

(1) Ghani Says...

Meanwhile, Ghani tasked the local authorities and security institutions to transfer and organize funeral ceremonies for those soldiers who lose their life in defending their country.

Leading a delegation of high-rank officials, President Ghani traveled today to Kandahar province where he inaugurated several public welfare projects. (ATN)

(2) US Designates...

"It is important that the perpetrators, organisers, financiers and external sponsors, including those glorifying these acts of terror against Pakistan, are brought to justice," the Foreign Office said.

A notification by the US Treasury Department identified the BLA as a militant organisation based in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The BLA is already listed as a terrorist organisation in Pakistan and the United Kingdom. The BLA is among 50 militant groups that are not allowed to operate in Pakistan. (Pajhwok)

(3) Presidential Polls...

paper prints and connection lines. The total cost of the sets was nearly \$16 million. Some civil society activists were also present at the meeting, the statement added.

Meanwhile, Mualana Mohammad Abdullah, an Independent Election Commission (IEC) member, told the meeting that the biometric devices would be bought from a German firm. He said the firm had promised handing over the sets before June 27.

He said around 21,679 biometric sets had been left from the previous elections and their total number would reach 39,544 for the upcoming presidential election. (Pajhwok)

(4) Taliban Confirm...

Pajhwok former president Hamid Karzai and his aides and presidential candidates would not participate in talks.

He said some advisors of the former president might take part in the upcoming talks.

Other sources said that Haji Din Mohammad, Ismael Khan, Atta Mohammad Noor, Fauzia Kofi, Dr. Omar Zakhilwal and some other individuals had been invited to the talks.

Former envoy Zakhilwal tweeted: "I'm pleased to take part in the intra-Afghan talks in Qatar, hosted by Germany."

He said talks between the US and Taliban had reached a delicate phase and intra-Afghan negotiations were necessary to steer the country out of the current crisis. Javed Ghafoor, spokesman for the High Peace Council (HPC), said they welcomed any step towards Afghan peace. Such meetings should be led and owned by the Afghans, he concluded. (Pajhwok)

(5) Technical Bodies to...

They also discussed issues related to Ghani's recent trip to Pakistan.

Afghanistan's exports via Wagah Border, energy exports to Pakistan through Afghanistan, educational scholarships, Islamabad's investment in textile sector, customs and other matters were discussed.

Qayyumi told the Pakistani envoy that Torkham and Spin Boldak border crossings were ready for 24 hours operations. It was decided that two meetings of technical committees would be held in follow-up to the president's trip to Pakistan to implement. (Pajhwok)

(6) Afghan Violence...

162 people were killed and 76 others injured, making it the deadliest day in June. According to experts, increase and decrease in casualties depends on the nature of tactics used in fighting.

They say the risk of casualties in guerrilla fighting and attacks is higher in populated areas.

Reasons behind intensified clashes Atiqullah Amarkhel, a retired general and military expert, said that the warring sides were trying to intensify their attacks for leverage in the ongoing peace talks and to come to agreement on their terms. He cited some countries' support with the Taliban, especially Pakistan, Iran and Russia, another reason behind the increased attacks to show foreign forces, particularly the US, had failed in Afghanistan.

The Ministry of Defense says Afghan forces have been fighting aggressively not because of leverage in the peace process but for the defense of the country.

Afghan forces, supported by foreign troops, have been fighting the Taliban for the past 17 years. Past experiences show casualties and attacks surge in Afghanistan in summer and decline in winter.

Casualties in the first five months of the ongoing year fell by 19 percent compared figures during the same period in 2018 and by 10 percent compared to 2017.

In 2017, around 25,000 people suffered casualties compared to around 27,000 people killed or injured in 2018. In the

last five months of 2019, more than 10,000 people suffered casualties.

Call for ceasefire

Lima Spesali, a resident of capital Kabul, says the ongoing peace efforts inside the country and abroad offer 'a great chance' for reaching a peace agreement in Afghanistan.

She voiced on warring sides not to miss the opportunity and put the war to an end in the country.

"I ask those involved in the conflict to agree to a ceasefire before reaching a peace deal, do it for the benefit of our people and to end the bloodshed," she said.

Ahmad Shoaib, a resident of Farah City, told Pajhwok he lost one of his brothers to a suicide attack two years ago. "Peace is blessing. The Afghans are being killed on different pretexts for the last four decades. Our life is really painful."

Shoaib says each time when he enters home and sees his orphaned nephews, his pain recurs. He thinks all Afghans -- soldiers, Taliban or civilians -- who lose relatives to the war would have the same feelings.

