

Taliban Attack Security Check Posts in Farah



FARAH CITY - Farah provincial council said Sunday that a group of Taliban insurgents attacked several security check posts in the province.

Dadullah Qani provincial council member said that on Saturday night Taliban insurgents attacked seven army check posts in Pusht Rod district. According to Qani two check posts have fallen to the Taliban and 15 ANA soldiers were killed.

Four other soldiers were also wounded in the clash, Qani added.

Farah security officials and ministry of defense have not yet commented.

This comes after Asad Mama, police chief of Meezan district of southern Zabul province was killed in a Taliban attack on Saturday night.

The attack took place after many Taliban attacked the Meezan district and started clashes with the security forces, the officials said, adding that "Asad Mama was killed in the attack."

The Taliban have also suffered heavy casualties, according to officials, adding that there is no exact information about the casualty numbers.

However, the officials did not provide further details.

In a separate attack, seven policemen were killed in Shar-e-Safa district in Zabul - also on Saturday night, the provincial governor, Rahmatullah Yarmal confirmed.

He said the Taliban also suffered casualties. No further details were provided.

Taliban claimed responsibility for the attacks. (Tolo news)

Riyadh Condemns Bomb Attack on Takhar Election Rally

KABUL - Saudi Arabia has vehemently denounced the latest bomb attack on an election campaign gathering in northern Takhar province.

At least 22 people were killed and dozens wounded on Saturday when an explosives-rigged motorbike exploded at an election rally in Rostaq district.

The oil-rich kingdom condemned subversive acts, while supporting Afghanistan against the twin scourge of terrorism and extremism.

According to the Saudi Press Agency, Riyadh extended condolences to the victims as well as the government and people of Afghanistan.

In a statement, the Saudi government wished the injured speedy and full recovery. (Pajhwok)



4-Year-Old Helmand Boy Diagnosed Polio Positive



KABUL - A new polio case has surfaced in the Nawzad district of southern Helmand province, the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) said in a statement on Sunday.

A four-year-old boy has been diagnosed positive for polio virus in Nawzad district, the statement said.

With the new case, the number of polio cases reached 11 in the southern zone and 16 country-wide this year.

Eight of the cases emerged in Kandahar, two in Helmand, one in Uruzgan,

three in Kunar and two in Nangarhar. Health officials in Helmand said the four-year boy had not been administered polio vaccine by his family and he also missed the special polio vaccination drive.

He added a team of health officials would visit the area and investigate the spread of the virus and decide about taking necessary measures. It is worth mentioning the Taliban have banned polio vaccination in Nawzad district for the past six months. (Pajhwok)

2 Suspects in Herat Bomb Blasts Arrested



HERAT CITY - Local officials in western Herat province on Sunday said two suspects had been arrested in connection with two bomb blasts.

Jilani Farhad, the governor's spokesman, told at a press conference that one the detainees hailed from Zabul province and the second from Zirkoh district of Herat province.

He said the two arrested were involved in two explosions in Darbhosh locality of Herat City a few days back. Some explosive devices were also seized from the detainees, he said. (Pajhwok)

(1) Civil Society...

been awarded to Syed Sadat Mansour Naderi, one of the stakeholders in the companies. He resigned as minister only four months ago.

Naderi stepped down as minister of urban development and housing in order to retain his mining contracts involving the Badakhshan gold and Balkhab copper mines, Afzali alleged.

The president and officials around him had violated the law by providing the contracts to the companies, the IWA head insisted.

He linked the signing of the deals with external pressures, asking the government not to impose foreign dictates on the people of the country.

If the government failed to resist these pressures or defend national resources, Afzali said, the people were not weak and had the ability to defend their country and rights.

"The government failed to play its role under the mining law and signed the contracts." While asking the government to protect the interests of the people in accordance with the constitution, Afzali also called on international community, especially the US, to revoke the contracts.

According to Afzali, the security situation is not appropriate in Badakhshan and Sar-i-Pul where the two mines are located. The country was not yet ready to handle such huge contracts, he believed. The IWA chief said the government should revise the two deals because the ministry concerned currently did have the capacity to deal with large contracts.

Gul Ahmad Madadzai, deputy head of the Afghanistan Lawyers Association, also claimed the government signed the contracts

against Article 16 of the mining law under international pressure. He warned the government against testing people's patience anymore. The contracts must be scrapped at the earliest possible, he demanded.

Opposition to privatisation of war

Afzali expressed aversion to the privatisation of the conflict in Afghanistan, arguing private firms were unable to ensure security or guarantee the defeat of the armed opposition.

Recent media reports suggest Blackwater founder Erick Prince has stepped up efforts for privatising the conflict in Afghanistan. Aziz Rafi, a civil society leader, suggested a responsible approach should be taken to the security of natural resources and assets of the country.

In the build-up to the October 20 Wolesi Jirga elections, the debate on privatisation of war and signing of major mining contracts was dangerous, he concluded. (Pajhwok)

(2) Mps Seeking...

away power from the current Wolesi Jirga members was important for transparency in elections. "There are two types of candidates, one type have access to government resources and the others do not have them."

Sharifa Zarmati, another candidate, said some civil and military officials supported some of the sitting lawmakers in their reelection.

