

(1) Death Toll ...

The blast happened in an area where Mohammad Mohaqiq, second deputy for CEO Abdullah Abdullah house is also located over there.

President Ashraf Ghani has strongly condemned the "terrorist attack on a civilian bus in Kabul, calling it appalling and a cowardly attack on civilians."

CEO Abdullah Abdullah has also "condemned the terrorist attack on civil servants in Kabul today" added "our security institutions will hold perpetrators accountable."

Taliban has accepted responsibility for the bombing. (Tolonews)

(2) UN, Iran, India ...

civilians," reads the statement.

The statement notes that Monday's attack comes amid commemorations of the 23 July 2016 Deh Mazang square attack, which killed and injured hundreds of demonstrators who were exercising their right to freedom of assembly and freedom of expression.

"This morning, a suicide attacker detonated a car packed with explosives against a bus carrying civil servants in Kabul's Ghulayee Dawa Khan area, killing more than 20 passengers and bystanders, and injuring more than 40. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack," said the statement.

"I am personally outraged by all attacks against civilians," said Pernille Kardel, the UN Secretary-General's Deputy Special Representative for Afghanistan and acting head of UNAMA. "The detonation of another large suicide device in a busy, civilian-populated area is egregious, cowardly and bereft of humanity."

"UNAMA reminds anti-government elements that employment as a civil servant tasked with providing public services to Afghan citizens on behalf of the government is a civilian function. Attacks deliberately targeting civilians, and the intentional killing of civilians, are war crimes," the statement says.

"In the context of so much suffering and death, I wish to commend members of the Enlightenment Movement for choosing to address their grievances resulting from last year's attack through dialogue, not violence," said Kardel. "I urge all parties to seek similarly peaceful ways to resolve their differences, and welcome the government's initiative in reaching out to hear the concerns of all Afghans."

Suicide and complex attacks have so far been the leading cause of civilian casualties perpetrated by anti-government elements in 2017, according to UNAMA's midyear report on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, released last week.

The Mission continues to verify reports about other civilian casualties, including alleged attacks against healthcare facilities and personnel in Ghor, and airstrikes impacting civilians in Nangarhar. The Mission reiterates its condemnation of attacks in civilian-populated areas, and urges all parties to the conflict to cease targeting civilians, read their statement.

Meanwhile, the Pakistani embassy in Kabul has also condemned the attack in Kabul.

"The Government of Pakistan strongly condemns the suicide attack in Kabul today that has resulted in the loss of precious lives of many innocent Afghans and injuries to scores. We express our sincere condolences to the bereaved families and pray for early recovery of those injured," a press release issued by the Pakistani embassy in Kabul said.

"Terrorism is a common enemy and the Government of Pakistan condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations," their statement read.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi also condemned the attack.

"Strongly condemn the terrorist attack in Kabul. My heart goes out to the victim's families. We stand in solidarity with people and government of Afghanistan in their fight against terrorism," Modi said via Twitter.

Iranian foreign ministry also denounced the attack in Kabul as barbaric and act of terrorism.

"The oppressed people of Afghanistan and the government will firmly continue their efforts against extremism and terrorism and the Iranian people and government will stay together with the Afghan people like the past," Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Bahram Qasemi said.

Amnesty International has also condemned the Kabul bombing by the Taliban and said it was a war crime.

"Kabul bombing claimed by Taliban

is 'a war crime'," Amnesty International said.

Back in May, a powerful truck bomb hit the diplomatic area of the Afghan capital, Kabul killing at least 150 people and injuring over 600.

It struck near Zandab Square in the heavily fortified zone, with civilians said to be the main casualties.

Kabul has accounted for at least 20 percent of all civilian casualties this year, according to recent United Nations figures.

Monday's attack comes at a time that the Afghan security forces are grappling Taliban offshoots on multiple fronts across the nation and fierce fighting is ongoing in Baghlan, Badakhshan, Helmand and Kunduz provinces.

