

(1) Afghanistan ...

initiative of consultations with different groups of society and said unity and education could steer the country out of crisis.

The supported the government's foreign policy, fight against corruption, promotion of education, implementation of infrastructure projects, water management and administration of transit routes.

Representing Kabul University students, Shahnaz Hussaini Tanin and Qudratullah hailed Ghani's initiative to take youth into confidence on major issues.

The ongoing situation was not in the interest of anyone and youth should understand the current circumstances before taking any decision, they said. They stressed the development of a proper system that would continue despite a change of government.

Ghani said: "Your viewpoints have provided me the assurance that we were moving in the right direction." Afghanistan, he hoped, would realize its goals despite challenges and nefarious designs of the enemy.

The aim of the recent attacks was to derail the Kabul Process conference, an event that represented the national will. It was led and managed independently by Afghans for the first time in 16 years.

At the Kabul Process conference, all participants condemned the attacks from Afghanistan's enemies and appreciated the courage and patience of the Afghan security forces and people, he said.

"Our enemies want to damage our national solidarity, society and stability in the country, but we should not let them achieve their goals," the president said.

He added the objective behind the Kabul conference and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit was to forge regional and international consensus on prosperity.

The current war was aimed to weaken the morale of Afghans, fuel disunity and destroy constitutionalism, and disappoint the rising generation and women, the president concluded.

He said the war was directly targeting the Afghan nation, whose enemy had been defeated by the security forces.

About the peace process, he said: "A roadmap has been prepared. Whenever we reach an agreement, its implementation will be closely supervised by international organisations. We want peace with Pakistan with honour and dignity."

Afghanistan, an inseparable part of Central Asia, no longer relied on a specific country for transit trade and it would be connected with Europe in the next five days, the president said.

He announced Afghanistan would sign a commercial and transit agreement with Uzbekistan within two months, as its relations with Central Asian countries had considerably grown.

Ghani stressed the need for a national debate and consensus, saying his meetings with different groups of society were the beginning of discussions across the country.

He said a national debate on Kabul security would help reach a positive result as people's views on the issue were important.

However, he stressed a clear distinction between positive and negative freedoms. The current transition might face with some resistance, Ghani said.

"We want to unite the nation so as to overcome all problems. Foreign interference would not be allowed to disturb our focus," he added.

"I don't belong to any political party, tribe, region or language. I am a Muslim and an Afghan. I am committed to equality between men and women and the presidential palace is a place of connection not a place of segregation," he remarked.

"We are in a four-phase governance process: nation-building, market and economy and peace and stability. There is need for strong consensus on a strong government.

"We need professional and powerful security forces for peace and stability; we have gone through four phases of security, political, economic and law-enforcement transitions," Ghani noted.

He hinted a High Human Resources Council would be created in the next few weeks to hold comprehensive discussions on universities and schools and curriculum for them would be fundamentally changed.

The system of education had been changed, Ghani observed, asking university lecturers and academic institutes to share their suggestions with the High Human Resource Council.

The president said the Indian prime minister had promised cooperation with Afghanistan on conducting the Wolesi Jirga and presidential elections, which would be held on schedule. (Pajhwok)

(2) Mattis Says...

has deteriorated in recent months. A truck-bomb explosion in Kabul last month killed more than 150 people, making it the deadliest attack in the Afghan capital since the ouster of the Taliban in 2001.

In some cases, Afghan security forces have been forced to abandon more scattered and rural bases, and the government can claim to control or influence only 57 percent of the country, according to U.S. military estimates earlier this year.

"We are taking a regional approach to this," Mattis told the House Armed Services Committee. "We will take that forward to the president for a decision very soon."

Mattis said a request by General John Nicholson, the head of U.S. and international forces in Afghanistan, for additional troops would mostly be made up of troops who would train, advise and assist Afghan forces, potentially putting them with Afghan forces at the brigade level.

"It's a fundamental change to how we bring our, what I would call our real superiority, in terms of air support," Mattis said.

At the same hearing, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Joseph Dunford said he had gone to Mattis and Trump with "some options that might be considered" in order to help improve the security situation in Afghanistan.

