

### (1) Wolesi Jirga ...

article adds the election of the Wolesi Jirga members shall be held within 30 to 60 days before the expiry of the term of the House of Representatives. (Pajhwok)

### (2) Sadat Says ...

people, but some external circles through making alliances were hatching conspiracies against Afghanistan.

"I can see some irresponsible expressions on social media which are against the freedom of speech code and the Afghanistan government and in support of terrorists."

The minister said all such websites would be blocked from Saturday. He said legal action would be taken against government officials who made similar expressions on their web pages.

President Ashraf Ghani has recently signed the cybercrime bill into law, according to the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology.

About the law, Sadat said previously there had been no law to punish people who committed cyber crimes. (Pajhwok)

### (3) The Military...

said there is no guarantee that America can "win" in Afghanistan, but it is quite clear that it can lose. He stated that U.S. President Donald Trump's decision last month to delegate troop level and operations decisions to his secretary of defense, James Mattis, set the correct conditions to improve security in Afghanistan.

But Cunningham asked the question that many have done - if the U.S. could not win with 100,000 troops, what difference would a few thousand more now make?

He said the key here was that despite mistakes having been made in the past and present, there have been significant achievements gained. He also said that any new strategy must aim all its instruments of power at countering Daesh and the Taliban.

He said if the U.S. gets this right, "America and its allies will be on much sounder footing in Afghanistan and in the global confrontation with Islamist terror."

He went on to say, "There is no guarantee that the United States can 'win' in Afghanistan, but it is quite clear that it can lose, with grave consequences for American security."

Cunningham also stated that even at its peak, the U.S. military effort, along with its coalition, had never aimed to defeat the Taliban but rather to push it back in key areas, degrade its operations and provide the time and space for the Afghan security forces to assume responsibility for protecting the Afghan people.

He said that after the combat mission ended in 2014, "the subsequent effort to support Afghan forces was handicapped by uncertainty about U.S. commitment, and by limited authorities for U.S. commanders to bring critical air and intelligence capabilities to bear as the Afghans took over the fight - in addition to serious deficiencies on the Afghan side."

He noted that since the 2014 draw down, the Afghan forces have done virtually all the fighting against the Taliban and work closely with the U.S. in the fight against Daesh, al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups. Cunningham stated that Mattis now has the authority to adjust the size of the force as needed, and to give his commanders "more agility" in conducting operations. "This is long overdue and should lay the foundation for the improved security and stability Afghanistan so badly needs," he said.

Cunningham states that troop levels will in future apparently be defined not by numbers and timelines but by missions and conditions, so that continued withdrawals of U.S. forces are based on Afghan success.

"To pursue such an approach would not be throwing good money after bad. It would be looking to preserve return on investment in the interests of American security. Seeking to end the conflict, with an enduring military commitment as the foundation of an integrated multifaceted and multilateral effort, would signal a qualitative shift away from the constraints and timelines favored by (former) President (Barack) Obama. This would not imply large increases in military forces; indeed it has been widely recognized for some time that there is no military solution in Afghanistan."

"Winning will require impacting the calculations of all parties involved and marshaling the instruments of military, political and eco-

conomic power at the disposal of the United States and its international partners.

"It will also be necessary to demonstrate that this administration is committed to supporting those who support the United States, and to protecting American interests while taking into account the legitimate security concerns of others in the region.

"In particular, Washington must finally find a way to persuade Pakistan that the continued ability of the Taliban and the Haqqani network to operate in and from Pakistan is no longer acceptable to the international community. The Taliban must conclude that it cannot win through violence; ending the conflict will be immeasurably more difficult if Pakistan continues to afford safe haven to the insurgency," Cunningham said. (Tolnews)

### (4) Pentagon...

throughout the region. The review, run by National Security Adviser and former military leader in Afghanistan General HR McMaster, is expected to be presented to the president in early July and released to the public mid-month.