Shoaib asked parties to the conflict not to lose the present opportunity of peace and be ready for sacrifices to end the bloodshed by making the peace process a success story. (Pajhwok)

(7) Abdullah, Dostum...

for their children and family," added Dostum.

One of President Ashraf Ghani's slogan during the elections campaign was to transform Afghanistan's economy and bring change to the lives of ordinary Afghans, something people believe has not happened.

This comes two days after the Taliban launched a brazen attack on a military installation in Kabul, leaving dozens of people dead and wounded.

On Tuesday sources confirmed that Qush Tepa district in the northern Jawzjan province has fallen to the Taliban following heavy clashes over the past two days. The two mainstream Afghan politicians and serving govt members vow action against the Taliban at a time that there are renewed hopes over the start of intra-Afghan talks in less than few weeks in the Gulf state of Qatar.

Germany's Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Markus Potzel, said in a statement on Tuesday that Germany and Qatar will convene an Intra-Afghan Dialogue Conference to be held in Doha on 7 and 8 July 2019.

"Afghanistan stands at a critical moment of opportunity for progress towards peace," Potzel said, adding that "an essential component of any process leading to this objective will be a direct engagement between Afghans."

"Only Afghans themselves can decide the future of their country. An Intra-Afghan Dialogue can help clarify the options and opportunities of such direct engagement," he added. (Tolo news)

(8) Security, Economic...

These factors have led to increased population movements with returnees less likely to be living in their province of origin than they were in 2017.

While perception of security has improved among returnees and IDPs, which may influence reduced movements, there is an increased desire among IDPs to leave their current displacement location compared with 2017, the survey finds.

The survey contributes to understanding of the return process, the influence of household characteristics and prevailing economic and security considerations and living conditions of Afghans, who have returned to their homeland.

For example, the survey finds that food security among the host community has improved since 2017 while it has deteriorated among returnees and IDPs.

In November 2018, UNHCR commissioned Orange Door Research and VOTO Afghanistan to use mobile phone surveys to collect real-time data of returnee, IDPs and host community populations. Nearly 14,500 surveys were conducted between November 2018 and April 2019, providing UNHCR with a detailed view of a range of protection and socio-economic challenges returnees and IDPs face across Afghanistan.

Nearly 15,700 Afghan refugees returned under the UNHCR-facilitated voluntary repatriation programme in 2018, with the majority returning from Pakistan, followed by smaller numbers from Iran and other countries.

This was 73% lower than the 58,800 refugees who returned in 2017, which can generally be attributed to the deteriorating security and economic situation in Afghanistan.

Returnees cited a decline in their incomes in 2018. Roughly 56% of 2017 returnees report earning at least 5,000 afi (approximately USD 67) per month.

However, only 47% of 2018 returnees report such earnings, highlighting that incomes are lower among more recent

returnees. Income among IDPs also declined.

No significant improvement or deterioration in tensions with host communities has been seen. The main trend has been an increase in neutral feelings towards returnees. Similar trends were observed for IDPs.

The study finds that 96% of beneficiaries report satisfaction with the assistance they received from UNHCR, not only immediately after their return but also when they try to reintegrate within their communities. (Pajhwok)

(9) Afghan Forces...

Balcheragh-Garziwan transportation road for traffic six days ago.

Yourish say 30 Taliban militants were killed and 14 others wounded during the operation.

A depot of ammunition and 15 motorcycles belonged to the insurgents also destroyed in the battle, he said. (Pajhwok)

(10) WJ Secretary...

from Kabul, were candidates for the deputy secretary position of the lower house today.

In today's session, 209 lawmakers were present and each candidate was required 105 votes to win the election.

Sayed Tahir Sadiq, a lawmaker from Herat province and Abdul Qadir Qalatalwal, a lawmaker from Zabul province, vied for the secretary slot. However, Qalatalwal received 78 votes and Sadiq 76 votes, both falling below the threshold.

Nazifa Zaki and Niamatullah Karyab, candidates for the deputy secretary position of Wolesi Jirga, also failed to win today's vote.

Mir Rahman Rahmani, Wolesi Jirga speaker, said none of the candidates for the two positions was able to win today's vote and the poll would go to a third round between new candidates next Saturday. (Pajhwok)

(11) 5 Border...

Jilani Farhad said the child had been abducted in Nimroz and brought to Herat. He added the captive was rescued by NDS personnel.

One of the kidnappers was arrested and efforts are underway for the detention of others. (Pajhwok)

(12) Afghanistan...

Unlike their spinners, who have come up with consistent performances throughout the tournament, Afghanistan's fast bowlers and batsmen have left a lot to be desired.