Reuters reported in late April that Trump's administration was carrying out a review of Afghanistan and conversations were revolving around sending between 3,000 and 5,000 U.S. and coalition troops there.

Deliberations include giving more authorities to forces on the ground and taking more aggressive action against Taliban fighters.

Some U.S. officials questioned the benefit of sending more troops to Afghanistan because any politically palatable number would not be enough to turn the tide, much less create stability and security. To date, more than 2,300 Americans have been killed and over 17,000 wounded.

On Saturday, three U.S. soldiers were killed when an Afghan soldier opened fire on them in eastern Afghanistan. (Reuters)

(3) US Throws ...

an Afghan-owned, Afghan-led, and Afghan-chaired event to raise our collective voices for peace - a peace that Afghans, sick of four decades of conflict - so desire," Ambassador Hugo Llorens said.

A statement from the US Embassy in Kabul quoted the special charge d'affaires as saying: "I, along with every American, stand firm with our Afghan friends and partners as we work together, looking forward in the hope of a peaceful tomorrow."

He said the scourge of terrorism and spewing poison and hate casted a dark shadow across the world.

"From Aleppo to Manchester, from Baghdad to Dhaka, from Paris to Orlando, those who hate have brought suffering to the globe."

Llorens acknowledged no nation had suffered more than Afghanistan at the hands of vicious and criminal terrorists and insurgents.

"The May 31 truck bomb attack that left 150 dead and 500 injured in the heart of Kabul made clear once again the depravity of those who seek darkness over light."

The envoy extended condolences to those who lost friends, coworkers, family, and loved ones during the attack. "We all suffered greatly that day, and our embassy family was not immune. We lost 10 of our brave and loyal Afghan security guards to the deadly bombing."

At the Kabul gathering a week after the attack, he said they made clear that terrorists could not stop the international and regional community from voicing their unequivocal support for the Kabul process.

"The US government agrees that the Kabul Process can provide an umbrella-platform to take stock of and reinforce other diplomatic initiatives, and allow international stakeholders to discuss and commit to firm action to fight terrorism, seek avenues for peace, and promote regional connectivity."

Applauding the resiliency, determination, courage and selflessness of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces, the US diplomat said these brave men and women sacrificed all to protect people. "We salute your service and I want you to know we are with you 100 percent."

Llorens recalled pain, grief, loss, and sorrow sparked demonstrations on June 2, but tragically, the demonstration near the site of the truck bomb ended in violence, resulting in death and injuries.

"Afghans need to know what happened that day; there should be a full investigation to determine how what should have been an exercise in democ-

cratic protest turned so ugly."

He said every Afghan had a right and a duty to be part of the process of peace. "A society benefits when every member of it has his or her peaceful voice heard."

He also said the Afghans needed to be informed about facts how multiple suicide bombers were able to target and assault a solemn funeral service attended by many good people including prominent Afghan political leaders.

"In the end, though, the sheer will to carry forward is what makes the world stand up and admire the Afghan spirit."

He said the Kabul Process represented bringing national and regional efforts for stability and peace home to Afghanistan.

He said support from all quarters was welcome as the search for peace did belong in Moscow or Beijing or New York. "It belongs here in Afghanistan."

He said Afghanistan could count on the United States to back its efforts to defeat terrorism and engage with all elements who seek to build a foundation for peace.

"The United States fully supports this effort and looks forward to participating in future Kabul Process meetings. Rest assured, we will never waiver or be intimidated by those who advocate violence and intolerance."

The ambassador said the United States remained a committed partner and friend to the Afghan people. "Americans are with Afghanistan now and in the future."

He also said they looked forward to parliamentary elections as soon as possible and presidential elections in 2019. "Together, we will forge a brighter, safer democratic Afghanistan." (Pajhwok)

(4) Saleh Resigns ...

(NDS) made his surprise announcement on Wednesday after having been appointed to the post in March this year.

Saleh announced his resignation on his Facebook page.