If approved, this latest change would be another expansion of the U.S. counterterrorism mission in Afghanistan, one that would help drive the decision to deploy more American troops to the country. Defense officials expect Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis to approve a plan to deploy upwards of 4,000 more U.S. troops to Afghanistan, some assigned to the NATO training mission and others assigned to a counter-terror mission. There are currently 8,400 U.S. troops there.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joe Dunford hinted at the need to fight the Taliban and Haqqani network during an event at the National Press Club on June 19.

"Pakistan is a key to Afghanistan and its security," he said, adding, "and ensuring that Haqqani does not have sanctuary in South Asia, and making sure the Taliban don't have sanctuary in South Asia, making sure there's a secure border between Afghanistan and Pakistan is critical, making sure there's effective political and military relationships between Pakistan and Afghanistan, that's one of the interdependent variables that's going to allow us to be successful."

The U.S. handed over security responsibility to the Afghans in 2014, officially ending the American combat mission there and discontinuing their ability to target Taliban and Haqqani fighters simply because of their affiliation to the groups. The US military could then only go after remnants of al Qaeda.

Over the next year the Taliban made steady gains throughout the southern, eastern, and central parts of the country and Afghan National Security Forces struggled to maintain security. The U.S. military remained in the country in an advise and assist mission, working with the Afghan military and police and providing them some air support.

In June 2016, President Obama approved the American military playing a larger role in supporting the Afghans from the air, authorizing airstrikes against the Taliban to support an Afghan military offensive. But those strikes were still limited to circumstances when they would have what the military called "strategic effects" - such as stopping Afghan troops from being overrun or help them in a critical phase of a mission.

About six months later President Obama authorized the military to also hunt and target ISIS-Khorasan Province fighters, an Islamic State affiliate that had grown in eastern Afghanistan. (NBC NEWS)

### (5) Pakistan Begins...

to speak the media. He said the plan also includes building 338 border posts and army forts along the border to stymie infiltration from Afghanistan.

"There are several legal routes to cross into Afghanistan in Chitral, Dir, Bajaur, Mohmand Agency, Tor Kham Khyber Agency, Kurram Agency, North and South Waziristan, and the Chaman area of Baluchistan, but despite these legal routes, there are over 300 [illegal] crossing points, and terrorists always enter via those hard mountainous routes to carry out attacks in Pakistan and now the army will close them," he added.

Pakistan announced last month that was starting to build the border fence after several high-profile terrorist attacks inside the country. According to Maj. Gen. Asif Ghafoor, who heads the Inter-Service

Public Relations, a media wing of Pakistan's army, the fencing plan will have two phases: the first already started in the Khyber Pukhtunkhwa and Fata, and the second in Baluchistan.

Protesting the plan, Afghanistan said the Durand Line border between the countries has long been disputed, adding that the fence would create hardships for families who straddle the border.

Pakistan dismissed the Afghan criticisms of the fencing plan, saying the barrier is being raised on the Pakistani side of the border and no one has the right to object.

Anti-terrorist effort Speaking to local TV Express News on Friday, army spokesman Maj. Gen. Asif Ghafoor said the border management plan, set to be completed within two to three years, is part of Pakistan's efforts to eliminate terrorism and bring lasting peace to the region.

"The Daesh terrorist group has been gaining strength in Afghanistan along the Pakistan border, as we heard media reports that the group has also captured Afghanistan's Tora Bora area, so Pakistan will never tolerate any terrorist group setting foot on our soil and these are all efforts underway to eliminate terrorist groups," he said. Greater safety, more hardships? Locals in the border areas are pleased at the fencing's potential to stop cross-border terrorist attacks but also fear it could create hardships for tribes and clans who live on both sides of the border.

Rashid Khan of the border village of Shahi in the northwestern Dir district told Anadolu Agency that locals are happy at the fence plan, as militants who fled Pakistan's Swat and Dir after 2009 military operations now live in Afghanistan's Kunar province and continue to pose a grave threat. "I lost my brother and many other relatives since 2010 when militants attacked our village and they killed several people and we are still afraid," he added.

