

**(1) Ghani off to...**

move and can understand the concerns of the Afghan people and the Muslims of the world. A statement issued by ARG Palace stated that the decision has hurt the feelings of the Muslims of the world which could endanger the peace process in the Middle East. (KP)

**(2) Commandos...**

from different sides," said Ayub-Shahryar, a civil society activist. The head of the Wolesi Jirga, Lower House of Parliament, secretariat MirdadNijtabi questioned the war management by security agencies. "I am wondering how the enemy is able to reduce the morale of security forces?" How can they seize military equipment including tanks?" he asked. (Tolo news)

**(3) Afghan Forces...**

provide a prosperous and peaceful future," he noted.

The US and NATO forces commander said Afghan forces not just fought for Afghanistan, but they were also fighting on behalf of all humanity, against international terrorism.

"In this holy month of Ramadan, we encourage all armed Taliban to accept the offer of Afghan president and join in peace talks, for a better future for their children and the noble people of this great nation," he said.

"We, the coalition forces, greatly appreciate your hospitality, and we are fully committed to stand with you in our joint struggle for peace, prosperity, and freedom in Afghanistan. We are with you and we will stay with you," vowed Nicholson. On behalf of coalition nations, Nicholson congratulated the noble people of Afghanistan, Muslim communities and the peace loving Muslim nations around the world for the holy month of Ramadan.

"We, the international community and coalition forces, wish you and your families a joyful and peaceful holy month of Ramadan," he said. (Pajhwok)

**(4) UK Intends to...**

meantime, NATO General Secretary Jens Stoltenberg in a meeting with the United States President Donald Trump in the White House has said that the organization wants to increase its support to Afghan forces in fighting "terrorism".

"We are stepping our efforts in the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan, where we are increasing the number of trainers and the support for Afghan government," said Stoltenberg.

The Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan meanwhile said currently the Afghan Air Force (AAF) carry out more strikes against insurgents than the US forces.

The Resolute Support spokesman Martin O'Donnell said 50 percent of Taliban's incomes come from drug trafficking which negatively impacts Afghans' lives.

"Fifty percent of their incomes come from drug trade," O'Donnell said.

US Defense Secretary James Mattis has said that in addition to an increase of military pressure on Taliban, the regional countries should play their role in resolving Afghanisthan crisis.

"Uzbekistan is taking an integrated approach to its central Asia neighbors and especially Afghanistan will unlock economical potential for your people and all the people in the region," said Mattis. Washington has said that holding meetings by religious scholars inside and outside Afghanistan will put the group under more pressure this year. (Tolo news)

**(5) Afghan Govt, US...**

and US governments," Gossman

said.

Human Rights Watch says it has found that the Afghan government has developed almost no capacity to investigate civilian casualties arising from its military operations. At the same time, the watchdog says, US forces have downsized their civilian casualties tracking mechanisms and never conduct on-site investigations after attacks resulting in civilian casualties, relying instead on visual and satellite imagery and unreliable Afghan security force reports.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has reported that civilian casualties from US and Afghan airstrikes have increased since 2016 as air operations in Afghanistan have increased.

In 2017, UNAMA documented 631 civilian casualties (295 deaths and 336 injuries) from 139 aerial operations conducted by Afghan government and US forces - a seven percent increase over 2016, and the highest yearly total of civilian casualties from airstrikes since systematic documentation began in 2009. Civilian casualties from air operations represent six percent of all civilian casualties from the conflict. Since 2015, attacks by insurgents have accounted for about 65 percent of all civilian casualties in the conflict.

The Human Rights Watch says the Afghan government should improve its tracking and investigation procedures and ensure accountability for laws-of-war violations.

"Our investigations of recent airstrikes killing dozens of Afghan civilians show that little real effort was made to uncover what happened," Gossman said. "For these human tragedies to stop, the US and Afghan governments need to do more to fully investigate incidents and learn from them, and appropriately punish those responsible for unlawful civilian deaths." (Tolo news)

**(6) Ministry to Start...**

have already recommended construction of a hydropower dam in Shahrestan district in Daikundi. We hope government pays more attention to this matter so that the resident of the province will have access to power," he said.

The Ministry of Energy and Water says the equipment which will be used in the solar power project have been designed for 25 years. (Tolo news)

**(7) School 'Compulsory'...**

a shortage of women doctors and healthcare officials. An educated girl will help educate a whole family," said Gul Mohammad Khan, a tribal elder.