The national team will draw inspiration from the fact that they have downed West Indies thrice in the last four matches.

West Indies, whose cause has been served by Sheldon Cottrell, have scored a solitary win in the tournament so far -- against Pakistan. (Tolo news)

(13) Massive Taliban...

one rocket, four 303 weapons, one Kalashnikov, 50 artillery shells, 300 rockets shells, and other ammunition, military vehicles and one Pakistani national ID card were seized during the raid. (Pajhwok)

(14) US-China...

commitments made during the talks and jacked up duty rates on a \$200 billion tranche of Chinese imports.

Markets were encouraged by Saturday's developments, which averted further deterioration in a trade conflict already weighing on the global economy.

Stocks were struggling on Tuesday, in part because Washington threatened heavier tariffs on European goods in a dispute over subsidies to aircraft maker Airbus.

And the tariffs put in place since last year by both Washington and Beijing -- which currently cover more than \$360 billion in two-way trade -- remain in place.

Navarro said a 150-page document developed during the US-China trade talks since December remained the basis of discussion.

He also said all that was at issue in Saturday's agreement on Huawei was "a small amount of chips" with negligible implications for spy craft.

"President Xi requested some relief on Huawei," he said. "Here is the important thing: US policy on Huawei with respect to 5G in this country has not changed."

"All we've done, basically, is to allow the sale of chips to Huawei. These are lower tech items which do not impact national security whatsoever," he added. (AFP)

(15) Kremlin Refuses...

Shoigu confirmed that 14 seamen were killed and that some members survived, although he did not specify how many. The ministry said the cause of death was intoxication by toxic fumes from the fire.

The ministry has refused to name the vessel involved in Monday's fatal blaze but has said that the crew were on a research mission to measure sea depths in the Barents Sea.

President Vladimir Putin's spokesman

Dmitry Peskov went a step further in declining to answer questions about the name of the submersible by also refusing to speak about its mission citing confidential information.

"Some information related to the category of state secret", he told reporters. "It is normal practice that such information is not released."

Local media has speculated that the vessel involved was the nuclear-powered AS-12 Losharik, which in itself is a ship that little is known about.

Having only entered service in 2010, the Losharik is the most advanced and most obscure Russian submarine. It's named after a Soviet-era cartoon character, a toy horse made of small spheres.

In 2012, it was involved in research intended to prove Russia's claim on the vast Arctic seabed. It collected samples from the depth of 8,202 feet, according to official statements at the time. Regular submarines can typically dive to depths of up to 2,000 feet. Some Russian officials have claimed that the sub can travel as deep as 19,685 feet, although this has yet to be independently verified. (RT)

(16) Good Luck...

Defense Ministry, Germany's armed forces, the Bundeswehr, have become a steady source of news about planes that can't fly, tanks that break down, and vessels that are unfit for maritime operations.

In autumn 2017, Germany was literally left without its entire submarine fleet as all of the ships turned out to be either undergoing maintenance or in dire need of repairs. More than half of the Bundeswehr's tanks were revealed to be unfit for service during the same year.

Dozens of assault rifles and pistols, as well as tens of thousands of rounds of ammunition, have simply been stolen from the Bundeswehr on von der Leyen's watch. The year 2014 -- her second year in office -- saw the biggest amount of equipment go missing, resulting in the loss of 21 weapons and more than 20,000 rounds of ammunition.

Admittedly, von der Leyen didn't inherit the military in the best shape, nor had she defense budgets like NATO expects its allies to have, but neither was she particularly effective at overcoming the German military's woes.

Despite boosting Germany's defense expenditure from some \$38 billion to almost \$50 billion over her tenure, she still did not quite succeed in modernizing the German armed forces. In 2018, it was reported that her ministry had still failed to find enough money to fund a long-awaited modernization of the Puma infantry fighting vehicles, while the bulk of the freshly purchased new hardware is not ready for service.

Von der Leyen also struggled to replenish the Bundeswehr's ranks as it has been facing a personnel shortage ever since the abolition of conscription in 2011. This situation prompted the military to come up with increasingly unconventional methods of resolving the issue, ranging from a controversial intensive social media campaign aimed at teenagers to suggestions involving the recruitment of people from other EU states. (RT)

(17) Stage Intruder...

man was swiftly rounded up by security. It is presumed that the offender was a delegate at a conference, since he had a badge dangling around his neck.

The driving force behind the show-stealing stunt remains a mystery. Baidu said that it has launched an investigation into the attack, the South China Morning Post reports. Li kept remarkably composed all the way through the incident, joking about the whole experience as soon as he resumed his briefly interrupted speech.

