

(1) 'Negligence ...

in Baghlan, Faryab and Sar-e-Pul provinces. He said it had been easy for them to enter the base.

The deadly incident is being investigated by a task-team that includes members from the Ministry of Defense (MoD), the National Directorate of Security (NDS) and the National Security Council (NSC).

"If I have committed anything wrong, then the task team should prove my crime. But under military structure, everyone has specific duties. Some people may be responsible for what has happened, but I am not the guard," said General Mohmand Katawazai, the former commander of the military corps.

Sources said when the insurgents attacked, some soldiers who were responsible for maintaining the security were not present at the gates and their posts and that the insurgents entered the base easily.

The Reserve Unit that is responsible for security in the military base has come under severe criticism.

"Despite a lesson being learnt after the attack on the military hospital in Kabul, the lack of an armed reserve unit inside the military corps and the enemy's influence inside the corps provided the context for such a big attack," Jawid Kohistani, a former military officer said.

Members of the Balkh provincial council meanwhile said an officer from inside the military corps was involved in the attack.

"The brother of one of the insurgents was a soldier inside the military corps, but we failed to find his name," Mohammad Hashim Azimi, a member of the council said.

A security source said insurgents used military vehicles and uniforms in order to gain access to the base where they killed more than 250 soldiers just over two weeks ago. (Tolonews)

(2) Abdullah ...

Tehran and Kabul in all fields. Zari's trip to Afghanistan comes a few days after his visit to the other eastern neighbor, Pakistan. Iranian officials have always referred to security as a common need for Iran and its neighbors.

Tehran has also voiced its commitment to finding a lasting solution to the problems of Afghan refugees. (Monitor Desk)

(3) High Sports ...

Anwari, a sports woman, who spoke on behalf of other athletes, said: "We want the president to make a final decision about sports to help us surely participate in national and international sports events and bring home laurels."

After hearing complaints from athletes, President Ashraf Ghani said he had decided to rescue the sports sector and create a high sports commission next week.

He said meetings about sports would be regularly held every week until problems in the area were resolved.

"I am ready to sign the sports law and I ask the officials concerned to cooperate with us in reviewing this law," he said.

Ghani said the current structure of sports organizations was not responsive and a review of the structure of the NOC was needed. "The aim of sports is physical training, not misusing this sector, you proved it that Afghanistan has great talents so they should be rightly led," he said.

He said leadership of sports organs should come through election and the sector should be in government's special attention. (Pajhwok)

(4) Afghanistan ...

In addition, the shelling by Pakistani militias caused displacement of thousands of villagers along the Duran line and four civilian vehicles were torched. (PR)

(5) Gen. Yaftali ...

Commander General, said as many as 1,226 soldiers and sergeants graduated after nine and 13 weeks of training courses.

He said in addition to training new soldiers, military corps officials were also sent to the facility for learning military lessons to grow their capabilities.

Mohammad Ramin, a newly graduated soldier, said: "I want to defend the country by wearing this military uniform and want to serve the war-weary nation." (Pajhwok)

(6) MoD Draws ...

insurgents infiltrated Qala-e-Zal after two days of heavy clashes with government forces, taking over the district, in another major setback for government which had pledged to secure Kunduz.

The district collapsed after the insurgents carried out a group attack on Aqtepa in Qala-e-Zal, according to officials.

In the meantime, a number of soldiers who have retreated from the district said the lack of supplies to security forces led to the collapse of the district to the Taliban. These soldiers are now deployed 10 kilometers from the district in Dasht-e-Abadan area.

"We are totally destroyed, we resisted for two consecutive nights with 300 AK47 bullets, we do not have grenades or rockets or mortars, we have only AK47 rifles," said Qurban, the commander of Afghan Local Police (ALP).

"They did not supply us with food or weapons," ALP commander Assadullah said.

"We did not have water or food, therefore we retreated from the trenches," said another ALP soldier Abdul Baqi.

