

### (1) Taliban Positive...

political parties' leaders, lawmakers and civil society activists attended the conference.

Qazi Hakim represented the Gulbadin Hekmatyar-led Hezb-i-Islami of Afghanistan (HIA), the second largest militant group after the Taliban in Afghanistan.

A source privy to the discussions, requesting anonymity, told Pajhwok Afghan News on Monday that the government delegation had individual meetings with the Taliban delegation on the sidelines of the conference.

The source said the Afghan delegation discussed women's rights and girls' education with the Taliban and got positive response from them. "The conference organizers were very strict, they did not allow taking pictures and using cell phones during the dialogue and we left our cell phones in hotel rooms when we went to the conference", he added.

One of the Taliban representatives confirmed individual discussions with Afghan officials to a foreign news agency.

He said Afghan government officials "demanded we stop our fighting and announce a ceasefire. They called us brothers and advised us to come to Afghanistan and obey the Afghan constitution."

The source said Taliban did not agree on ceasefire until all foreign forces left Afghanistan. The sources also confirmed that both parties of the conference agreed to have another meeting in the United Arab Emirates next month.

Another participant, requesting anonymity, told Pajhwok Afghan News the participants shared their point of views in the conference. The Taliban also openly discussed their views and opinions, he added. The source said Taliban's arguments were stronger than Afghan officials'. "The Taliban criticised the government for corruption, poor governance and lack of interest in peace talks."

After the talks, the Taliban issued a policy statement, expressing their willingness to soften stance on a range of issues and said they did not want to harm others.

Pakistan on Sunday extended complete support and cooperation to peace and reconciliation process between Afghan government and Taliban in Qatar.

Foreign Secretary Aizaz Chaudhry told a press conference in Islamabad that Pakistan would be ready for every support needed and said "Pakistan wants peace in Afghanistan and supports reconciliation process between Taliban and Afghan government."

He further said that peace in Afghanistan was imperative for peace in the region and that Pakistan desired better ties with Afghanistan. Political analysts also called the conference as beneficial for peace and stability in the region. (Pajhwok)

### (2) MPs Hold ...

and the Bilateral Security Agreement with the United States.

Earlier in the day, some lower house members renewed their call for the government to revoke the BSA following an unprecedented rise in insecurity across Afghanistan.

Abdul Latif Padram, a lawmaker from northeastern Badakhshan province, said the security situation deteriorated after the agreement was inked. "After signing the BSA, violence and terror attacks increased and our people have become more insecure," said Padram. He termed signing of the BSA as national treason and said a Loya Jirga should be called into session on the existing issues.

Another lawmaker Naqibullah Faiq said the Wolesi Jirga did nothing wrong by approving the BSA, but officials should be asked why some articles of the agreement could not be implemented until now.

Some lawmakers claimed some 300 people from Pakistan and other countries had reached Faryab, Kunduz and Sar-i-Pul provinces to purchase poppy harvest.

Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahimy said lawmakers always complained against insecurity and violence but a majority of them did not appear when the officials concerned were called to answer their questions.

Out of total 249, only 70 lawmakers were present at Monday session. (Pajhwok)

### (3) Attacks in ...

from Khan's office said. Khan appreciated NATO forces in his meeting with Lt. Gen. Carsten Jacobsonm the statement said.

The deputy CEO said the international community did not provide Afghanistan the expected support, but now they should provide special support for security purposes. He warned clashes in northern Afghanistan would prolong without active and immediate support from the international community.

Jacobson called Daesh presence and its activities a matter of concern, but said NATO forces were planning to restrict Daesh in the region.

He also said northern Kunduz province would never fall to militants though they held sway there. (Pajhwok)

### (4) Senate Summons ...

force of nearly 10,000 international troops to stay on in Afghanistan beyond 2014.