Meanwhile, the provincial directorate of education welcomed the move and said the authority is committed to taking serious steps for the improvement of education in the district.

The provincial education director Nasir Roshan said such agreements and decisions should be made in other districts in Khost in order to allow more girls to go to school.

"People are ready to allow both girls and boys to go to school, but they face the lack of facilities," said Roshan.

Khost has 351 schools with over 3,000 students of which at least 40 percent are girls. (Tolo news)

**(8) Schools Closed as...**

The residents added that insurgents have targeted the house of a member of the provincial council.

"The Afghan and foreign air forces have also targeted the insurgents," residents said.

Early Tuesday, Taliban insurgents attacked Farah city. Twenty-five security force members were killed in a day-long battle.

But on Wednesday morning, provincial governor Basir Salangi told TOLO news that about 300 insurgents had been killed in the clashes which started when about 2,000 Taliban attacked the city.

"First 1,000 Taliban insurgents attacked Farah districts on Tuesday and after the first attack over 1,000 other insurgents also joined the attack," he said.

The Taliban gathered the insurgents from Helmand, Herat, Ghor and Zabul provinces to launch the large-scale attack on the city, but security forces defended the city including the National Directorate of Security (NDS) department, police headquarters, and Farah city hospital and pushed them back after reinforcements arrived.

Residents said the Taliban had been pushed back from the city, but they were in ShirKoh, PeshtKoh districts and Regi area of the city.

Salangi said security forces will continue their operations to destroy the insurgents in the province.

On Wednesday night, NATO's Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan said security forces played a key role in pushing back the Taliban from Farah city.

The security forces were supported by the US Air Force, including US Air Force A-10 aircrafts, said NATO's RS spokesman Martin O'Donnell.

According to RS, the Afghan Air Force (AAF) and the commando division also played an effective role in forcing the Taliban to retreat. (Tolo news)

**(9) U.S. Air Force...**

was posted by high school students on May 11.

After questions at a Pentagon briefing about whether the tweet was appropriate, the Air Force deleted it and expressed regrets for the poor attempt at humor.

"We apologize for the earlier tweet regarding the A-10. It was made in poor taste and we are addressing it internally. It has since been removed," it said. (Reuters)

**(10) ARG under...**

and other challenges," said one MP Muhaiuddin Mahdi.

"The rolling out process of Tazkira (ID cards) should lead to further unification and brotherhood between the ethnicities in Afghanistan," said MP Abdul RaufEnaami. Officials from the Afghan Central Civil Registration Authority (ACCRA) however have said that the rollout process is proceeding based on the president's decree and that it has nothing to do with political differences.

"The government leadership has issued an order and we launched this national process, if they ask for a change in the process, we are obliged to implement the government's directives," ACCRA spokesman RohullahAhmadzai said.

According to ACCRA, until now, over 1,000 people have been issued with the e-NIC and hundreds of families have also applied for their cards. (Tolo news)

**(11) Pentagon...**

Less than 24 hours later, the U.S. Air Force posted its own Afghanistan-related tweet that raised eyebrows - this one referencing a viral audio clip that has sparked a lighthearted online debate among those who hear the word "Laurel" and others who hear "Yanny."

"The Taliban Forces in Farah city #Afghanistan would much rather have heard #Yanny or #Laurel than the deafening #BRRRT they got courtesy of our #A10," read the Air Force tweet.

The Air Force has since apologized and deleted the tweet, saying it was sent in "poor taste." The USFOR-A tweet remains.

In a statement to VOA, a Pentagon

spokesperson said the tweets do not represent a new social media strategy.

"As with any other organization, the post was an attempt to bring awareness to a major/ongoing organizational activity by tying it to references or conversations already trending with their established audiences," said Lieutenant Colonel Kone Faulkner.

Some former U.S. military officials viewed the tweets as a departure from the more measured online messaging typical of the U.S. military.

"It isn't unusual for militaries around the world to speak publicly or show footage of their combat successes ... but it's inappropriate to joke or be cute in tweets or other social media channels," said former Pentagon press secretary George Little. It's unlikely that rank-and-file Taliban fighters would ever see the English-language tweets, or even be able to comprehend them. Afghanistan's literacy rate is only 31 percent, according to U.N. figures, and 70 percent of Afghans do not have access to reliable electricity.

