

(1) Afghans...

government officials, they are not there in their official capacity.

"I am here as an Afghan, but I am not sure if the Taliban view themselves as Afghans before anything else," said the government official, who spoke by telephone from Qatar but declined to be identified.

Reuters spoke to six of the Afghan delegates attending the talks.

The Taliban officials were welcoming in general although less willing to discuss issues like women's rights and freedoms in society, the delegates said.

PRESERVING PROGRESS?

During their 1996-2001 rule, the Taliban barred women from working outside their homes, and said women could only go out in public if accompanied by a male relative.

Afghan society has taken huge strides since the Taliban were ousted weeks after the Sept. 11, 2001, al Qaeda attacks on the United States, and many Afghans are nervous about preserving the progress under some sort of a power-sharing government that might be part of a deal to end the war. The talks, facilitated by Germany and Qatar, have touched on how Afghanistan might be organized but no conclusions have been reached.

"The Taliban prefer Islamic Emirates style of government while we ask for a republic," Khalid Noor, the son of a powerful politician from northern Afghanistan, Atta Mohammad Noor, told Reuters by telephone.

Some Afghan government officials fear the United States and the Taliban will strike a deal enabling the United States to get out of a war that President Donald Trump is impatient to end, leaving government forces to battle on alone.

Such fears are only compounded by the relentless violence across the country. The Taliban now control and influence more territory than at any point since 2001.

According to the United Nations, 3,804 civilians - including more than 900 children - were killed and 7,000 wounded in 2018, the deadliest year for civilians in the conflict.

U.S. negotiators and the Taliban get back to their talks on Tuesday.

Last week, the chief U.S. negotiator, Zalmay Khalilzad, said the discussion was the "most productive session" since the process got going late last year. Afghans, Taliban talk in Qatar about a peaceful future as war rages at home (Reuters)

(2) British Museum to ...

a portrayal of Buddha, the turbaned heads of meditating bodhisattvas, the bald head of a monk and three larger heads belonging to female and male individuals, one possibly to be identified with Vajrapani, the spiritual guide of Buddha.

The others are thought to be lay donors or bodhisattvas.

The clay heads belong to a well-known class dating between the fourth and sixth centuries AD, the museum said. The items will be returned to Afghanistan (Trustees of the British Museum/PA)

They are typical of the tradition of Hadda, near Jalalabad in eastern Afghanistan, and the remainder of Buddhist sites in the Kabul region of central Afghanistan and will have adorned the walls of Buddhist monasteries.

The objects will be returned to the National Museum of Afghanistan through the British Museum after they go on temporary display in London, with the permission of the Afghan museum.

Due to be returned to Iraq is an important collection of tablets bearing cuneiform, one of the earliest systems of writing.

A haul of 154 Mesopotamian texts written on clay in cuneiform script was seized on entry to the UK in February 2011.

The tablets range in date from the mid-third millennium BC to the Achaemenid period.

The earliest are Early Dynastic administrative tablets and the latest are dated to the reigns of a Darius and an Artaxerxes but most date to the period between 2100 and 1800 BC and belong to the Ur III and Old Babylonian dynasties.

Some carry cylinder seal impressions and some are still enclosed in their clay envelopes.

The texts include letters and a mathematical text, but most are economic texts, and many belong to adminis-

trative archives coming from a place called Irisagrig. The city was unknown until tablets referring to it surfaced on the art market in 2003 when the site was probably heavily looted in the immediate aftermath of the American-led invasion of Iraq.

After a long investigation by HMRC, they will be returned to the Iraq Museum, part of the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage of Iraq, through the British Museum.

The museum has also developed a collaborative project with antiquities authorities, collectors, dealers and law enforcement agencies called Circulating Artefacts, which aims to identify and return trafficked objects to Egypt and Sudan, with support from the Cultural Protection Fund.

Over the past year, almost 700 illicit artefacts looted and trafficked from Egypt and Sudan have been identified under the scheme.

Repatriated objects include statues, reliefs and funerary objects spotted with a wide range of auction houses and sellers, both in the UK and abroad.

