

### (1) Islamic State Claims...

attackers were involved in raiding Police Station 13.

He confirmed six attackers and two policemen were killed in these assaults.

According to local Ariana News, armed clashes among the attackers and the security forces were underway.

Zabihullah Mujahed, Taliban spokesman, claimed responsibility for the attack on Police Station 10 in a tweet.

Daesh militants claimed the attack on Police Station 13 via a statement on their Amaq propaganda site.

It is worth mentioning Daesh claimed a suicide attack in the Dasht-e-Barchi last month killing up to 30 people at a voter registration center.

This area is predominantly occupied by the ethnic Shia Hazara Afghans who have been on the Daesh hit-list. (AA)

### (2) AAF Conducts...

Afghanistan seven months ago, allowing the training programme to begin 18 months ahead of schedule.

Currently the Afghan Air Force has 13 of these aircraft in its fleet, with two more scheduled to arrive each month through the end of 2018.

Over the next five years, AAF plans to add over 100 more UH-60 variants to their inventory, allowing for increased aerial fires and lift capabilities, thus building a stronger, more capable force.

"AAF modernisation is essential for increasing competence, instruction and education with merit-based advancement of its best leaders," said US Air Force Col. Christopher Goodyear.

"The Afghan Air Force has come a very long way in a very short time; this mission is further proof of the air crew's hard work and dedication." (Pajhwok)

### (3) Afghanistan...

in the end of the conference.

On the other hand, the Taliban have asked Afghan ulema not to attend the meeting in Indonesia.

Taheri said a meeting of Islamic scholars on ending the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan would be organized in Saudi Arabia in July. (Pajhwok)

### (4) ADB Assesses...

They said Afghanistan, in line with its capacity for generating solar, hydro and wind power, should come up with inclusive programs to attract international support for this purpose.

"Afghanistan has much capacity in terms of producing hydro, wind and solar power, but so far only a small part of it has been used. We need to identify these opportunities, and there is a need to attract a sufficient budget for mega electricity projects in the country by the government and the international community," said Saadatullah Ahmadzai, an energy expert ADB has said that the bank also plans to connect countries having the largest power generation capacity with other countries in need of energy and Afghanistan plays a key role in energy transit. (Tolo news)

### (5) Pakistan Waives...

attended the meeting.

The visiting team signalled its willingness to consider resumption of talks under the Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Cooperation Authority (APTTCA) meeting.

During his recent visit to Kabul, Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi had vowed to undo the regulatory duty on fruits and vegetable and remove non-tariff barriers on Afghan exports.

The Afghan delegation also included Hamdullah Hamdard, deputy minister of agriculture, Saeed Saeedy, director-general of international trade and Khan Jan Alakozai, head of the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and In-

dustry.

Najibullah Wardak, deputy director at the Ministry of Finance, and Ahmed Shakir Qarar, deputy director at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were also in attendance.

Both sides expressed their desire to enhance trade relations by overcoming existing challenges. The discussion focused on the quarantine certification and removal of regulatory duties on selected items. (Pajhwok)

### (6) Most Uruzgan...

areas have not been provided the facility to register their selves as voters," he said.

Meanwhile, Lt. Col. Rahmat Shah Qemati, commander of the Uruzgan's 4th brigade, said the military had plans for improving security for voter registration centres in the province.

He said: "After the implementation of these plans, most of the security issues would be resolved and people would be able to register themselves as voters." (Pajhwok)

### (7) Quarantine...

protests on both sides of the Durand Line.

The decision was announced during a visit by Peshawar Corps Commander Lt Gen Nazir Ahmad Butt to the Torkham border on Tuesday. He was accompanied by Frontier Corps Inspector General Maj Gen Waseem Ashraf.

The corps commander was briefed steps to be taken to step up trade with Afghanistan and facilities to be provided to traders of both countries and the Afghans coming to Pakistan via Torkham.

Concrete walls constructed in front of local markets would be removed to facilitate the movement of local traders to the Customs and political administration offices, the official said.

Also on Tuesday, local shopkeepers and traders staged a protest against the suspension of power supply, shortage of drinking water, poor sanitation and imposition of illegal taxes by the political administration. (Pajhwok)

### (8) India Announces...

Murali Vijay, KL Rahul, Cheteshwar Pujara, Karun Nair, Wriddhiman Saha, R Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav, Umesh Yadav, Mohammed Shami, Hardik Pandya, Ishant Sharma, Shardul Thakur (Tolo news)

### (9) Afghanistan...

technical capacities and negotiate the future commitment's conditions.