Reports from the frontline indicate that fighting was also underway in suburbs of Kunduz city including Charkhab, Khan Abad, Naseri Qishlaq, Shurabi Qishlaq, Kunduz highway and areas close to Kunduz airport.

War in the northeastern provinces:

In addition to heavy fighting in Kunduz, the Taliban has been trying to tighten its grip on some strategic areas such as Yaftal Bala village located in provincial capital Faizabad, in Badakhshan as well as in Eshkashim and Tagab districts of the province.

The Taliban insurgents have also started their offensive against government forces in Baghlan province and there are reports of fighting in Chashma-e-Shir area, in suburbs of the provincial capital Pul-e-Khumri, Baghlan-e-Markazi and Doshi districts.

The recent wave of violence has created major concerns among residents in Baghlan who have all too often endured attacks by the Taliban.

"The situation in the northeastern provinces is moving towards a new crisis," said Faiz Farahmand, a civil society activist in Baghlan.

"This indicates the weakness of government in maintaining security while security is one of the fundamental duties of government," said another activist Nooria Nuzhat Naderi.

What analysts suggest "The government needs to keep the enemy under pressure, it should come out of its defensive mode and instead be on the offensive; at the same time, it should have the support of backup," said military analyst Mohsin Mukhtar. Over the past two years the Taliban has frequently launched coordinated attacks on parts of Kunduz city, a move which has raised serious questions over the Taliban's ability and the weakness of government to tackle the issue.

The Taliban also managed to overrun the strategic town of Kunduz on two occasions in the past two years, which was a setback for government forces. (Tolonews)

(7) Taliban Again ...

staging a multi-prong offensive on the area that borders the former Soviet Central Asian state of Tajikistan.

Afghan Defense Ministry spokesman Dawlat Waziri, however, insisted government forces staged a "tactical" withdrawal to protect civilians and surrounding areas. He claimed a counteroffensive to retake Qala-e-Zal is underway.

But a Taliban spokesman dismissed official claims Sunday, saying there was no fighting in the district, the insurgent group was in full control, and life is returning to normalcy there.

There are no casualty details available from either side.

US drone attack

Meanwhile, a U.S. drone attack in the eastern province of Nangarhar has killed at least 27 Islamic State militants and wounded 13 others. A provincial government spokesman, Attaullah Khogyani, told VOA on Sunday the strike occurred in the mountainous Achin district.

Fighting has also been raging for days in the northeastern Badkhashan province where Taliban insurgents are said to be consolidating their hold on the recently captured Zebak district and staging attacks on nearby districts.

Possible spillover effects of the Afghan conflict has been a cause

of concern for neighboring Central Asian states because some of them are already struggling to tackle domestic Islamist extremists.

In a bid to allay those fears, the Taliban reiterated Sunday its combat mission is solely directed against Afghanistan's "foreign occupiers and their internal allies", an apparent reference to the U.S.-led NATO military mission and the Afghan government.

"We have no intention of meddling in others' affairs and nor will we allow others to interfere in our internal affairs," a statement quoted Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid as reassuring Afghanistan's neighboring countries.

"However, the liberation of our land from foreign occupation and the establishment of an Afghan-inclusive government is our natural right and we will continue our struggle until we have achieved this goal," Mujahid added.

Afghan authorities maintain militants from Central Asian states have been spotted in Taliban ranks in recent months while U.S. military commanders allege Russia is also arming the insurgents. Moscow denies the charges as groundless and as an attempt by the U.S.-led military mission to place blame for failing to stabilize the war-shattered country.

Afghan Defense Ministry spokesman Waziri has also accused neighboring Pakistan of helping the Taliban, charges Islamabad rejects.

In its report for the first quarter of 2017, the U.S. Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, or SIGAR noted the government controlled nearly 60 percent of 407 Afghan districts, but 11.1 percent or 45 districts were under insurgent control on influence.