"If someone thinks that members of the Taliban are going to understand the Laurel and Yanny reference, they're wrong, so jokes like this are often ineffective in addition to inappropriate," added Little, now a partner at the Brunswick Group.

"But it's probably just an airman who saw this and said, 'This is pretty cool, let's get it out there,' and the editing process failed," said David Des Roches, a retired Army colonel who teaches at the National Defense University.

Pentagon social media accounts have sometimes been used to send strong, although usually more subtle, messages to U.S. adversaries. For instance, U.S. Pacific Command has tweeted pictures of the nuclear-capable B-52 bomber when it takes part in joint military exercises with South Korea.

Following Trump's lead?

U.S. President Donald Trump sometimes uses Twitter to send toughly worded messages or lob insults at his foreign counterparts, such as North Korean leader Kim Jong Un or Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Trump says his tough language and threats, along with expanded sanctions, helped persuade Pyongyang to participate in upcoming nuclear negotiations with the U.S.

The Afghanistan tweets, too, come as the U.S. tries to convince the Taliban to accept Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's offer of peace talks without preconditions.

On Thursday, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, General John Nicholson, released a Ramadan greeting in which he encouraged "all armed Taliban to accept [Ghani's offer] ... and join in peace talks, for a better future for their children and the noble people of this great nation."

The statement provided a stark contrast to the earlier tweets by USFOR-A and the U.S. Air Force. For some, the more conciliatory approach was preferable.

"At the end of the day, you're fighting insurgents, you're killing people who are relatives or friends of the people you're trying to convince to come over to your side," Des Roches said. "So you usually don't spike the ball in the end zone." (VoA)

**(12) Ghani Calls...**

Yamamoto has also urged the in-

surgents to stop fighting, adding the United Nations remains committed to stand with the people of Afghanistan.

"I sincerely hope that the observation of Ramadan will provide an opportunity for all communities in Afghanistan to come closer to each other and build bridges peacefully. In the same spirit, I would like to call parties to the conflict to respect this religious obligation and halt the fighting," Tadamachi said in a statement.

This comes as the Taliban insurgent group are threatening more provinces following the announcement of their annual spring offensive under the name of Al Khandaq. (ATN)

**(13) Helmand Peace...**

"We are moving on for peace. Anyone who is not willing to join us, he can leave this convoy," said QaisHashemi, member of the peace campaign.

Meanwhile, Kandahar residents said they are committed to join the pace convoy in their journey to Kabul.

"Join us for the purpose to save our children, to save them from being killed, as did our ancestors," said Sami, a resident of Kandahar. "My mother was against my decision to join the campaign, but I have made this decision because I have realized the importance of this move and the importance of peace," said Bashir, a resident of Kandahar.

The number of the convoy members is eight people and it is expected that more people will join them in their journey to Kabul.

The convoy will visit Zabul on Saturday and will arrive in Kabul at the end of next week.

The first sit-in protest was launched in Helmand following a deadly suicide car bombing near Ayub Khan Stadium in Lashkargah City in March, when spectators were leaving a wrestling match. At least 16 people were killed and almost 50 others were wounded in the explosion.

Later, the campaign received support from different provinces.

The main message and demand of the activists is peace and a ceasefire between government and militants. (Tolo news)

**(14) Public Works...**

Company called ICCI two years earlier, with an agreement mostly in favor of the contractor. But later reports surfaced in the media that the company failed to complete the project and fled the country with \$100 million. (Tolo news)

**(15) Top IS Leader...**

on a tip-off, the two terrorists were attempting to transfer families of IS recruits from Nangarhar to Jawzjan province.

The two terrorists confessed to their crime and are currently in NDS custody for further investigation. (ANI)

**(16) Afghan Spinner...**

a meteoric start to his international career.

The 16-year-old Afghanistan spinner, whose uncle Noor Ali Zadran is also a national cricket team player, has bamboozled just about every batsman he's faced so far, with the element of 'mystery' surrounding him adding to his aura.

"It is a great honor for me to play domestic cricket in England and I am very much looking forward to this latest challenge in my career so far," Zadran said as quoted by Times of India.

"I hope I can help Hampshire be successful during my time with the team this year," he added. (Tolo news)