

**(1) 40 to 50**

with limited ANSF." In Parliament, however, sentiment among representatives is ostensibly one of more anxiety and concern for the immediate fate of local communities in provinces around the country. "The government and its leaders are busy with their discussions, while the country is in a bad condition," Senator Nesar Haris said on Sunday. "We criticize insecurities every day and there is no one to pay attention," he added. "In reality, the country is in a bad condition security wise; there is no place where it could be safe," Senate Deputy Muhammad Alam Izadyar said. "There were a few safe provinces that have been insecure lately."

While anti-government groups first launched their offensive this year in the northern provinces of Afghanistan, based on recent reports, their attacks have shifted focus to Kandahar, Uruzgan, Nangarhar, Helmand and Herat provinces.

A number of security officials - who have spoken on terms of anonymity due to the sensitive nature of their claims - have confirmed to TOLONews that the Afghan security forces recently began conducting night operations to eliminate insurgents. (Tolonews)

**(2) Number of**

are seeing a 50 per cent increase in the number of civilians injured this year compared to the same period last year," Bowden said in a statement on the UNAMA website.

He added that 978 civilians were killed in the conflict throughout Afghanistan over this period and expressed concern that humanitarian aid workers are frequently among the victims. The conflict in Afghanistan has killed 17,774 Afghan civilians since 2009, according to UNAMA data. (Sputnik)

**(3) US-Afghan**

entered a new phase of supporting Afghanistan. He said the US was committed to training Afghan security forces on a long-term basis to help improve the security situation in Afghanistan.

"Our partnership and cooperation is strong, President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani has also confirmed that the partnership and cooperation between the two countries has improved after the US entered its new phase to support Afghanistan," he said.

McKinley added Washington would also support the new Afghan ministers in implementing their 100-day plans as well as the national unity government in fighting corruption and enforcing laws.

The ambassador said the United States would continue to help Afghanistan further improve its health services and education facilities for better future of Afghan generations. As an example, he said, the US had doubled higher education scholarships for Afghan students.

Afghanistan faced several challenges including terrorism and Taliban insurgency that had widely affected Afghan people, he said, but added relations between the US and Afghanistan were not confined to security issues only.

"Our message about these challenges is clear that the American people are proud to stand by the Afghans in their country development, peace and economic stability," McKinley said. (Pajhwok)

**(4) Abdullah, Tajik**

between the two countries was intensifying with implementation of projects for construction of bridges across the Panj River border, CASA-1000 and construction of the railway connecting Tajikistan and Turkmenistan through Afghanistan. They also discussed the gas pipeline, railroad from China through Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan to Iran, and other regional projects.

Abdullah arrived in Tajikistan a day earlier. He will take part in the International Water Conference in Dushanbe on June 9-11. Meanwhile, Dushanbe-based Asia-Plus new agency reported that the visiting Afghanistan CEO met with Tajikistan Prime

Minister Qohir Rasoulzoda. The two discussed prospects of further expansion in bilateral cooperation, the agency quoted Subhiddin Muhiddinov, a senior consultant at the Tajik president's press center as saying. Expansion of economic cooperation between the two countries was reportedly a major topic of the meeting.

The two, in particular, discussed a broad range of issues related to development of cross-border trade between Tajikistan and Afghanistan, cargo transit and customs cooperation.

The Tajik PM and the Afghanistan's CEO also signed a joint statement on prospects of cooperation between the two countries.

Besides, Tajik Foreign Minister Sirojiddin Aslov and his Afghan counterpart Salahuddin Rabbani signed a protocol on cooperation between the Foreign Ministries of Tajikistan and Afghanistan in the presence of Rasoulzoda and Dr. Abdullah. (Pajhwok)

**(5) Afghan-US**

sacrifices and reiterate their resolve for a better America.

Afghanistan valued its relations with the USA dating back to 1921, Karzai said, adding the 9/11 incident showed both the countries faced the same enemy which required a unified campaign.

The deputy foreign minister said Afghan-US partnership was vital for regional and international peace and stability.

He said Afghanistan with the US help had achieved huge targets such as the transfer of security to Afghan forces and the conduct of elections that saw the political power peacefully transferred to one elected civilian government from another elected government.