Hartwig Fischer, director of the British Museum, said: "War, conflict, climate change, globalisation, poverty and migration all play a part in the threats to cultural heritage. "The museum adopts a systematic approach, working with many colleagues across the world to help preserve, train, conserve, document and understand material culture.

"I am extremely proud of this deep and committed engagement, built collaboratively over many years and with the help of many funders.

"Sadly, this work is more essential now than ever and the museum will continue and increase its efforts to assist colleagues globally in the preservation and celebration of their cultural heritage." (Agencies)

(3) 'Selfish' MPs ...

Kochi affairs related commissions.

Erfanullah Erfan, deputy secretary of the lower house, said that members of the cultural, economy, justice, religious and international affairs commissions had been picked without voting.

He said some lawmakers had nominated themselves to two commissions at the same time while one lawmaker could only contest membership of only one commission.

Earlier, speaker Mir Rahman Rahmani said that in line with internal rules each commission should have nine to 25 members.

Tomorrow (Tuesday) there will be voting to elect members of the financial, security, telecommunications and complaints hearing commissions of the house.

Financial privileges in commissions' elections

Some lawmakers claimed that certain lawmakers considered financial and other privileges for themselves in contesting elections for membership of commissions.

Monawar Shah Bahadur, a lawmaker from Herat province, said: "Experience of a person should be considered when it comes to election but here more attention is paid to money. Now the leadership of commissions is purchased and those who have money could become head of a commission." It happens when some lawmakers had already alleged fraud in the elections for the house administrative board.

Ramazan Bashardost, who is eyeing membership of the privileges and impunity commission, said a majority of his colleagues were interested in membership of financial, internal security, telecommunications and complaints hearing commissions.

"Because these commission are more important compared to the other commissions, and heads of these commissions could increase their power and money."

Syed Azem Kabrzani, a lawmaker from Herat province, said lawmakers' interest in powerful commissions was aimed at gaining more power, uplift projects, influence and advocate strongly for their supporters.

He said he had decided on behalf of his supporters to nominate himself for the financial commission because he had much experience in the field. (Pajhwok)

(4) Turkey Strongly ...

and today in Ghazni, at a time when talks between parties to achieve peace in Afghanistan have intensified," the ministry said in a statement.

The statement came after a massive suicide car bombing killed at least 12

people and injured 50 others in Ghazni province.

Separately, at least 10 people were killed and 65 more injured in a suicide bombing followed by a gunfight at a Defense Ministry installation in Kabul last week.

The ministry extended condolences to the brotherly people of Afghanistan. "Turkey will continue to stand by Afghanistan in its fight against terrorism," it added.

Amid Afghan peace talks in Qatar, the Taliban took responsibility for the deadly assault.

Last evening, the Taliban and the U.S. expressed optimism for peace in ongoing talks in the Qatari capital Doha. U.S. envoy Zalmay Khalilzad said in a series of tweets on Saturday that the last six days of talks with the leadership of the Afghan insurgents were "most productive session to date."

Talks between the U.S. and the Taliban are paused for two days as a group of Afghan politicians and civil society activists hold intra-Afghan dialogue at the same venue. (AA)

(5) Politicians Note ...

Anwarulhaq Ahadi, an Afghan politician who has attended the conference, said he hopes that more discussions of this type will be held in the future to further facilitate direct talks between all warring parties.

"We pray that the rights which have been outlined in the history of Islam about women, particularly when it comes to freedom of the press. These are the issues which will be discussed in the talks," said Ahadi.

The first day of the meeting was focused on wide-ranging discussions about the women's rights, the freedom of the press, civilians protection, ceasefire, foreign forces withdrawal, the post-peace deal government, and other relevant issues, according to few delegates interviewed by TOLONews. The delegates are expected to issue a joint statement at the end of the conference. (Tolo news)

(6) 60% Of Inmates...

women are transferring the drugs into the prisons.

The addicted inmates interviewed by Ariana News said that they are buying the drugs from inside of the prison at high prices.