He gave no further details except to say he had handed his resignation in to the president and the CEO. (Tolnews)

(5) Paktika ...

surrounding walls and providing potable water and solar energy for schools.

"We are trying to increase education facilities in this province and put an end to illiteracy," Wajid added.

Azmat Katawazi, a civil society activist in Sharan, said: "People want their children get educated that is why they support the education department."

In the recent past, local people constructed a girls' school at a cost of two million afghanis in Yahyakhel district, he said.

Katawazi said people were collecting money in different areas of Paktika to use it for education related developments or share it with the education department.

More than 30 schools in Paktika province have been closed due to insecurity and other reasons. (Pajhwok)

(6) UAE Pledges ...

Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, had been attending the Rotary Convention in Atlanta in the U.S and was one of 31 donors contributing to the \$1.2 billion USD target needed to wipe out the disease.

"The UAE is proud to be a leader in the effort to end polio," said Yousef Al Otaiba, the UAE's ambassador to the U.S, as quoted by The National.

"The Emirates looks forward to a future in which every child around the world is able to experience the full economic and health benefits of polio eradication." Sheikh Mohammed has been a global leader in the fight against a disease and in 2011, he linked up with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to give \$100 million USD for vaccines in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Polio has been eliminated everywhere but Pakistan, Afghanistan and Nigeria. However, this week, reports emerged that an outbreak of polio had been reported in Syria.

This is causing concerns for the World Health Organization (WHO) as they face obstacles in administering the much needed vaccinations to children in the war-torn country.

Two children have been paralyzed in the last few months in Daesh-held Deir al-Zor in the first polio cases in Syria since 2014.

According to reports, WHO's Communications Officer, Oliver Rosenbauer stated that vaccinating even 50 percent of the estimated 90,000 children under the age of five in Deir al-Zor would probably not be enough to stop the outbreak. To have maximum effect and protect the population, immunization rates should be closer to 80 percent.

"Are we concerned that we're in fact going to be seeding further future

polio vaccine-derived outbreaks? ... Absolutely, that is a concern. And that is why this vaccine must be used judiciously and to try to ensure the highest level of coverage," Rosenbauer said. Polio is a highly infectious virus that affects mainly young children. The virus is transmitted person-to-person or mainly through a fecal-oral route or through contaminated water or food.

Polio can paralyze a child within hours of exposure. (Tolnews)

(7) China to ...

debate about reforms in the security sector and the process should be started from Kabul and extended to other provinces in order reforms could be easily implemented in the sector, particularly in the Ministry of Interior. (Pajhwok)

(8) Efforts on ...

teachers including 805 females. The department says the current number of teachers is not enough and another 2,380 teachers are required for Bamyan schools. However, the number of uneducated women in Bamyan is higher than men.

Ali Afzali, a culturist, told Pajhwok Afghan News: "A major reason of the large number of uneducated people in this province is that they had grown up in the conflict and were unable to study. Most of the people above 35 years of age are uneducated."

He said only a limited number of people with medium age found access to education facilities during their migration.

"The number of uneducated women in this age is many times higher compared to men because there had been no education facilities during the revolution time," he added.

Zulaikha, who studied up to six grade in Bamyan, said she left school due to poverty and had to sell plastics in the city to earn money and purchase bread for her family members.

"We are living in a cave, we have no income and we have to collect plastics or drink packages from city and then sell them at a small amount of money, we pass our life this way," she said.

"Poverty forced me to leave school while my classmates graduated this year," she added.

The Ministry of Education (MoE), supported by a number of international organizations, has started efforts and programs to reduce the number of uneducated people, particularly women in the country.

Salima, 40, another resident of Bamyan, said she registered herself in a literacy course to be at least able to read and write.

"I cannot read letters, I also cannot read billboards, so I decided to start a literacy course, I started it from the first class and I hope I would be able to read and write this year," she said.

Residents evince keen interest in education in Bamyan where two universities are active including a state-owned and a private. High interest of people in education has encouraged even elderly men and women, including government officials in Bamyan, to get admission in universities.