As per the BSA agreement, the US forces' mission would be to "enhance the ability of Afghanistan to deter internal and external threats against its sovereignty and "advising, training, equipping and sustaining" Afghanistan's National Defense and Security Forces "as appropriate."

Senators on Sunday discussed the BSA and the worsening security situation in the country.

Rahmatullah Achakzai from southern Kandahar province said the deal with the US was a curse that gave birth to Daesh and deteriorated Afghanistan's security situation.

"The Meshrano Jirga blindly trusted in and approved the BSA which should be reconsidered," he added. Gulalai Akbari from northeastern Badakhshan province said the Afghan Army had not received equipment as promised in the accord, which had not been event 10 percent implemented.

Farida Kochi, a Kuchi tribe representative, said Uzbek, Chinese, Al Qaeda, Daesh and other militants had increased their activities in Afghanistan since signing the BSA.

"Americans bring Daesh fighters in airplanes to Afghanistan. The Americans have destroyed Afghans. To hell with the US financial aid that brings destruction to Afghanistan."

Senate chairman Fazl Hadi Muslimyar said National Security Advisor Hanif Atmer should brief lawmakers about the non-implementation of the BSA.

"If we did not satisfy with his explanations, we will make another decision that will be sent to the government. then it will be up to the government to accept or deny that."

A majority of lawmakers voted to summon Atmar to the upper house on Tuesday to answer their questions. (Pajhwok)

### (5) Afghan Troops...

"The Afghan security forces are supported by air, by their own air force, they are supported by howitzers, and also by helicopters [that] can give them closer support," Smithman said.

He added that it "doesn't matter how [well]- trained the bad guys are, the [Afghan] security forces will succeed" in the northern Kunduz region.

Smithman said the Kunduz area was "tough terrain" and Afghan forces needed time to fight the Taliban but he believes there will be "a solution in a couple of weeks."

Some 2,000 families have been displaced by the fighting since Taliban forces attacked an area near Kunduz in late April. (RFERL)

### (6) No One Has...

Sayyaf, the only group that had the authority to represent Afghanistan was the one selected by the government and agreed upon by representatives of the people.

"We will stand up for the defence of our religion and country against these slaves and their masters, and our stance should not be viewed as anti-peace," added the statement. Sayyaf asked the government not to allow any group or country to behave arbitrarily and ridicule matters of national importance.

Ajmal Obaid Abedy, the presidential spokesman, said those invited to the conference did not represent the Afghan government. He insisted the public would be informed if the peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban made any headway. (Pajhwok)

### (7) Taliban Seek ...

He read out a statement from the Taliban after the discussions, explaining the current situation in Afghanistan, reasons why the rebels had been waging the war, their stance on peace process and the existence of foreign troops in

Afghanistan. The Taliban appreciated efforts and endeavors of Pugwash and Qatar for organizing the conference. The Taliban admitted to their lack of experience when they ruled Afghanistan from 1996 until 2001.

Reading from the statement, Stanikzai said the Taliban wanted to continue the system of mujahideen, but the Americans toppled the regime calling it terrorist and started the war in Afghanistan.

He said the existence of foreign troops in Afghanistan was the main reason of instability. "Afghanistan is ranked among top corrupt nations and drug producing country. Therefore, Afghanistan is passing through crises and has lost its direction," the statement said.

The Taliban said peace was the need of every human being, the nation and the country. "Life is meaningless without peace. Peace can't come with slogans alone".

In their statement, the Taliban demanded a specific office for the continuation of the peace process and asked the international community to officially recognise their office.

They also called for the removal of some Taliban leaders from the US and the UN blacklists. They asked the Afghan government to nominate officials who were not corrupt and wanted peace and stability in Afghanistan.

They further added "there are some government officials who want to use peace as a strategic tool and are not sincere at all. Peace can only be achieved if all the issues which create hurdles in peace process are removed," the statement said.

The Taliban demanded foreign troop's withdrawal from Afghanistan and accused the Afghan government of not making peace with the Taliban a priority.