He praised sacrifices of US and Afghan forces during the past 13 years in the war against terrorism and said there was a common objective behind these sacrifices. (Pajhwok)

**(6) Ghani Accepts**

adding that Azerbaijani investors and businessmen are interested in investing in economic and cultural areas in Afghanistan.

Sultanzade said practical measures will be taken in this regard by late 2015.

Afghanistan's president for his part said that within the next two years, some 70 percent of Afghanistan's trade will be carried out via Turkmenistan-Azerbaijan-Georgia corridor and Turkey.

The president appreciated the decision of Azerbaijan to invest in Afghanistan, highlighting that the investments focus on infrastructure.

The president added that Afghanistan uses about one million metric tons of construction cement each year and investment in this area would benefit both Afghanistan and Azerbaijan.

Afghanistan recognized the independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan on December 21, 1991. The diplomatic relations between the two countries were established on November 16, 1994. (TNA)

**(7) Turkey's New**

government despite becoming the ceremonial head of state, but is tainted by scandals involving lavish expenditure, including on a 1,150-room presidential palace.

Won 258 seats with 41 percent of votes, down 69 seats and 9 points.

Center-left and staunchly secular. The party founded modern Turkey in 1923 under its first leader, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. (AP)

**(8) Security Forces**

offensive to re-take control of the district.

The attack took place when Taliban insurgents, including foreigners, stormed the district and started clashing with security forces early Saturday. (Tolonews)

**(9) Taliban Free**

demining personnel were from HALO Trust group and have been taken to an unknown palace," he said soon after the kidnapping. (Tolonews)

**(10) Health Minister**

resulted in inefficient coverage and health services delivery, and NGOs working to some extent independently from national structures.

But in his 100-Day Plan, Feroz is looking to close these gaps. He thanked the private sector and NGOs for working closely with his ministry and said to date, with their help, emergency services had already been established at 14 hospitals in Kabul. He also said that discussions were underway to send local doctors abroad for advanced training.

However, he also raised the issue of polio in Afghanistan and said he was committed to eliminating the virus by 2018. He said the spread of polio was particularly bad along the Afghan-Pakistan border but that he had discussed the matter with Pakistani officials. Feroz however assured the nation that everything was being done to eliminate the virus all together.

He also said that his ministry had held talks with Pakistan and India on the issue of Afghans seeking medical treatment in the respective countries. He said Afghans were being forced to spend large sums of money when seeking specialized health care and said he had asked the two countries to help assist Afghans where possible.

In line with this he thanked the Afghan embassy in Delhi for everything it has done in this regard and for working closely with the ministry on matters relating to Afghans in India.

Feroz went on to say his policy is to support the private health sector in Afghanistan, which he says cooperates with his ministry. He stated that most private hospitals offered a good service although there were some that were below standard.

On these below-par institutions, action has been taken, he said.

According to him, there are about 100 clinics and hospitals in Kabul. "We need only 10 good hospitals which can provide good facilities," he said.

Feroz said that 10 such hospitals would ensure Afghans were not forced to leave the country in search of good medical facilities.

On the issue of pharmaceuticals being imported into the country, Feroz said that already some companies had lost their licenses after they were found to be importing sub-standard medicines.

Feroz said that as a result, the entire framework of importing pharmaceuticals into Afghanistan was under review.

The minister also mentioned the issue of security and said health services were not being provided in some provinces due to insecurity.

He said that health officials had also fallen victim to fighting in the provinces and that some had even been killed.

On this issue of budgets, Feroz said less money was now available than in the past. He said reforms and commitment to fighting corruption within the ministry was critical in order to receive much needed donor funding.

In conclusion, Feroz said that some government hospitals that had been closed in the past would be reopened over the next three months.

Last month, Feroz took decisive action and closed down nine private clinics in Kabul over what the ministry claimed was sub-standard facilities.

He said at the time that in the three weeks leading up to the closures, the ministry reviewed operating conditions of 54 private hospitals and clinics in the city. Of the 54, only 21 hospitals were providing services that met government's criteria. The remaining 24 were given three months to standardize their services, or their licenses would be revoked.

In reviewing the hospitals, officials looked at the premises, operating theatres, medical equipment, diagnostic services and the level of professionalism among employees.