Governor's spokesman, Abdul Rahman Ahmadi, said most of the new generation (teenagers and youngsters) were educated in Bamyan but most of the previous generation was illiterate. However, he said the local government was trying to provide more education facilities to people.

"Bamyan has good security, thanks God and the ground for education is paved without any concerns," he said. Thousands of people in Bamyan this year were enrolled to literacy courses to be able to write and read.

Sardar Mohammad Rahimi, deputy education minister, said six districts of Bamyan were facilitated with nine-month literacy courses this year. He said the courses were implemented by UNESCO. "Three hundred and fifty courses launched through this program in which around 10,500 people were enrolled while 5,000 others attend literacy courses of the MoE," he said.

He said the ministry's literacy program covered 120 districts across the country and people with most of them women above 15 years of age were attending it.

"These students will graduate as third graders who can be enrolled to the Vital Literacy School to continue their education," he said.

On the other hand, Bamyan acting education director said: "Decades of conflict, violence and poverty have deprived a large number of people from education, but now they are interested to learn read and write."

However, people with higher education degrees in Bamyan complain about lack of job opportunities.

Zainab, a resident of Waras district who has degree in sociology, said she had been seeking job for the past two years but she was not even granted a teacher job.

She said she applied for job at three

government and nongovernmental organizations, but she was not even shortlisted.

"When you study for 16 years but remain jobless, it would be good to learn only read and write because more study in Afghanistan is useless both for the society and the person himself," she said.

But Hussainad Ahmadi, head of the Afghanistan Civil Society Forum (ACSF) for Bamyan, said, "We should not get education just only to get jobs, but we should get it for its importance in life and training our children."

He said many people expected jobs after higher education but the government had no capacity to employ all educated people. Only a limited number of people in foreign countries were employed in government organizations while a large part of them worked in the private sector, he added.

Rahila Sharifi, a businesswoman in Bamyan who has graduated from literature, said she was satisfied with her own business.

According to national and international organizations, nearly 11 million Afghans above 18 years of age are uneducated or had only primary education. In general, 60 percent of Afghans including 63 percent men and 90 percent women are uneducated. (Pajhwok)

(9) Latest Clashes ...

than 500 houses were torched and damaged due to the latest conflict in different villages, he added.

The district chief said Governor Omarkhel, during a meeting with the displaced families, had vowed immediate assistance to them. The governor also vowed revenge on militants for displacing the people.

Rahimullah, a displaced individual, said government officials were unconcerned about their situation. He said their crops had been damaged in the war and the displaced families faced huge problems.

"Houses are destroyed, people martyred, dozens wounded and our cattle died due to lack of water, we want security first and then assistance", he added.

A member of the provincial council, Yousaf Ayobi, also expressed concern over the situation of the displaced people.

Pajhwok tried to contact local officials in Kunduz about the displaced people's problems, but in vain. (Pajhwok)

(10) Judicial ...

parties who had to endorse the decisions as part of the tradition.

Another activist, Saeeda Rahimi, said tribal jirgas gave little importance to women's rights. "Most members of such jirgas are not aware of women's rights. In their decisions, they violate women's rights and the government should prevent such verdicts."

She recalled last year a girl eloped with an uprising man in Andar district and local residents were able to capture them and produce before a jirga.

The jirga fined the boy and ordered the girl to be at home for ever, she said, adding that the right decision would have been to allow the couple to get married.

She said the jirga decision had defamed the girl and no one else would marry her now.

Provincial attorney office head Niaz Mohammad said he could not confirm or rule out corruption in the judicial organs. He said people should refer their cases to the judicial organs for the sake of law implementation.

Ghazni governor Abdul Karim Matin said such jirgas existed in the provincial capital and districts.

He said jirgas and the judicial organs did the same work and the jirga system had long been in practice in Afghanistan. However, the governor said nothing about the legal status of such forums and their decisions.

A member of one of such jirgas, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, told Pajhwok Afghan News that no law was considered in jirga decisions. Justice and judicial organs have been operational in only five of Ghazni's 18 districts and people in the rest of the districts approach jirgas or Taliban for resolving their cases. (Pajhwok)

(11) Gunmen Kill ...

they have started investigations into the incident.