The rest of the area is contested, the government watch dog said, quoting the U.S. military assessment prior to the Taliban spring offensive on April 28. (VoA)

(8) Iran Ready...

he remarked. He went on to offer Kabul cooperation in economic, transit, transport and infrastructure sectors. He also commended Afghanistan's support to Iran on international forums. (Pajhwok)

(9) Af-Pak ...

countries, he said in a statement, urging immediate de-escalation of the situation.

Asfandyar asked Pakistan and Afghan governments to resolve their differences through peaceful negotiations. Innocent Pakhtuns were victims of border clashes, he regretted.

He commended as valiant efforts by Asghar Khan Achakzai for arranging a ceasefire in Spin Boldak between the armed forces of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

"We welcome the positive atmosphere created by the most recent Kabul visit of Pakistani parliamentarians and hope both governments will build on this and would not allow spoilers to vitiate the atmosphere," he added.

It was time to jettison the politics of the Cold War era and open a new chapter of peaceful bilateral relations, he remarked. "Both Pakistanis and Afghans yearn for peace and expect their leaders to respect their aspirations." (Pajhwok)

(10) Afghan...

Deputy Spokesperson Dawa Khan Minapal had said last week. Minapal claimed that Ghani, after meetings with Director General Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Naveed Mukhtar and Sadiq, had rejected their invitations, saying he would not visit Pakistan until Islamabad hands over the perpetrators of terror attacks in Afghanistan.

"I will not go to Pakistan till the perpetrators behind the attacks in Mazar-i-Sharif, the American University in Kabul and the Kandahar attacks are handed over to Afghan authorities and until Islamabad takes concrete action against Afghan Taliban militants on Pakistani soil," Minapal had quoted Ghani as saying.

Sadiq, however, claimed that Ghani assured the speaker he would visit Pakistan once Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif paid a reciprocal visit to Afghanistan. The Afghan president last paid an official visit to Pakistan in Dec 2015 for the Heart of Asia moot.

The speaker said that he had invited the Afghan president to Islamabad so that relations between the

two countries may improve.

"It is his [Ghani's] desire as well that relations improve and peace is established," Sadiq added.

Sadiq told the media that during his meeting in Kabul, the Afghan president told him that 50 per cent of Afghan land is not under his control.

Ghani said members of the militant Islamic State group and the Afghan Taliban were present "just a few kilometres" away from where the meetings were held between the speaker and the Afghan president, Sadiq told the media. Sadiq told the media that former Afghan president Hamid Karzai and Chief Executive Abdullah will be visiting Pakistan soon.

"When [Afghanistan's] parliamentary delegation comes we will talk to them about our soldiers being attacked [in Chaman]," Sadiq added.

Earlier this week, at least nine people were killed and over 40 others injured as Afghan border forces opened fire on security personnel guarding a census team in Balochistan's Chaman area.

Sadiq said that Pakistan has started fencing its borders and over 1,000 posts have been established. He urged Afghanistan to co-operate so as to improve border security.

The speaker said that once border fencing was complete, neither side would have any complaints. (Agencies)

(11) Pope Slams...

Donald Trump on May 24, criticised the US military in address to students on Saturday, according to the BBC.

Used for the first time in April against a series of cave complexes in Achin district, the 10-ton bomb had been in the American arsenal for more than a decade.

At least 94 Daesh fighters were killed in the bombing, which drew stringent criticism from former president Hamid Karzai, who snubbed the US for using Afghanistan as a testing ground for its weapons. (Pajhwok)

(12) High Level...

corruption in the justice, security sectors and the mining industry, the envoy explained, who added 'prevention and public education' will be also on the agenda.

Among other speakers at the conference will be Vice-President Sarwar Danish, National Security Advisor Mohammad Hanif Atmar, Acting Minister of Mines and Petroleum Narges Nehan, UN SRSG, Tadamichi Yamamoto and the US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction John F. Sopko. (Pajhwok)

(13) NRC Says ...

northern Afghanistan has increased over the past week, following the announcement of the Taliban's spring offensive on April 28.