The rebels urged the international community and neighbour states to play their part for peace and stability in Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

### (8) Tajikistan....

border in the Khatlon Province. "We are in constant contact with Afghan power-wielding structures and our allies within the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO)," the source said, adding that Tajikistan is able to prevent escalation of tension in its areas bordering Afghanistan. (AKIpress)

(9) Verdict in Farkhunda lynched front of a well-known mosque "Shah-i-Doshamsheera, after she was falsely accused of burning pages from the holy Quran. The court framed charges against 30 individuals from the mob for beating, killing and torching Farkhunda, seven police officials from the 2nd police district for showing lack of responsibility and not using legal powers and another 12 police officials for not performing their duty at the time.

Former 2nd Police District Chief Hasibullah said the investigation in the case had not been accurate. He added, "We informed the police headquarters at 4:30pm about the incident, but officials at the headquarters informed the quick response force at 5:15pm to reach the site and control the situation."

Ex-crime branch chief Shah Mohammad said police had not committed negligence in preventing the incident. He said police had been unable to control the mob after the quick response force could not reach on time.

Syed Taimur Shah, the operation in-charge at the 2nd police district, said he did not have the responsibility to prevent the incident, but still he tried to do so.

Syed Ismail, deputy administrative chief at the area police station, said he was not present at the scene and when he informed it was too late and when he reached after struggling with traffic snarls the mob had killed Farkhunda.

He said with the help of other police officials, they controlled the fire and carried the remains of Farkhunda to the police station. Another indicted official, Abdul Sami, rejected the charges and said police had fired in the air to disrupt the crowd beating Farkhunda.

Each police official accused of negligence presented their arguments in the court and said it was not possible for them to prevent Farkhunda from being lynched.

After hearing arguments from the accused officials and their lawyers, judge Safiullah Mujadeddi said the case was of a complex nature and there was a need for further consideration. He said the court would hand down its verdict in the case at Wednesday's hearing.

Earlier, the Attorney General Office had said security officials should be

tried in military courts in line with the constitution. The AGO spokesman said the chief justice had accepted this request. (Pajhwok)

### (10) UN Asked to...

Kabul and western Herat province in the Shahjib district of Zabul.

Family members of the passengers and civil society activists have staged sit-in protests in Zarnigar Park and in front of parliament, asking the government to ensure the release of the passengers.

Liaquat Fazeli, a civil society activist, told a press conference here that the government was yet to take serious action to secure the release of the hostages.

"Had the government been serious in its efforts, the hostages would have been released now," he said, adding the government and the UN should not keep mum over the matter.

Parima Sherzad, another activist, said the president was to be blamed primarily for the failure to rescue the hostages. "These 31 people do not just belong to the Hazara tribe, they belong to all the Afghan people."

She urged the government to take honest steps for releasing the passengers so that they could reunite with their families.

The activists issued a statement calling the hostage-taking a clear violation of human rights and demanded stern measures for their release.

"The false peace process that is aimed at legitimising terrorism and brutality should be ceased," read the statement.

Two family members of the abducted men have reportedly died of heart attack and mothers of another two hostages are said to be in critical health condition. (Pajhwok)

### (11) Bulgaria's Military...

the NATO-led Resolute Support mission (RSM) to Afghanistan would continue until the end of this year, but the extension of RSM would still have to be decided.

"Currently there is no clarity in a final decision on the closing date of the operation, so we can not participate in something if it is canceled," Nikolov said.

Bulgaria, a NATO member since 2004, has been participating in the International Security Assistance Force mission in Afghanistan since 2002.

According to statistics from the country's Defense Ministry, Bulgaria currently has 110 troops in Afghanistan, and another 33 soldiers in missions and operations abroad in places such as Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mali and Liberia. (Xinhua)

### (12) Afghan Nationals...

by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and organized by the Centre for WTO Studies at the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Around 25 Afghan delegates attended the 10-day 'specialized training programme last month.