No group including the Taliban has yet claimed responsibility for the attack. (Tolnews)

(12) 34 Army ...

According to Waziri four other military corps generals were sentenced to three years in prison, two other officers from the corps got two years in jail and a further 26 low-ranking officers got one year in prison, Waziri said.

Taliban insurgents penetrated multiple layers of security and carried out the deadly attack on the Shaheen 209 Military Corps - the first time in the

base's 12 year history - that it has been attacked by militants.

Almost 30,000 army personnel fall under this corps and provide security to 114 districts in Balkh, Jawzjan, Faryab, Sar-e-Pul, Samangan, Kunduz, Takhar, Badakhshan and Baghlan provinces.

The camp, which for many years was used by foreign forces to train Afghan soldiers, was officially handed over to the Afghan defense force in 2014. (Tolnews)

(13) German Experts...

150 people, including two Afghan employees of a security company who were guarding the German Embassy. The act must be investigated rapidly, urgently and diligently, using rule-of-law means."

"That is also necessary to prevent something like this happening again. We are doing our utmost to ensure the safety of our staff," the spokesperson said, adding that "Foreign Minister Gabriel spoke with President Ghani by telephone a few days ago and promised him our support in investigating the attack."

The spokesperson of the Foreign Ministry of Germany also added that "The Federal Public Prosecutor General has started investigations. German experts will travel to Afghanistan as soon as possible. In order to solve this crime, there must be close and effective international cooperation with the Afghan authorities and all other countries affected."

"We must stand up to terrorism together. It is important now that the people of Afghanistan do not allow themselves to be incited and divided by such attacks and that the Afghan Government takes united and resolute action. Germany will continue to stand firmly by its side," he said.

The incident near the embassy of Germany took place earlier on the day of 31st may after a tanker packed with explosives was detonated, leaving over 150 dead and more than 400 others wounded.

No group including the Taliban insurgents has so far claimed responsibility behind the attack but the Afghan officials are saying that the Haqqani terrorist network based in Pakistan plotted and carried out the attack although the leader of the network in a voice message said today that the group has no role in the incident. (KP)

(14) New Clashes ...

Taliban and ISIS terrorist group were killed during similar clashes in this province last week.

The provincial governor's spokesman Attaullah Khogyani said Thursday the incident took place in the vicinity of Pacher Agam district.

He said the militants of both the groups exchanged heavy fire in Suri Village, Judri, Saleh Baba shrine, and Wachi Lagadi areas.

Khogyani further added that so far 12 ISIS militants have been killed and two others have been wounded and two civilians were also killed.

At least three Taliban insurgents have also been killed during the clashes, Khogyani said, adding that hundreds of families have been forced to flee from the area. (KP)

(15) 38 Taliban...

militants and 4 Taliban insurgents were also wounded during the incidents.

At least seven Taliban insurgents were killed and 4 others were wounded after they were targeted in an airstrike in Sparai area of Chaparhar while 27 ISIS militants were killed during the infighting with the Taliban militants in Spin Jomat, Masta Khel, and Sholani areas, the officials said.

According to the officials, at least four Taliban insurgents were also killed during the clashes with the ISIS militants. (KP)

(16) Security Forces ...

forces in Marja and Nad Ali districts. Marja is said to be one of the insecure district of Helmand. (Pajhwok)

(17) Jawzjan...

provided by the two organisations to the needy families inadequate. He added most of the people were engaged in agriculture and when their crops were washed away, they were left with nothing to eat. But the governor's spokesman said efforts were underway to resolve the issue. Several charities had been contacted for assistance to the affected families, he concluded. (Pajhwok)

(18) US Dron...

a counterterrorist operation there in 2014. The drone strike comes after a May 31 truck bombing in Kabul killed more than 150 people in the deadliest attack in the Afghan capital since the ouster of the Taliban following the U.S.-led invasion in 2001.

Earlier, a US senator asked Trump administration to review US drone attacks in Pakistan. (Pajhwok)