Abdul Karim (31) from Qala-i-Zal, fled with his family to Kunduz City, where he is staying in a compound with four other families.

"Around 2:30 am Taliban fighters came to our houses and asked us to evacuate. They told us not to make any sound. We were all afraid," he told NRC staff in Kunduz City on Saturday. Preliminary reports from families who fled, local authorities, and aid groups indicated that thousands of people had been displaced.

"Around 180 families from my neighbourhood in Qala-i-Zal have been displaced into Kunduz City. But those with no money, like widows, are in Qala-i-Zal desert, as they couldn't make it as far as the city. They are now living in the open," said Abdul Karim.

A rapid humanitarian assessment is currently being undertaken in Kunduz, to identify immediate needs of families displaced by the recent fighting.

The NRC said it was ready to provide emergency shelter, water, food, sanitation and hygiene articles and other essential supplies. "All armed actors must respect International Humanitarian Law," said O'Rourke.

He asked the warring sides to avoid civilian casualties and allow fleeing civilians safe passage. We request security assurances from all parties to the conflict for safe humanitarian access to respond to those in need." (Pajhwok)

(14) Iran to Ban ...

the statement said. There are over 1.4 million Afghan that have hand written passports and CEO Abdullah has asked for their issues to be addressed, said

the statement.

During the meeting, Abdullah promised the representatives that the "government will seriously work on the issues", it added.

"The easy way would be by providing electronic passports. Abdullah also promised that he will talk with Iranian officials over the issues and will hold a meeting on Sunday with officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Refugees and Repatriation and Hajj," the statement emphasized.

The migrant's representatives have also told the CEO that the Iranian government also warned Afghan students in the country that "their cards will expire on May 5 of 2017 and they must have then had a national ID card." (Tolonews)

(15) Raziq Warns ...

Raziq who has attended two rounds of talks with Pakistani military representatives has said that the outcome of his discussions with the Pakistanis would be shared with government once talks have concluded.

"If Pakistan takes action in defiance over the agreement, then we are forced to retaliate, but our expectation is that the issue is settled through diplomacy and talks," added Raziq.

The Spin Boldak crossing has remained closed to traffic over the past three days since security forces from the two sides engaged in an armed battle in the area.

A technical delegation from the two sides has also agreed to finalize their assessments about the fate of Luqman village.

"The purpose of our trip here is that a ceasefire should be in place so that civilians on either side of the border can return to their homes and (that we can) find a solution to the issue through diplomacy," said general Farid Ahmad, head of the Afghan delegation.

Raziq has also called on the Pakistani government to stop conducting their census in Luqman village while talks are underway.

In defiance of Afghanistan's territorial integrity and national sovereignty, the Pakistani military forces entered Afghan territory in Spin Boldak to carry out a census.

But, the two sides engaged in an armed confrontation after Afghan forces tried to stop the Pakistani forces from conducting the census. Both sides suffered casualties. According to reports, at least four Afghan border security personnel and nine Pakistani officers were killed in the battle. The battle also left 80 people wounded on both sides of the border.

Meanwhile, some residents have raised hopes that the tensions come to an end so that they can return to their homes.

"We want the route to be reopened, because people have a lot of problems," said a resident of Spin Boldak Mohammad Jan.

"Our vehicles are stranded on the other side of the border," said another resident Wali Jan. (Tolonews)

(16) Journalists, ...

ment Media Centre head, National Directorate of Security, Foreign Ministry, Rural Rehabilitation and Development Ministry, Attorney General Office, Commerce and Industries Ministry and some other departments were honoured with the medals.