Afghan people have frequently blasted government for failing to define a better security strategy to thwart attacks on populated areas and cities. (Tolonews)

(3) US Denounces...

near Deputy Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Haji Mohammad Mohaqiq's residence.

Najib Danish, spokesman for the Ministry of Interior (MoI), told Pajhwok Afghan News the suicide car bombing took place in the limits of the 3rd police district at 7:00am. Three vehicles and 15 shops were destroyed by the massive blast that killed 24 people and wounded 42 others. (Pajhwok)

(4) Hekmatyar-Led ...

between the government and HIA regarding the party's in the system.

The HIA member said they supported the incumbent administration and the purpose behind HIA's participation in the system was to enable the government to complete its term. (Pajhwok)

(5) Municipal,...

ensure transparency," Shah Hussain Murtazawi, acting director of the president's spokesman's office said.

"Currently the income is being collected through different channels, but we intend to collect the transport and municipality revenue through a single channel," finance ministry spokesman, Ajmal Abdul Rahimzai said. Meanwhile, the Afghan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) said extortion on highways has created huge challenges for traders and that by establishing a single center national revenue collection will increase and corruption and embezzlement will be controlled.

ACCI however emphasized that the center should be digitalized.

"To avoid corruption, competent and professional people should be appointed in this center and the revenue should be collected digitally," ACCI spokesman, Seyam Pesarlay said. Meanwhile the finance ministry said in the first six months of this year more than eight billion Afs in national revenue has been collected and that if revenue collection is managed well, the national income will increase. (Tolonews)

(6) Presidential...

However, he said some employees of the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum carried by the coaster were among the casualties.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack. Zabihullah Mujahid, the group's spokesman, said two buses carrying officials of the 40th and 90th departments of the National Directorate of Security (NDS) were targeted. He claimed 37 intelligence agents were killed in the blast. He said the buses had been under Taliban's surveillance for the past two months. (Pajhwok)

(7) Ghani Meets ...

pilgrims to pray for peace, stability, development and national unity in Afghanistan.

"You are traveling to an area where Prophet Mohammad S.A.W put his steps and Prophet Ibrahim prayed," the statement quoted Ghani as telling to the pilgrims.

"I am your first servant and the government is in your service. The Afghanistan Embassy in Saudi Arabia has taken necessary measures for you and provided needed facilities for all Afghan pilgrims," he said.

Osmani said all required measures had been taken for Afghan pilgrims and the operation would be successful like the previous year due to government's special attention to pilgrims. Merajuddin, talking on behalf of the departing pilgrims, said the Afghan government had provided more facilities this time to them than the past.

"The government and the president's special attention to pilgrims has enabled pilgrims to find access to more facilities than pilgrims of other countries," he said.

He added Afghan pilgrims would pray for peace in Afghanistan while performing the hajj.

According to the Ministry of Hajj and Islamic Affairs, 30,000 Afghans are expected to perform the pilgrimage this year. (Pajhwok)

(8) 54pc of ...

from domestic resources, 55 percent from foreign resources. Domestic resources contributed about five percent to the development budget last year and 17 percent came from foreign resources.

More than two percent of the budget was obtained in loans and the budget deficit stood at six percent, the report shows.

Findings

The audit report also cited various violations by government departments in implementing projects. It also recorded the tour of 28 lawmakers to Turkey to attend the inauguration of a power project. The report said the Ministry of Finance skipped guidelines in appointing contract-based employees.

It said there was zero allocation for 158 projects of total 674 projects that worth implementation last year when the cost of another 192 projects was reduced by 50 percent and there was zero allocation for ten projects between 1395 and 1398.

Hussaini said out of the six billion afghanis to bailout the central bank, four billion afs has reached the bank, but the bank denied receiving anything from the Ministry of Finance.

He said the central bank claimed it had only received installments of loans issued to the Ministry of Finance. (Pajhwok)

(9) Iran, Afghanistan...

Mohammad Yamma Shams during a meeting at IRIR's building in Tehran. Alongside the construction of railway between Iran's city of Khaf and Afghanistan's city of Herat, the MOU calls for further railway cooperation between the two sides.