"We are buying each with 250 Afghans. You can find any kind of drugs inside the prison," said an addicted prisoner.

Meanwhile, Abdul Haleem Kohistani, the Head of Pul-e-Charkhi Prison accepts the drug smuggling inside the prison.

"During the last year, we have arrested more than 10 people in connection to the drug trafficking and we have referred them to the justice," Mr. Kohistani said. (ATN)

(7) Abdullah Hopes ...

other relevant issues, according to few delegates interviewed by TOLONews.

Talking reporters, a spokesman of the Taliban, Suhail Shaheen, said the group is ready to entering intra-Afghan issues, including a ceasefire, when a timetable on foreign forces withdrawal from Afghanistan is announced.

The meeting was also welcomed by the Presidential Palace.

"It can be evaluated as progress [in the peace process] and an opportunity for those Afghans who are present there in the meeting to share their ideas with each other," President Ghani's spokesman Sediq Sediqqi told TOLONews. (Tolo news)

(8) Afghan Movie...

- Best Actor
- Best Actress
- Best Short Film
- Best Screenplay
- Best Cinematographer
- Best Editor
- Best Sound Designer
- Best Original Score (Music Composer)
- Special Jury Award No 1
- Special Jury Award No 2

(9) Taliban Driven ...

detected and defused in the villages. Pajhwok reporter tried to contact the Taliban for comment but failed. (Pajhwok)

(10) 48 Taliban Killed...

Ahmadzai said security forces and civilians suffered no casualties in the operations.

Meanwhile, 203 Thunder Military Corps acting spokesman Eimal Khan

told Pajhwok that Afghan security forces targeted militant hideouts in Rustamkhel area of Baraki Barak district late Sunday night.

He said the nighttime airstrike killed at least 15 Taliban militants and injured 16 others and destroyed their vehicle.

Zahir, a resident of the area, confirmed the airstrike to Pajhwok and said all Taliban militants onboard the vehicle were killed.

The Taliban have not yet commented in this regard. (Pajhwok)

(11) Iran Exceeds...

He blamed the United States for creating an "unsafe atmosphere for Iranian economic and political relations," according to IRNA news agency.

Washington unilaterally withdrew from the accord last year and reimposed sanctions which placed restrictions on anyone who trades with Iran, scaring off investors. Tehran for its part criticized the EU for turning its back on investment projects aimed at boosting the Iranian economy. (RT)

(12) \$72M Worth...

seized what they thought was 1.4 kilograms of californium, but that find actually turned out to be a natural substance with no radioactivity. (Fox News)

(13) Ukraine's Zelensky ...

region," Zelensky said, referring to the eastern conflict zone.

Some 13,000 people have been killed in the conflict in eastern Ukraine that erupted in 2014 after a popular uprising ousted pro-Kremlin president Viktor Yanukovich and Russia responded by annexing Crimea.

Kiev and its Western backers accuse Russia of funneling troops and arms across the border to fan the flames of the conflict. Moscow has denied any military involvement despite evidence to the contrary.

A peace process involving Germany, France, Russia and Ukraine has stalled. In June, French President Emmanuel Macron said new talks could be possible with the same countries involved.

Zelensky suggested in comments addressed to Putin that fresh talks also include the United States and Britain, which are strong backers of Kiev.

"I suggest the following lineup for talks: me, you, US President Donald Trump, British Prime Minister Theresa May, German Chancellor Angela Merkel (and) French President Emmanuel Macron," Zelensky said. May is to step down later this month. (AFP)

(14) Qatar's...

isolation will continue."

Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, who visited the White House last spring, is set to return to the U.S. on Tuesday to meet with President Trump, who in 2017 accused Qatar of funding terrorism and threatening the region in part because of its alliance with Iran. The emir's visit comes as Washington is in the midst of trying to manage an increasingly volatile relationship with Tehran.

"We have... offered to act as an independent and impartial mediator should Iran and the U.S. decide to come to the table for discussions," said Jassim Bin Mansour Al-Thani, media attaché for the state of Qatar in the United States, adding that Tamim would meet with members of the administration, lawmakers, and business executives during his trip.