But Ali Hazrat, another Shahi villager, said he has many relatives living on the Afghan side of the border and they regularly visit each other. The fence could make such visits difficult, but army officials have said that there will be a legal route so people can travel and take parts in celebrations, ceremonies, and funerals, he added. Tens of thousands of Pashtuns live on both sides of the border and since the demarcation of the Durand Line in 1893, family members of border communities have been able to freely move back and forth. The practice continued after the creation of Pakistan in 1947. (AA)

### (6) Afghan MPs ...

and key cities. In the meantime, certain lawmakers also criticized the embassy of the United States and said the Afghan security forces are not supported to thwart the attack despite they have information regarding the possible attacks and explosions in Kabul and other provinces of the country.

According to the local media reports citing the German officials, the intelligence authorities of Germany were informed regarding the deadly attack days before it happened.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Thomas Schäfer quoted by the German news agency DPA and Deutsche Welle, security agencies received warnings from multiple intelligence sources several months ahead of time.

Earlier, the public broadcaster RBB and respected news magazine Spiegel reported that Germany intelligence had specific knowledge of an attack targeting the embassy using a tanker truck five months before it happened.

According to the reports, the militants had used around ten tons of explosives for the explosion and the suicide bomber had apparently managed to reach close to the embassy compound using the fake papers. (KP)

### (7) NATO's ...

"NATO's recent commitment to send a few thousand additional troops to Afghanistan will help us in this respect," Waziri said.

Last week, the acting defense minister Tariq Shah Bahrami attended NATO's defense ministers meeting in Brussels, Belgium.

NATO allies reaffirmed their continued support to the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) to ensure security in the country.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said at the meeting that NATO and its allies have reconfirmed their commitment to Af-

ghanistan and that they will sustain the Resolute Support Mission beyond 2017.

"Our military authorities have requested a few thousand more troops for the mission and today, I can confirm that we will increase our presence in Afghanistan," Stoltenberg said at a press conference on Thursday. (Tolnews)

### (8) Ubiquitous ...

Afghan News, said he had been serving in the police force for 12 years.

The official, who started demining operations eight years ago, has defused more than 10,000 landmines so far.

Afghanmal thought of demining after the Panjwai district of Kandahar was infested with landmines by Taliban militants.

"I have been witness to the daily killing of security forces, civilians, women, children and youth by Taliban-planted bombs. I have seen how the innocent people were blown to bits," he said.

He could not tolerate the painful killing of the people and thus felt obliged to take risk and take up a dangerous assignment.

Afghanmal has also received basic training from professional foreigners but his personal experience is also pretty vast. Even foreign forces have sought his advice.

"I don't have protective clothing to wear during demining operations. Instead I use a mine detector, a bayonet for pulling out the bomb and scissors for cutting wires," he said.

However, he added the mine detector he used was unable to find some types of landmines built by Taliban. The rebels have changed bomb making techniques so they could not be found with mine detectors. The militants bring explosives from Pakistan and other countries. They are use in making bombs with the help of plastic cans, bottles, dishes and other things.

He claimed having become an expert in the field. He can sense the existence of a planted bomb even without using the mine detector.

Due to his extraordinary experience, people and officials often call Afghanmal to address relevant issues. He performs his job courageously, believing life and death are in Allah's hands.

Afghanmal said he had escaped unhurt in many incidents as a result of people's prayers. "I have detected and defused mines on roads, in houses, gardens, mosques and other areas.

"I have helped save the lives of many people. Naturally, they would pray for me in return," he said, adding his demining efforts had made him a strong enemy of militants.

"Militants repeatedly attempted to kill me, but failed. They even warned me over walkie-talkie to stop demining, but their threat can't affect my morale. I will continue saving people's lives until my death," he vowed.