Hospitals that lost their licenses were Ali Seena in Kart-e-Se, Spin Ghar in Kot-e-Sangi, Madawa on Company Street, Shamsul Rahman Tora Ki in Kart-e-Naw, Karimul Rahman in Khair Khana, Khurami in Khair Khan, Elaj in Khair Khana, Gulab Ah-

madzai in Arzan Qeemat and Faisal on Sarsabzi Street.

Feroz said: "We will continue our review of private hospitals. We are forced to act seriously against them and more hospitals will be closed if the standards are not maintained." (Tolonews)

**(11) Stop Ethnic**

Ahmad added the US should have acted against the extremist Buddhists as it was doing against radical Islamists.

He demanded Muslims stay united against the aggression of Buddhists and extend moral and financial support to the Muslims in Myanmar.

Maulvi Attaullah Rahmani, another speaker, termed the situation in Myanmar as a highest degree of violence against humanity. He asked human rights organizations to condemn the inhuman acts committed by the Buddhist extremists.

"Why human rights organizations are silent. Are the Muslims of Burma not humans? Aren't they deserve mercy and help," Rahmani asked.

He also called on Arab countries to raise their voices against the persecution of their brothers and sisters and extend support to them.

The participants passed a resolution asking the government of Myanmar to immediately halt violence against Muslims.

The resolution praised Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's efforts and pledged to extend every kind of support to the violence-affected Muslim community in Myanmar.

Earlier, the government of Afghanistan has strongly condemned the persecution of the Muslim minority in Myanmar.

A statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) had said the government of Afghanistan denounced the killings, torture of Muslims, including women, children and senior persons.

"The people of Afghanistan regret the loss of innocent people under suppression and are sad about the displaced families who fled their homes due to violence, aggression and unjust behavior," the statement said.

Afghanistan urged the UN and human rights organisations to play their proactive role in ending the ongoing persecution in Myanmar and help the suppressed people.

The Rohingyas are fleeing Burma en masse and have faced years of persecution considered by many to be a form of ethnic cleansing.

The United Nations considers the Rohingyas one of the world's most persecuted minorities. (Pajhwok)

**(12) Arab Company**

development in Afghanistan. "The DAMAC company is willing to invest in commercial and tourism related areas and construct standard buildings. But they are looking to study the investment climate to know where and how much to invest," said Samir Mateen, the head of the local firm.

Despite foreign direct investment being recognized as a critical growth factor in economies such as Afghanistan, leadership in Kabul has struggled to attract investment to the country since the national unity government took power. Political uncertainty, insecurity and administrative lapses have discouraged many investors abroad from continuing to channel capital into projects in Afghanistan. (Tolonews)

**(13) 3 Graft**

ministry, wishing anonymity, identified the remaining three officials as Ahmad Shah Hemmat, Aminullah Amin and Gul Rahman Ziarmal. (Pajhwok)

**(14) Activists Push**

Rula Ghani included thousands of signatures collected in order to show the level of popular support for the elimination of violence against women law.

"A joint call made by women rights advocacy institutions urges the ratification of the law on elimination of violence against women," activist Humaira Saqib told TOLONews. "The letter has been dispatched to the president and chief executive to help the women in this respect."

The draft law was referred to

the Lower House in 2012, but became marred in controversy after a number of MPs said articles of the law were in contradiction to Islamic principles. The bill has been put aside by Parliament ever since. (Tolonews)

**(15) MP Apologizes**

Center insisted that Mr. Wafa should be prosecuted for issuing death threats to a journalist and insisted that the complaint filed by Mr. Jahish was withdrawn due to pressures and in a bid to escape from further threats of the lawmaker. (KP)

**(16) Completion**

man needs.

Since the start of its operations, the NSP has been able to successfully execute 1,454 projects in various sectors such as transport, water and sanitation, irrigation, power, livelihoods, education, etc, while the work of another 300 is currently in progress in different localities of Samangan province. (PR)

**(17) Civilians among**

"Taliban militants led by their designated governor Mula Abdul Khaliq had terrified residents of Pasaband district," Rahmati said, adding that the air strike was launched after security forces received a tip-off about the insurgents. Civilians suffered no casualties in the incident.

Elsewhere, four civilians were killed in Borka district of Baghlan province. Abdul Jabar Islami, the town's administrative chief said that the incident took place when four local residents were on their way from Flol village to the district center.