The meeting entailed a comprehensive agenda in various sessions, MEC and KPK had the opportunity to exchange knowledge and further increase their capacities. International anti-corruption experts from Transparency International provided input throughout all activities.

MEC's Acting Executive Director, Cheirollah Sarag, emphasised: "KPK and MEC have a lot in common. Therefore, we want to continue learning from each other, also in other areas of anti-corruption. Cooperation also means friendship and paves the way towards peace." Follow-ups and a commonly agreed roadmap will follow soon.

KPK's Commissioner, Mr. Saut Situmorang, commented: "Cooperation between our organizations flourishes well. It is great to work with our colleagues from MEC, who are committed to fighting corruption. We look forward to strengthen cooperation by sharing and exchanging our knowledge." During the meeting, MEC reflected on its progress since it last visited Indonesia. Recently, the committee produced numerous high-quality reports and vulnerability to corruption assessments on Afghan ministries. MEC's work was partly based on shared knowledge from their Indonesian colleagues. (Pajhwok)

### (10) Takhar People...

my representative, he in telephone tells me that he will come and meet me but I wait the whole day and he does not come," he said.

Ghulam Haidar, a resident of Hazar Somuch district, who was leaned to a wall of the provincial council said that he needed confirmation of the provincial council member for the death benefits of his brother who was killed while fighting in Afghan National Army (ANA) ranks.

He said that he waited every day in front of the provincial council and the guards there told him that no one existed in the office.

"My brother served the country in ANA for two years, he left three children, but I am disappointed when cannot find the provincial council members for confirming my brother's death benefits," he said.

Munif Ahmad Hadaf, a civil society activist, also said that the provincial council's absence was increased with the approach of elections.

He said that some of the provincial council members do not attend their office even for weeks and months due to their business in personal and patrician activities.

However, Esmatullah Qurbani, a provincial council member, told Pajhwok that they regularly attended their office when had no urgent work elsewhere.

"I recently traveled to Kabul and stayed there for 12 days due to an important work, I visited my clients' villages for helping them when returned, so it is not correct that we will not come when we are free," he said.

Mohammad Azam Afzali, the provincial council secretary, confirmed some of his colleagues were violating the law and were absent.

He said most of the provincial council members only visit their office to sign the attendance sheet and then go back to follow their personal activities.

"Some of them are following formal affairs in Kabul, some of them visit the office once a day and then disappear with their clients, some are illegally absent but we cannot warn them," he said.

According to internal duties of the provincial council, the council member should organize one meeting in each 15 days. But Takhar provincial council members say such meetings were ignored due to incomplete curriculum.

Besides the provincial councils, the parliament members also do not attend their duties, an issue that faced people and government officials with problems. (Pajhwok)

### (11) 100 Security...

Shuja rejected the fall of Tala wa Barfak district.

He said: "Some check-posts have been overrun by the Taliban but there is still resistance at one check-post, so we can say the district has not fallen."

He said they had requested reinforcement and air support from Kabul and other places but the support was yet to arrive.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid claimed the rebels captured the district centre and police headquarters this afternoon at around 3pm.

Mujahid claimed security forces suffered casualties in the attack and the Taliban captured a large amount of weapons and ammunition. (Pajhwok)

### (12) Fast Growing...

Provincial Council member Taj Mohammad Mangal expressed similar views and said armed attacks, kidnapping and robberies had increased and security forces had failed to ensure security.

Mangal alleged administrative corruption at the provincial police headquarters was main reason behind the messy situation.

"After the blast at police headquarters, the management and discipline of the force administration is questionable, as of now the police headquarters have not yet returned to normal state."

Provincial Police Chief Brig. Gen. Gul Aqa Rohani acknowledged recent incidents of insecurity had worried Paktia residents, but added joint meetings of security institutions headed by the governor had recently ordered improvement in security of the city and on highways.

Rohani rejected allegations of bribes and corruption in police and said no one would be allowed to get illegal advantage of government authority and resources. (Pajhwok)

### (13) Undocumented...

receive 500 afghans for every right hand-drive vehicle upon entry into Herat, but the number of such automobiles has increased in the absence of effective law enforcement.

In 2012, the government issued five-year licences for 6,000 right hand-drive vehicle in violation of the traffic laws that are in force in the country.