"Some district chiefs, police chiefs and intelligence officers work in support of specific candidates, they are tasked to do so, it is a matter of concern for other candidates," she said.

Haji Ayub Totahkel, another candidate, said lawmakers should not be allowed to use govern-

ment resources in their election campaigns.

"I think it is government's fault, these lawmakers are granted police, ranger pick-ups and Humvees for campaigns, the membership of current lawmakers should be suspended until the result of the elections are announced," he said.

However, the lawmakers seeking reelection rejected these claims. Ibrahim Ghashtali, a lawmaker from Paktia province, said the current members of Wolesi Jirga did not use government resources in their campaigns.

Paktia Independent Election Commission (IEC) deputy head, Najmuddin Osmani, said no candidate had the right to use government resources in their campaigns.

"We have received only information about this issue, but we have not received any formal complaint, if anyone provides us evidence-based complaints, we would act," he said.

Paktia governor, Shamim Khan Katawazi, told Pajhwok that he had ordered government officials in the province they could not work in favor or against any candidates in duty time. He said the government provided security equally for all candidates. Eyed by 80 candidates, Paktia has five seats in the lower house of Parliament. (Pajhwok)

(3) Lack of Facilities...

the Youth Parliament, said they in general did not trust the election process.

He said many special people could not participate in polls due to bad condition of road and lack of facilities to transport them.

"Another problem is that candidates misuse our votes, for example how will I know the person that will cast my vote in the ballot

box is choosing the same candidate I support," he said.

Lack of information about elections for people with disabilities is another major problem, he added.

Meanwhile, Balkh IEC head Mohammad Zahir Akbari said they had arranged some facilities for the special people.

He said wheelchairs would be available in every polling station on the Election Day and disabled people could use them for movement to cast their votes.

Blind people would be helped by IEC-appointed persons in polling stations in casting their votes to the candidates of their choice, Akbari added.

"Yes we did not print Braille text ballot papers, which is a problem, another problem is that most of people with disabilities are uneducated so Braille text cannot help much."

He said the IEC was trying to enable every eligible Afghan to cast vote on the Election Day. (Pajhwok)

(4) Security...

amount to an act of treason and a conspiracy against the people of these areas.

"Even polling stations right in front of security check-posts have been declared sensitive on the desire of a Wolesi Jirga hopeful who does not have a strong vote bank in these areas," he maintained.

Provincial council member Kafeel Rehan acknowledged security threats in some areas and blamed security institutions for not outing in place the requisite arrangements.

"Some of our districts such as Spera and Qalandar are faced with huge security threats. The election may not be possible there, barring the districts centres," he believed. Shah Jahan Sardari, head of the In-

Govt Discusses Trade Policy with Private Sector



KABUL - The Ministry of Industry and Commerce and officials from the International Trade Center discussed the draft five-year trade policy with the private sector at a gathering in Kabul on Saturday. The meeting was held with the private sector to get their ideas on further development of the policy.

The national trade policy will be sent to the high economic council after it is finalized by the ministry.

The head of the International Trade Center office in Kabul, Sediqullah Mujaddidi, said the policy will help reduce the trade deficit in the country, increase exports and improve Afghanistan's trade with the world.

"The new policy for five years will have a high impact on Afghanistan's trade," said Sediqullah Mujaddidi, head of the office of the International Trade Center in Kabul. "We hope that the policy will not only increase exports but will also improve Afghanistan's trade rapidly."

Officials from Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) said the lack of rule of international trade laws and a lack of required supportive plans from the private sector are key challenges for the sector.

"We are faced with many challenges at the moment. Many investors want to have lots of exports to Singapore but due to the lack of a clear policy, they are not accepting their goods," said Khanjan Alokozai, the ACCI deputy head.

"The establishment of this policy will help us improve our trade relations with other countries and we will be able to solve our problems," said Kamila Seddiqi, deputy minister of industry and commerce. (Tolo News)

dependent Election Commission (IEC), for Khost, said they were fully prepared to conduct the Wolesi Jirga elections in the province.

"Preparations have been made for opening 186 polling stations and all necessary material has arrived and workers have been appointed as well," he said.

But police chief Brig. Gen. Akhtar Mohammad Noorzai did not rule out the closure of some polling station at the behest of some candidates. He said a report had been dispatched to the central government. (Pajhwok)

(5) Parwan...

the candidates should substantiate their allegations so the authorities could take action.

He said if government officials or security organizations were found siding with candidates on the Election Day, they would be fired from their jobs. (Pajhwok)

(6) Afghan...

A year back, Afghan and Pakistani forces engaged in heavy clashes over fence installation in Luqman and Jahangir areas of Spin Boldak district and both sides suffered casualties.

Luqman and Jahangir areas are located in the zero point area of the border and they belong to Spin Boldak district.

Pakistan forces last year conducted a population registration process in the two areas and claimed the areas belonged to Pakistan, but Afghan forces prevented them.

The Afghan forces' interference last year led to a fierce clash that continued for several hours, with both sides sustaining heavy casualties.

After the clash, Afghanistan port with Pakistan was closed for 23 days that caused millions of Afghanis losses to traders. (Pajhwok)