He has many bitter memories, including the killing of a friend by the bomb he was defusing in Panjwai. Afghanmal, having a son and two daughters; hopes his children would get educated and serve their country. "My job is a kind of worship, and that's why I don't whine about a small salary."

However, he complained about the late payment of salaries. The police officer asked senior government officials to care about the lives of security forces as they were the pillars of a stable system.

"I have received many appreciation letters from my seniors." He particularly thanked the Kandahar police chief, who encouraged him with extra cash payments, and in other ways.

He also urged the government to train more youth on demining and provide them equipment and facilities for mine-clearing campaigns. Roadside bombs are a weapon of choice for militant groups against the Afghan security forces and civilians. (Pajhwok)

### (9) Over 140 ...

forces were fully trained and prepared to thwart the nefarious designs of the rebels, he hastened to assert. "We have been responding to them in a befitting manner and would continue to do so."

However, the Taliban rejected the police chief's view. Their spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said no other group except Taliban was active in Ghazni. He added the Taliban were leading the ongoing insurgency in the province.

On the other hand, residents termed the security situation precarious. Rahmatullah, hailing from the provincial capital, said the security situation in all districts had

deteriorated.

With heavy clashes ongoing in Waghaz, Deh Yak, Zankhan and Qarabagh districts, he called for strong action to keep the insurgents at bay.

Esmatullah Jamardal, deputy head of the provincial council, acknowledged different militant groups were active in Ghazni. He asked the government to chalk out a proper strategy to improve the security situation.

Security officials, however, said they had been working hard to improve the situation in the province. (Pajhwok)

### (10) NATO's Troop ...

economic sanctions against this country? With these dual policies, Afghanistan's problems cannot be resolved," MP Mohammad Sarwar Osmani said.

Meanwhile, parliament's second deputy speaker, Mohammad Nazir Ahmadzai said if NATO instead invested the same amount of money into the Afghan security forces as what was going towards mobilizing foreign troops, results would be much better.

"If the money that will be spent on foreign troops got spent on Afghan forces and the air force, the result would be much better," said Ahmadzai.

But some MPs welcomed the move and said an increase in foreign troops could play a significant role in helping Afghan forces fight insurgents.

"I think any move to strengthen government, no matter if it is directed from a distance or through physical presence alongside Afghan forces, it will make Afghanistan more stable and I think the foreign troops increase is a positive move," Zahir Sadat, an MP said.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg on Thursday confirmed the alliance would send more troops to Afghanistan to train Afghan security forces and help them win the battle against terrorist groups.

NATO will expand its presence in Afghanistan based on two logics: One, to fill the gaps in NATO and the United States' mission in Afghanistan, and second is to prevent Taliban of taking more areas and helping Afghan security forces to retake the fallen areas from insurgents.

Stoltenberg did not however reveal exactly how many more troops would be sent to Afghanistan. Currently there are around 13,000 in total. (Tolnews)

### (11) Germany ...

in the bombing. Over 180 people are believed to have been killed in the bombing, which also injured hundreds more. DW reported that in the weeks and months prior to the bombing, numerous intelligence reports indicated a truck laden with explosives would target the embassy.

According to DW, the driver had fake papers, but was stopped at the gate to the Green Zone, by an Afghan security guard, who phoned the embassy to see if the truck was expected.

The driver then detonated the bomb.

Since the bombing, Germany temporarily suspended its controversial deportation scheme of illegal migrants.

After the bombing, the German embassy in Kabul praised the Afghan security forces for stopping the bomber's truck from entering the inner part of the diplomatic enclave. (Tolnews)

### (12) Efforts on ...

Saadullah Payendazai asked the government to extinguish the blaze through aircraft and prevent the forest from being reduced to ashes. He said residents could not tackle the fire.

But Governor Hafiz Abdul Qayyum believed only local residents would extinguish the fire. "The government has no facility to spray water from the air; but people have reached the area and are making efforts to control the blaze. We have also sent residents of other areas to help control the fire."