Islami said: "The bombe was planted by the Taliban to kill me." Taliban did not comment on the incident so far. (Pajhwok)

**(18) Russian Troops**

tions in Ukraine are hurting Russia and hurting the Russian people," Obama said. "And the G7 is making it clear that if necessary we stand ready to impose additional significant sanctions against Russia." (Reuters)

**(19) UN Atomic**

on. The Islamic republic rejects the allegations as being based on faulty intelligence provided by Iran's enemies to a gullible and partial IAEA, saying its nuclear activities are peaceful and have always been so.

An IAEA probe into the "PMD" claims has been stalled since last August, although the IAEA's latest report on Iran released in May said that Tehran had "shared some information" on one area. (AFP)

**(20) Rebels Have**

combined size of the Russian armed forces and illegal armed formations... stands at more than 42,500," Poltorak told a group of visiting lawmakers from NATO countries. (AFP)

**(21) Concerned**

ers said, without naming countries.

China has been criticized for extensive reclamation work and moves to turn submerged rocks into man-made structures. (Reuters)

**(22) US-Led**

killed Sunday by two coalition airstrikes that targeted their home in the village.

There was no immediate comment from U.S. officials. A statement by the U.S.-led Combined Joint Task Force issued Sunday said the coalition carried out five airstrikes near Kobani that struck four Islamic State tactical units, destroying two militant vehicles and two mortar systems. (AP)

**Abe's anti-China attempt at G7 summit futile, counterproductive**

BEIJING - Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's attempt to arouse concern over the South China Sea issue at the Group of Seven (G7) summit in order to forge a unified anti-China stand is futile.

**South Korea government says ready to counter economic impact of MERS**

SEOUL - The South Korean government on Monday said it is ready to take swift measures to counter the negative effects on its economy from an outbreak of a deadly respiratory disease, suggesting that worried policymakers may soon deliver monetary and fiscal stimulus. President Park Geun-hye said the negative economic effects from the outbreak of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) should not be overlooked, while Finance Minister Choi vowed to take steps to offset any hit to growth.

"The effect from MERS on private consumption cannot be overlooked as spending and tourism are quickly shrinking," Park said on Monday during a visit to the MERS response headquarters.

"We can say that the virus has been driven out completely only once the economic effects are minimized."

Her comments mirrored concerns expressed by Choi earlier in the day.

"I am concerned over the negative influence the recent MERS outbreak could have on the local economy, including private consumption and investment sentiment," the finance minister said. "We will aggressively respond to mitigate the effect of MERS on the economy, including allocating necessary budgeting at the right time."

Backing the government's stance, Gyeonggi Province - where most of the infections are concentrated - announced on Monday it would provide 84.1 billion won (\$74.94 million) worth of funding for small-to-medium sized businesses in the area.

The health ministry reported 23 new infections on Monday, bringing the total to 87 and making South Korea the second-most infected country in the world after Saudi Arabia. Six deaths have been reported. The outbreak has prompted analysts to wager on another rate cut as early as at this week's Bank of Korea policy review, with some predicting more support from the government in the form of stimulus worth billions of dollars. The finance minister, however, did not raise the possibility of a supplementary budget to support Asia's fourth-largest economy, which is already tottering amid a collapse in exports and slow consumption. (Reuters)

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**In northern Haiti, conservation efforts focus on coastlines**

CARACOL, Haiti — Only little fish are pulled from the coastal waters off Haiti. In this overfished area of northern Haiti, fishermen who want a catch big enough for a meal say they must travel three hours in a boat to the Dominican Republic, where they scour the reefs of a national park and risk arrest, beatings or even death. "Going over there is the only way we can feed our families," fisherman Wilfrid Desarme said in Caracol, where the sandy beach is lined with small wooden boats that replaced similar ones seized or torched by Dominican sailors who caught Haitians poaching there with rusty spear guns and fine-mesh nets. Over the decades, impoverished Haiti has gained a reputation as an environmental wasteland. The country has only about 2 to 3 percent of its original forest cover, most of it lost because trees were cut down to make charcoal for cooking fuel. Its waters are severely overfished, leaving only small, young fish to catch. Coral reefs are clogged with silt washing into the sea from denuded hills.

Now, Haitian conservationist Jean Wiener is leading a home-grown campaign to protect the country's northern coastal areas,