will be made through this coalition, at a diplomatic level and through the media, against forces that are working to create unrest in the Muslim world," Asif said. (PressTV)