The fire is raging in an area haunted by a large number of insurgents. With a reason yet to be ascertained, officials alleged shepherds set up a fire in the forest last night.

According to another report, a fire eruption in Kot and Rodat districts of eastern Nangarhar province gutted 75 homes, inflicted heavy financial losses on people.

The Nangarhar governor's spokesman, Attaullah Khogyani, told Pajhwok the fire erupted in a home in the Tirili area of Kot district. Later on, the blaze spread to the Baro area of neighbouring Rodat dis-

trict.

He said 15 homes were burnt in Tirili and about 60 houses in Baro areas, causing heavy financial losses to people. However, no casualties were reported. (Pajhwok)

### (13) Saleh Urges ...

States does need to do is to come up with more clarity and tell the Pakistanis we know what you are doing and we are a superpower, but we do not have super patience."

Saleh also welcomed the move to increase foreign troops in Afghanistan, but said terrorist safe heavens must be bombed in Pakistan.

Saleh also criticized former president Hamid Karzai's stance against the Taliban and foreign troops.

"I have not been in agreement and in sync with such an ideas and some specific ideas and propositions of our former president since 2010 and I still hope that the former president will not look at it from a narrow perspective; he should look into the reality of Afghanistan where most of the people - the majority of the Afghan people - oppose the Taliban and terrorism. He should side with the majority and ask for the defeat of these blood thirsty groups," he added.

Saleh also touched on his resignation from the state ministry on reforms in the security sector and said he does not want to highlight the reasons, because if he does, the enemies of the country will benefit. (Tolnews)

### (14) Gen. Bajwa ...

after three different militant groups, including Daesh, claimed responsibility for latest suicide attack that killed over 70 Shia Muslims earlier this week.

"We need to remain, united, steadfast, prepared and vigilant against this (Daesh) threat, which has an agenda of exploiting sectarian fault-line", he added.

In the past, Islamabad insisted that Daesh had no presence on its soil, in response to Afghan claims that hundreds of Pakistani Taliban fighters were now loyal to Daesh.

The network has claimed responsibility for several terrorist attacks across Pakistan in recent months, including a suicide attack on a Sufi shrine in southern Sindh province earlier this year that killed over 80 people. (Pajhwok)

### (15) 7 Dead as ...

several militants and children were injured during the clash, with the rebels torching a military tank and a gypsum production plant. One ANA officer was captured by the Taliban.

The convoy was carrying a delegation of various security organs from Maimana to Andkhoi district to assess check-posts and security agencies of seven districts.

The convoy evaded another ambush in Bai Moghini area of Khwaja Sabzpush district.

The Faryab police spokesman said members of the delegation were safe in the ambush, but two civilians were slightly injured by a landmine explosion that partially destroyed the road.

A security official, who did not want to be named, told Pajhwok the officer who was captured by Taliban was the head of logistic supplies of an ANA battalion. He named the officer as Abdul Ahad. Elsewhere in western Farah province, unidentified gunmen killed an intelligence official in Farah city, the provincial capital, on Friday night. (Pajhwok)

### (16) ISIS Loses ...

further added that the other ISIS leaders killed in the airstrike have been identified as Mohibullah, the commander of the terrorist group for Sardara village of Darzab, Mahboobullah, the commander of the terror group for Batu village of Darzab, Sadruddin, the commander in charge of the logistics of the terror group, and Faiz Malang, another commander of the terror group.

According to Khashi, the airstrike was carried out late on Friday in the vicinity of Maryazi area of Qosh Tapa district.

The anti-government armed militant groups including the ISIS loyalists have not commented regarding the report so far. (KP)

### (17) 14 IS Men...

the ongoing special operation in Nangarhar.

The Taliban and Daesh have so far not commented about the killing of 14 fighters. The two groups have previously clashed many times in various districts of Nangarhar, with both the sides suffering casualties. (Pajhwok)