"Qatar's political and economic partnership [with the U.S.] has endured for decades," Al-Thani said. "As His Highness stated last year, Qatar is committed to doubling the U.S.-Qatar economic partnership to \$250 billion." The White House and the State Department did not respond to a request for comment for this story. (Agencies)

(15) 1,100-Pound...

disruption in Frankfurt, Germany's financial center.

The defusing operation was completed by mid-afternoon, according to the city's fire service, about two hours after police verified that no one was left in the area. (Fox News)

(16) Indian Air Force...

fighter jets, as well as older-generation MiG-21s, form the mainstay of India's air power, matched with a fleet of hundreds of Russian-built helicopters.

Just this year, it emerged that the IAF will take delivery of 21 MiG-29s from Russia. The purchase is to deal with the problem of losing operational aircraft faster than new ones can be

bought.

India is also a potential buyer of the Sukhoi Su-35, a top Russian air-superiority fighter jet. It features some fifth-generation technologies and stands out due to its high maneuverability and advanced avionics.

Aside from its interest in Russian aircraft, the IAF has already placed orders for French Rafale fighters as well as for its first domestic fighter, the Tejas. However, without a full legacy program in place, these purchases are not enough to plug squadron depletion, local media reckons. (RT)

(17) Post-Brexit ...

use facilities it operates in Poland to print the passports.

The company, which specializes in digital security and prints ID documents for numerous countries, declined to confirm the allegation when contacted by PrintWeek.

However, while elements of the passports will be produced elsewhere, the citizens' personal data is said to be handled exclusively in the UK.

The decision to award a French-Dutch company the contract, as opposed to British firm De La Rue, which previously printed UK passports, left many on social media scratching their heads. (RT)

(18) Mali PM ...

"We will create a bigger security net," Cisse had said at the start of his central region tour.

"Our forces will be deployed on the ground. A total of 3,500 men will be put in place," 1,500 of whom have already arrived in the region, he added. On Sunday Cisse ended his tour with a visit to the village of Hombori whose chief was recently killed by suspected jihadist attackers.

Central Mali has seen a spate of massacres this year between ethnic Dogon and Fulani communities.

The Fulani are primarily nomadic cattle breeders and traders, while the Dogon ethnic group are traditionally sedentary farmers.

Between May 2018 and May 2019, the number of people fleeing violent attacks almost quadrupled in the central Mopti and Segou regions, rising from 18,000 to 70,000, UN Humanitarian Coordinator (OCHA) Ms. Mbaranga Gasarabwe said in a report this week.

"Many villages have almost been emptied of their population. Civilians in violence-hit areas live in constant danger," Gasarabwe said.

Food insecurity is also severe, with Mopti accounting for a quarter of the 3.8 million people grappling with high food insecurity or at risk across Mali during the lean season from June to August. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said in its report.

On Saturday in Bandiagara, a Dogons stronghold, Cisse spoke of his "firm determination" to ease the intercommunal tensions.

The previous day in Bankass, near the border with Burkina Faso, the Malian prime minister called on all sides to "overcome their resentment and their bruises". (AFP)

(19) Ancient Murals...

written records from the Yuan Dynasty were ever discovered," said Guo, who added that the tomb will be protected and preserved in its original place and a salvage excavation will not be considered as there is no construction work that could affect the safety of the tomb. (Xinhua)

(20) Sudanese Say...

investigation into security forces' deadly crackdown on the protests last month - though it's unclear if anyone will be held accountable. The military also agreed to restore the internet after a weeklong blackout.

Much could still go wrong, and last month's violence erupted at a similarly hopeful moment. But for now the deal appears to be on track, with the two sides expected to formally sign it this week.

Two leading activists, a Sudanese military official and two Egyptian officials described intense U.S. efforts to force a deal after veteran diplomat Donald Booth was appointed special envoy in mid-June. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the talks.

State Department officials declined to comment on U.S. efforts to broker the deal, saying only that Washington welcomes the agreement and commends the AU and Ethiopia for their mediation efforts. (AP)