The training covered a range of issues such as tariffs, trade in manufactured and agricultural products and most importantly transit, which is enshrined as a right in the WTO.

"India's contribution in helping Afghanistan is immense and we expect more from India than Pakistan. We are not the member of World Trade Organisation (WTO) and we expect that India will play a major role in helping Afghanistan to become the member of WTO," said Naseer Ahmed, Director Trade and Service in the Afghan commerce ministry.

"Afghanistan is a landlocked country and our main problem is that we do not have access to the sea and our borders are landlocked. We do not have access to Indian commodities. India is not allowed to export commodities to Afghanistan but we are allowed to export to India. When we become a member of the WTO, this problem will be solved and it will help our economy," added Ahmad Tariq, Director of Commerce and Industry, Afghanistan.

If Afghanistan becomes a WTO member, then its exports will have access to all WTO member markets on a Most Favoured Nation (MFN) basis. This means that Afghan exports would be eligible for WTO member countries.

"It is a small gesture of the Indian Government in keeping good relations with the Afghanistan Government and Afghan people to cooperate and to develop their capacities in their network," said Prof. Mukesh Bhatnagar, Centre for WTO

studies and ITEC coordinator.

India is conscious of the critical location of Afghanistan, which though a land locked country sits at an important north south, east west crossroad in the very 'Heart of Asia'. (ANI)

### (13) PC Members...

cooperative environment between the government and the people," the resolution said. The members also demanded an increase in their salaries. (Pajhwok)

### (14) Drone Strike...

They were planning their destructive activities in the area".

Israr Ullah, resident of Bati Kot district, said 12 dead bodies were brought to Chadari Mosque in Bati Kot soon after the drone attack on the militants.

Haji Ghaliab, Bati Kot district chief, confirmed the death of 12 militants in air strike and said 8 more wounded in the attack. He shared the details of the killed militants and said "One or two among the dead are local residents of Bati Kot district and their dead bodies were brought to the area. The rest are Pakistani militants."

Taliban militants have not commented on the attack so far. (Pajhwok)

### (15) 'We Don't...

places in Afghanistan? The circumstances on the ground in Afghanistan were well known and anticipated by U.S. military leaders. Why is the Obama administration letting the Afghan government struggle with the losses on their own? Is the relationship with Afghanistan's government still strained?

When progress has been made at propping up a new government after years of combat, why is the Obama administration apparently squandering the advance? We saw what happened in Iraq when the government lost traction and ISIL/ISIS moved in to fill the void and to take the initiative. Similar circumstances exist and persist in Afghanistan.

These things, along with the complete collapse in Yemen, beg for a comprehensive Middle East foreign policy that is more effective. The present approach is failing at all ends. (Agencies)

### (16) 18 Taliban

Officials said Saturday that over 200 militants have so far been killed in the past week and at least 125 insurgents injured. This is in addition to 20 security force members and four civilians killed in the clashes over the same time period. An additional 36 security force members have also been injured, officials said.

The clashes have resulted in more than 2,000 families being displaced from their homes in the past week due to fighting.

Earlier concerns were raised that Kunduz would possibly fall into the hands of the Taliban after scores of insurgents attacked the province in their annual spring offensive about 10 days ago.

But officials from the Defense Ministry (MoD) eased fears and assured the nation that neither Kunduz nor any other province in the country was on the verge of collapse.

Reinforcement troops were however deployed to the province to support the local security force members, said officials. (Tolonews)

### (17) Ghani's Popularity...

The survey shows that 23.8 percent of people were satisfied with the job being done by the Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah. It found that 71.3 percent of people want the National Unity Government to put the issue of security on its top working agenda.

Those that were moderately satisfied with Ghani totaled 21.9 percent - a drop from 30.4 percent during his first 100 days.