During the event, the officials emphasized the importance of Iran-Afghanistan railway projects and called for acceleration of efforts from both sides for completion of Khaf-Herat railway as soon as possible.

The projected Khaf-Herat railway will be about 140 kilometers (km), of which 60 km is funded by the Iranian side and the rest will be financed by Afghanistan.

According to Mohammadzadeh, IRIR will complete 30km of its 60km-share by the 15th of the current Iranian calendar month of Mordad (August 6) after which the two countries railways will officially be connected.

The railway is going to be used for freight transit in the first phase but passenger transfer has also been foreseen for a near future.

Khaf-Herat railway part of East-West corridor

The Iranian official noted that completion of Khaf-Herat line is just a small part of a much bigger project and the two countries plan to build some part of the East-West railway corridor which extends from China to Europe through Iran and Afghanistan.

According to Mohammadzadeh, Iran and Afghanistan have signed an MOU with five other countries which are in the way of East-West corridor and further negotiations are still ongoing in this regard.

"With the establishment of East-West corridor, Iranian railway will have the potential for transferring over 100 million tons of goods through the country in the next 10 years," he added. IRIR ready to share knowledge and technology Mohammadzadeh further said, "Iran has good experience and knowledge in railway construction and IRIR is ready to provide ARA with knowledge, technology and experience."

"IRIR is planning to hold training courses for ARA employees and for the time being 96 ARA members will be coming to Iran to participate in these courses," he said.

Mohammad Yamma Shams for his part expressed satisfaction with IRIR's efforts for the completion of Iranian side of the Khaf-Herat project saying, "We hope the construction of Iran-Afghanistan railway will lead to better economic relations between the two countries."

Shams further mentioned the tender for construction of Afghanistan's side

of the line which is going to be held to choose an Iranian contractor to execute the project.

"ARA has made the necessary preparations and a competent Iranian company will be chosen through tender for execution of the Afghan part of the deal," he said. (Agencies)

(10) U.S. can't ...

Pakistan's support.

"So we're in the midst -- I think it has been referred to this week -- we're in the midst of a review, and it's not an Afghan review, it's a South Asia review. And what I would -- the short answer to your question, is that we should only provide more capability on the ground if it's in the context of a broader strategy that has a chance of being successful. And so I do believe that additional forces for the Afghan security forces would make them more competitive," Dunford said.

On the deployment of additional U.S. forces to Afghanistan, Dunford said that the deployment of additional troops in Afghanistan will help the conventional forces combat the insurgents with more power.

"Absolutely. I mean this is from New Delhi to Tehran when we talk about South Asia and a critical element of our strategy in the region has to be Pakistan. And we cannot be successful in Afghanistan -- we've seen that over the last several years -- unless we have a higher degree of cooperation from Pakistan. So Pakistan is absolutely an integral part of the strategic review that's ongoing," said Dunford. This comes at a time that the Trump administration has decided to reduce the level of U.S. aid to Pakistan this year over Pakistan's reluctance to take solid action against the Taliban leadership and its brutal offshoot the Haqqani network. (Tolonews)

(11) Iran, Afghanistan ...

one of them mainly focused on water related issues and the second round of negotiations kicked off a month ago and the second one will be held within next month in Kabul, Qasemi said.

Taking into account world climate changes and its impacts on regional water resources have urged regional countries to put water related issues on the agenda, he said. (IRNA)

(12) Significant Problems...

organized in Kabul.

"I speak from personal experience. I have found myself relying on these studies to understand the situation on the ground," she told a gathering of Afghan government representatives, legislators, members of the international community, academia and civil society organizations, engaged in a one-day discussion.

The Governance Forum Afghanistan initiative was financed by the German government through the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH or GIZ. A consortium, spearheaded by the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU) with the full support of the Germany-based GOPA and the Kabul-based JS Consultants, implemented the Govern4Afg project. The initiative was launched in 2015 with the main objective of establishing a platform for overarching policy dialogue on cross sectoral governance reforms in Afghanistan.