Among the journalists, Faisal Zaland, Haseeba Atakpal, Aneesa Shaheed, Maryam Sama, Najia Safi, Sabouri Sadozai and others were awarded the medals. On World Press Freedom Day, Ghani approved medals for the individuals. (Pajhwok)

(17) Finland, ...

Besides theoretical parts, the training included many sessions on practical modelling and data interpretation. In small groups, the 15 participants had the opportunity to strengthen in-depth knowledge and to network.

The geophysics training is part of the continuous cooperation between the Geological Survey of Finland and the Afghanistan Geological Survey - a partnership that the Afghan-German Cooperation aims to collaborate with. In November 2017, a follow-up field training for Afghan sector experts will take place in Iran, organised by the Geological Survey of Finland. (KP)

(18) Residents ...

mortars on mountains surrounding the district. They sometimes fire their guns."

According to him, the insurgents

were trying to capture the strategic district that borders three districts of neighboring Kunar province and some other districts of Nuristan.

Residents of the district said they were deeply worried about the situation as periodic clashes continued. They asked the government to launch an operation to break the siege.

A resident of the area, Sibghatullah said businesses and other activities including academic had been at a standstill over the past three days as clashes feared anytime.

(Pajhwok)

(19) ANSF Kill ...

the statement read.

Afghanistan has long been suffering from unstable political, social and security issues due to the activity of the IS terrorist group and Taliban radical movement. The Afghan National Defense and Security Forces are currently conducting joint offensive operations to combat terrorism across the country. (Sputnik)

(20) 36 Daesh ...

would-be suicide bombers were killed in Surkamar area of Achin district. He said the bombers wanted to attack an Afghan forces operation, codenamed Hamza, in Achin district.

Daesh militants did not comment about the recent incidents so far. (Pajhwok)

(21) What Happened....

Afghan National Army troops in armored vehicles have filled the village's streets.

However, the Pakistani forces could also be just 100 metres away from the Afghan forces. The Pakistani forces have taken positions on rooftops of mud-made homes across the border.

Nearby the remains of a Pakistani armored vehicle which was destroyed during the clashes lay on the ground. (Pajhwok)

(22) UK Local ...

Scotland the Conservatives gained 164 seats and moved into the second spot, pushing Labour into third. Labour lost control of Scotland's largest city, Glasgow, for the first time in 40 years.

The new third party of UK politics, the UK Independence Party (UKIP) was almost entirely wiped out across the UK, losing 114 seats, almost all its seats.

"I think the Conservative Party has obliterated UKIP. It's difficult to see what the rationale of UKIP is; its purpose was to take Britain out of Europe. It has succeeded in doing that in the referendum," said Sir Ivor Crewe, master of University College, Oxford, and a veteran analyst of the UK electoral system. (Xinhua)

(23) Bill to Declare ...

Netanyahu's call could deny Palestinian refugees of past wars any right of return. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has characterized such "nation-state" legislation as putting "obstacles in the way of peace". (Reuters)

(24) Macron Favorite...

integration, would contrast with recent nativist, anti-globalization voting outcomes like those that will see Britain quit the EU and which made Donald Trump U.S. president.

Should an upset occur and Le Pen win, the very future of the EU could be on the line given her desire to close borders, dump the euro currency, and tear up trade treaties.

But even in defeat the 48 year-old's vote is likely to be about twice what her party scored the last time it reached the presidential second round in 2002, demonstrating the scale of voter disaffection with mainstream politics in France. (Reuters)

(25) Obama to...

include Presidents Gerald Ford and George H. W. Bush, former U.S. Representative Gabrielle Giffords, who survived an assassination attempt, U.S. Senator and former prisoner of war John McCain and U.S. Representative and civil rights leader John Lewis.

The award takes its name from Kennedy's 1957 book profiling eight U.S. senators who risked their careers by taking politically unpopular stands. (Reuters)

(26) China, Belgium ...

an all-round partnership of friendship and cooperation in 2014 during Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Belgium, said Yu... (Xinhua)