"As you can see, there will be problems along the way when it comes to AI, but it will change everybody's lives," he reportedly said in Chinese to a round of applause from the public.

So far, one can only speculate as to what the man's motivation was. Baidu, although an undisputed leader on China's internal search engine market after Google partially pulled out in 2011, has been going through a rough patch. Its stock has been sliding due to stunted growth. In May, the company, frequently referred to as the 'Google of China,' reported its first quarterly loss in 14 years.

The company faces increased competition from its old rivals such as Alibaba and Tencent, as well as emerging tech start-ups and news and video apps. In a bid to diversify its profile, Baidu has immersed itself in promising new fields, launching the 'Apollo' self-driving car project back in 2017. (RT)

(18) U.N. Aviation...

focuses on suspected flaws in an automated stall-prevention system called MCAS, which Boeing Co <BA.N> implemented to make the MAX perform like previous 737 models.

But the training given to pilots to allow

them to handle such problems smoothly is also under scrutiny, expanding an industry debate over pilot skills that has been raging for years as crew spend less and less time flying aircraft manually.

"Recently, with current events, people are discussing whether the minimum requirements or experience are still valid,(or) should we review that?" ICAO's chief of operational safety Miguel Marin told Reuters.

In addition to regulators, representatives of a global pilots group are expected to attend the July 8-12 meeting, Marin said. Marin called the meeting a "first step," with any eventual change up to regulators.

In the United States, the Federal Aviation Administration increased the number of required training hours for commercial pilots from 250 to 1,500 in 2013, a move that some players have criticized as excessive, particularly as the industry grapples with future pilot shortages.

At the Montreal meeting, regulators will discuss flying hours and competency-based training, where pilots demonstrate skills like landing an airplane, as opposed to focusing on learning to fly and accumulating hours regardless of aircraft type. (Reuters)

(19) More Than...

border into Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

South Sudan descended into war in 2013 when President Salva Kiir accused his former deputy and fellow former rebel leader Riek Machar of plotting a coup.

The conflict has been marked by ethnic violence and brutal atrocities, and left about 380,000 dead while some four million have fled their homes.

UNMISS said overall there had been a "significant decrease" in violence across the country since Kiir and Machar signed the deal. "However, Central Equatoria has been an exception to this trend, particularly in areas surrounding Yei, where attacks against civilians have continued," the report said.

The report identified government forces, fighters allied to Machar and rebel groups who did not sign the peace agreement, as responsible for atrocities in their quest to take territory in Central Equatoria.

In the first phase of fighting, that coincided with the signing of the peace agreement, at least 61 civilians were killed in deliberate attacks or caught in indiscriminate crossfire.

"At least 150 civilians were also held in captivity by these groups, including women and girls taken as 'wives' by commanders or raped and beaten by multiple fighters," the report said.

The second outbreak of violence began in January, when government forces punished those believed to be rebel collaborators with "sexual violence as well as looting and destroying homes, churches, schools and health centres". (AFP)

(20) Construction...

laying of grass is scheduled for mid-July, while the running track will be installed in August and September.

The JSC said a completion ceremony is scheduled for mid-December, and an inauguration event featuring athletes and artistic performers will be held on Dec. 21. "We hope to keep up the good work for the remaining five months and do a thorough job," a JSC official said.

Of the 60,000 permanent seats to be installed, 45,000 were already in place. After the games, the capacity will be expanded to 68,000. A total of 185 fans and a spray system in eight areas will cool the stadium, while organizers continue to explore ways to cope with the sweltering heat. The first sporting event to be held in the venue will be the Emperor's Cup soccer final on Jan. 1 next year. The Tokyo Olympic Games will be held from July 24 to Aug. 9, 2020, followed by the Paralympic Games from Aug. 25 to Sept. 6. (Xinhua)

(21) Vodafone

Business director of Vodafone UK, described 5G as "a game-changer for the economy and UK businesses."

"We are committed to helping our customers take advantage of this technology by making it widely available in the UK and through roaming. We want to help UK businesses become global leaders and 5G will play an important role in achieving that aim," Sheehan said.

Victor Zhang, Huawei Senior Vice President, told Xinhua: "We are proud to be helping Vodafone open up a new world of seamless opportunities with their launch of 5G mobile services in the UK. This reinforces the UK as a 5G leader and builds on our 18-year history of supporting the digital economy here."

Huawei is the world's leading company in 5G. According to the Chinese company, Huawei already won 50 5G contracts globally.

On May 30, mobile network operator EE launched Britain's first 5G service, using Huawei equipment. (Xinhua)