"Govern4Afg brought together key sectoral actors to discuss and develop topics and consequently help facilitating overarching discussions that involve not only government and donors, but also civil society organizations," said Dr. Orzala Nemat, Director of AREU, a leading nonpartisan Kabul-based research organization that "envisions of an Afghanistan where policy decisions are made by evidence, open debate and widespread public awareness in the belief that this will better reflect the priorities of Afghans."

Nemat said that this has strengthened not only the Afghan-German cooperation in the sector, but also inter-governmental and civil society cooperation.

As the result of poor governance, widespread corruption, increasing insecurity and lack of capacity, Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world. These challenges have slowed down the socio-economic growth, aggravated the vulnerability of people and adversely affected employment opportunities in the country. A recent World Bank report reveals that Afghan households have been negatively affected by the crisis triggered by the security and political

transition. The majority of Afghans live in rural areas that lack basic facilities.

The Govern4Afg initiative conducted a number of research initiatives including urban governance, mining governance and migration governance.

The focus of the good urban governance project was the assessment of the implementation of the urban development program while the migration governance project looked at the evolution of concepts and institutional frameworks in Afghanistan. The mining governance research assessed Afghanistan's extractive industries revenue collection system.

"Urban Afghans are safer and have better access to services and economic opportunities than those living in rural areas," says a recent World Bank report. "Inequities also persist between Afghan men and women, who increasingly find it difficult to access education and health services. Left unattended, poverty and inequality can further undermine social cohesion and jeopardize progress attained in the past 15 years." (Wadsam)

(13) Faryab: 120 ...

at what he called the government's irresponsible attitude, he said Kohistan had been under Taliban siege for the past one year.

Governor Humayun Fauzi said the local uprising members and other security officials had been stationed in Khairabad area and the Afghan air force had bombard Taliban positions, inflicting heavy losses on the militants.

He said choppers, while supplying arms to security forces, bombarded the insurgent bases as well. Kohistan district was captured by the Taliban on Sunday after coordinated attacks. (Pajhwok)

(14) Taliban Teams ...

Nimroz police chief Khwaja Jilani Abubaker told Pajhwok Afghan News an operation had been launched to drive the rebels from the Zaranj-Dilaram highway and Khashrud district. Two Taliban fighters were killed and one policeman injured during the operation, he added.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said cars were being stopped by the fighters just to find people who worked for government. "Civilians are free to go everywhere they want." The Zaranj-Dilaram highway connects Nimroz province with the southwest and the east. (Pajhwok)

(15) Nangarhar ...

foreign forces tried a lot to not harm civilians; a number of Daesh commanders were killed in the strike; in total 25 Daesh militants were killed and according to information a number of civilians were also killed and wounded; a delegation has been sent to the area to investigate the incident," said provincial police spokesman Hazrat Hussain Mashriqiwal.

Nangarhar police said that at least 25 Daesh militants were killed in foreign airstrikes in two villages of Haska Mena district.

At the moment Daesh militants are active in six districts of Nangarhar province. (Tolonews)

(16) 40 ISIS Militants...

the provincial government said, adding that the local residents and security personnel did not suffer any casualties during the clashes.

The anti-government armed militant groups have not commented regarding the report so far.

Both the Afghan and US forces conducted regular strikes against the loyalists of the terror group in this province. The increased raids, usually involving drone strikes, by the US forces followed a broader role granted by the Obama administration earlier last year. The broader role was granted amid concerns that the loyalists of the terror group are attempting to expand foothold in the country and turn the eastern Nangarhar province into a regional operational hub for its fighters. (KP)

(17) Pashto Singer...

they were beaten by the men whom were demanding money.

Zarsanga's son Shehzad said his younger brother had borrowed money from the group of men. Shehzad said his brother had however repaid the loan but the group had demanded more interest.

Zarsanga confirmed they had borrowed 500,000 Pakistani rupees from the group but called on police to help solve the problem. (Tolonews)