On the Chief Executive 23.8 percent said they were very satisfied with his work while 18.7 said they were moderately satisfied. A total of 43.5 were not satisfied at all with Abdullah's work while 14 percent gave no opinion.

Perceptions of what should be the government's top priority in the next six months showed that 71.3 percent of people called for improved security, 6.7 said the economy needed boosting, 12.1 percent said reaching a peace deal with the Taliban was a priority, 5.4 percent said bringing electoral reforms should be priority and 4.4 percent had no opinion. (Tolonews)

### (18) Architects of ...

Abdulzai the governor's spokesman, also confirmed the main architects of the suicide attack and

the killer of Angeza Shinwari, a provincial council member, had been arrested.

Separately, unknown gunmen on a motorcycle shot dead a female NDS employee after a physical clash in the Greshk district of southern Helmand province.

The gunman shot her in one of her hands before she entered a physical clash with the assailants, who then shot her dead, the Greshk district chief, Mohammad Fahim Mosazai, told Pajhwok Afghan News.

The 45-year-old, Apwa, had been associated with the spy agency for eight years.

Isnat, a local resident, told Pajhwok Afghan News she was killed late on Sunday evening when most shops in the bazaar were closed.

Pajhwok Afghan News tried to contact NDS officials in Kabul for comments but could not reach any. No group has asserted the responsibility for the incident. (Pajhwok)

### (19) Taliban Attack...

to be stranded and outgunned.

Meanwhile, on Monday, the MPs summoned the acting Defense Minister, Interior Minister and the head of the National Directorate of Security (NDS) to discuss the increase in insecurity in northern Afghanistan.

A week before insurgents attacked several districts of northern Kunduz in which more than 200 insurgents, 36 security soldiers and four civilians were killed. The clashes still continue in some parts of the province after military forces launched an operation to clear the insurgents, said officials.

MPs and residents are still worried about the situation especially as other northern provinces such as Baghlan, Sar-e-Pul, Takhar, Faryab and Samgan face insurgent threats. Taliban insurgents have announced the launch of their summer offensive late last month and Afghan security forces have since had to deal with the increase in attacks - for the first time on their own after the foreign troop handover at the end of last year.

But thousands of foreign troops remain in the country to train and advise the Afghan forces. (Tolonews)

### (20) 2 Dead, 14 ...

the staff van and security forces cordoned off the area soon after the attack.

Zabiuhulla Mujahid, Taliban spokesman, said the group was behind the attack, claiming the staff suffered high number of casualties. (Pajhwok)

### (21) NATO Starts...

Russian aircraft have also repeatedly approached and even violated Nordic and Baltic airspace in recent months, challenging air defenses and triggering allied responses.

"Russia has a right to be at sea, just as we do," Rear Admiral Brad Williamson, the commander of the exercise said. "But the incidents we have seen are not in line with international regulations... and that's been the cause of concern." (Reuters)

### (22) Ethiopian ...

Some commentators have highlighted latent racism in a country that has absorbed millions of migrants over the past 60 years but still agonizes over differences between East European and Middle Eastern Jews, relations with its large Arab minority, and how to handle more recent arrivals from Africa.

"There is a problem, there are discrimination issues, there is racism in Israel," said Fentahun Assefa-Dawit, the director of Tebeka, an advocacy group for Ethiopian Israelis, who number around 130,000, many of them born in Israel. (Reuters)

### (23) No Indication...

Abdurrahman said the dead include 16 girls and 15 boys, as well as 19 women. The Observatory relies on a network of activists on the ground.

The U.S.-led coalition confirmed there were airstrikes at the same time near Kobani, adding that it destroyed seven Islamic State group positions and one of the group's vehicles and hit 50 fighters. (AP)

### (24) Nigerian Army...

A resident of the area said the army had killed 20 people in retaliation for the dead soldiers, who he said were murdered Saturday night. Those killed belonged to the Tarok ethnic group, members of which had allegedly engaged in cattle rustling. (Reuters)