Ahmad Taufiq, head of the Traffic Regulation Department for Farah, said police had not received orders to stop right hand-drive vehicles. The government might register all unregistered vehicles to prevent further problems, he suggested.

However, he vehemently denied the sale of fake licences and registration plates in Farah, saying the allegation could not be substantiated independently. (Pajhwok)

## Iran's Rouhani Seen as Lame Duck after Trump Ditches Deal

ANKARA - Iranian President Hassan Rouhani put his political life on the line to champion a nuclear deal with Western powers in the face of fierce opposition from hardliners at home.

With the deal now on shaky ground after U.S. President Donald Trump pulled out, the 69-year-old mild-mannered cleric faces the prospect of serving out his second term as a lame duck leader.

A pragmatic politician with an impeccable background in Iran's clerical establishment, Rouhani came into his own in 2013 when Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei needed to shore up the establishment's legitimacy.

Already threatened in 2009 when millions of Iranians took to the streets to protest against alleged election fraud, Iran's rulers came under mounting Western pressure in 2013 over the country's nuclear program and concerns Israel might attack.

Rouhani, who established a track record for bridge-building in nuclear talks with European powers a decade earlier, promised change and in 2013 he secured the votes of pro-reform Iranians who had been politically muzzled for years. Elected in a landslide, Rouhani opened the door to nuclear diplomacy with six major powers to try to lift the sanctions that had held back Iran's economy for years and meet the demands of young, restless Iranians.

But he was fiercely criticized by hardliners in Iran wary of opening up to the West, first for re-engaging and then for agreeing in 2015 to curb the country's nuclear program in return for the easing of sanctions.

Trump's announcement that he will reimpose U.S. economic sanctions on Iran to undermine the nuclear deal is now expected to shift the balance of power against Rouhani.

Aware hardliners could try to exploit the shift in U.S. policy, Rouhani quickly said Iran could remain in the pact with other Western powers.

"If we achieve the deal's goals

in cooperation with other members of the deal, it will remain in place," Rouhani said in a televised speech on Tuesday.

But Trump's decision is seen playing into the hands of Khamenei and his allies who control the judiciary, security forces, public broadcasters, the council which vets election candidates and laws, as well as the powerful foundations that run much of the economy.

Any new U.S. sanctions will also raise the cost of trade for Iran and are expected to further deter Western companies from investing, giving hardliners an excuse to cement their grip on power by making Rouhani a scapegoat for hardship.

"Historically, Iranian presidents are weaker in their second terms. Now, with the deal collapsing, Rouhani will be even weaker," said an Iranian diplomat, who declined to be named.

"Khamenei prefers a weak president. Rouhani will serve his term, but as a lame duck," the diplomat said. (Reuters)

## Merkel Calls for More German Military Spending, But SPD Eyes Tax Cuts

BERLIN - Chancellor Angela Merkel on Wednesday said the state of the German military was "not satisfactory" and called for increased military spending to cover a wide range of gaps.

Merkel's comments came amid a widening conflict with the Social Democrats (SPD), junior partners in her coalition government, about military expenditure, with the center-left SPD favoring moves to lower taxes and investment in digitalization.

The conservative leader told fellow Christian Democrats (CDU) at an event in Berlin it was clear that funds were lacking "in every nook and cranny" of the German military.

"When it comes to the Bundeswehr, we must make progress," she said. "We certainly won't get better with less money."

Critical ministry and parliamentary reports this year showed that missing spare parts and quality defects had curtailed the readiness of German submarines, warplanes and other key weapons after years of declining spending after the end of the Cold War.

Finance Minister Olaf Scholz, a Social Democrat, last week drew the ire of conservative Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen with a plan that would see military spending rise in 2019 as a percentage of economic output, but fall thereafter.

Von der Leyen and the conservative leader of the development ministry objected in writing to Scholz's longer-term budget plans, saying they violate the coalition pact signed by the two political blocs in February.

Merkel said the current level of military spending by Europe's largest economy often sparked questions about Germany's commitment to move toward the NATO target of spending 2 percent of economic output on defense.

"I'm very happy that we were able to write down in the coalition agreement that we do feel obligated to these targets from Wales (the 2014 NATO Summit in Wales) that all agreed there," she said. "One also has to put one's cards on the table."

Just hours later, however, Scholz told reporters that Germany's tax estimates showed only limited scope for additional fiscal spending through 2022 and the money would be used to lower income taxes from 2019 and hike investments in digitalization by 2.4 billion euros in 2018. (Reuters)