

### (1) Lessons Learnt...

unique efforts to target Muslim communities. Obama reiterated: "This is not going to be turned around overnight because it is not just a military campaign that we are involved in. There are problems that have built up over decades that are manifesting themselves in organizations like ISIL." (Pajhwok)

### (2) UN Want...

the current fighting has caused more than 100 civilian deaths and injuries, and there are concerns the number of casualties will rise. The UN has received reports up to 6,000 civilians have fled the city.

In a statement, UN's Humanitarian Coordinator for Afghanistan Mark Bowden stressed: "The protection of civilians must remain at the core of any response to the current situation in Kunduz and Taliban and Afghan security forces must take all feasible actions to prevent civilian casualties."

Parties to the conflict must not use improvised explosive devices and indirect heavy weapons in populated areas of the city, he said, adding the wounded must be allowed access to medical treatment and parties to the conflict must not restrict the work of humanitarian personnel.

The United Nations in Afghanistan reiterated its unwavering commitment to the Afghans and expresses its continued support of initiatives to strengthen the protection of civilians and the promotion of human rights. (Pajhwok)

### (3) US Reaffirms ...

Afghanistan. Monaco praised Afghan Security Forces' efforts to counter the Taliban's recent advances in Kunduz and reaffirmed continued US and Coalition support to the ally, a statement from the White House said.

Both leaders agreed on the importance of the national unity government, led by President Ashraf Ghani and supported by Abdullah, working together to deliver on its promises to the people.

The two sides also agreed it was a critical time of transition and discussed how the US and Afghanistan could ensure Afghan security forces had the capabilities and training necessary to preserve the gains made over the past 13 years. "Monaco and Dr. Abdullah affirmed the importance of continuing to work together to maintain a productive security and counterterrorism partnership in the years ahead," the White House said. (Pajhwok)

### (4) Trapped Kunduz...

and Monday and captured the entire city from government forces until late Monday.

Security forces are said to be preparing for a decisive operation and people trapped in their homes cannot come out due to fear.

Afghan security forces with the aid NATO forces claim to have recaptured some areas from the rebels and have caused them heavy casualties, but the city remains under Taliban control, a situation that has landed Kunduz City residents in deep trouble.

One resident, Mohammad Omar, told Pajhwok Afghan News the supply of electricity and water had been suspended over the past three days and residents faced an acute shortage of food.

He said the price of a flour sack had doubled from the previous rate of 200 afghanis. "The closure of bakery shops and the lack of potable water have further worsened our situation," he said.

Another resident, Faqir Mohammad, said his children were ill, but all medicine shops and hospitals in the city had been closed. He said the Taliban were in control of the zonal hospital where only injured Taliban militants were being treated.

"The people of Kunduz had suffered in the past wars and they are now passing through bitter days, but the government is yet to do something to recapture the city," he said.

There were reports the Taliban were searching for government and military officials from house to house to kill them, but these reports could not be verified. (Pajhwok)

### (5) Emotions Run ...

barrage of questions from angry MPs over why nothing had been done to secure Kunduz despite months of growing insecurity in the city.

Nabil spoke on camera for only two minutes before the session was closed to the media.

He opened by apologizing to MPs and to the nation for what has happened but praised the city's local NDS forces for having continued to work and provide accurate and detailed information about the situation on the ground. He told MPs however, that if they remember correctly he addressed them a few months back and told them of the deteriorating security situation in Kunduz city. He said that a month ago over 700 commandos were deployed to Kunduz airport where they have since been stationed.

An operation was meant to have been launched but due to classified reasons he was not able to divulge details.

MPs demanded answers and said Nabil should then hold a meeting with them in private.

This was agreed to and media feeds were disconnected.

At the same time, Interior Minister Noorulhaq Olomi arrived in parliament.

Leading up to Nabil's arrival however, MPs spent over an hour voicing their concerns and at times emotions ran extremely high over the Kunduz issue.

They accused government of not having done anything to prevent the crisis despite it being common knowledge that the city had been on the verge of collapse for a while.

One MP however, drove home the fact that it was the innocent Kunduz civilians paying the price as they were falling victim to the Taliban's brutality.

"Kunduz residents are in serious danger," he said.

Questions surrounding the reasons for the city's collapse were many with one MP saying that an investigation needs to be conducted to find out exactly who is behind the crisis.

He said that government needs to find out exactly where the Taliban is getting their weapons from - whether it is just from Pakistan or whether other sources are involved.

He said: "Differences between Kunduz local officials and security forces led to fall of the city and a deal was struck".

Another MP pointed out that despite there being a crisis within the ranks of the Taliban over leadership issues Following reports of the death of Mullah Omar, the insurgent group was still able to carry out a coordinated siege of the city.

He said it was imperative that a minister of defense now be appointed.

According to him, government needs to take note that over the past two days, the Taliban has seized large quantities of military equipment in Kunduz including armored vehicles, tanks and weapons.

He also drove home the point that the nation must not show any sympathy towards the Taliban, who he says has killed thousands of innocent people.

Another MP said the leaders of the National Unity Government need to acknowledge foreign fighters are involved in the Afghan war and they need to name their supporters. (Tolnews)

### (6) Biden, Abdullah ...

from the White House said: "They reaffirmed their commitment to the historic strategic partnership and honoured the heroic sacrifices of Afghan and Coalition partners striving for lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan." (Pajhwok)

### (7) IS Advances ...

IS regrouped in recent weeks, Mellbin said, and "laid waste to sites in (the eastern province of) Nangarhar, brutally murdered tribal leaders, battled the Taliban, held entire families hostage and imposed rigid rules for women," he said.

Mellbin said Afghan security forces had fought back but were overstretched with operations against the Taliban in other REGIONS.

He warned that the "great danger" was if IS began to attract fighters who abandoned the Taliban because of divisions within

the movement or their rejection of a peace process.

Mellbin said IS did not yet pose a "strategic threat" in Afghanistan but was already complicating the political situation "because it is influencing the position of the government and the insurgents in peace talks".

He argued that the West needed an "immediate counterstrategy" while the Afghan government must find ways "to weaken the IS brand and its political foundations" built with "fear and propaganda".

He said air strikes and ground troops would not be enough to defeat the militants and must go hand-in-hand with improved LOCAL administration and state services in areas vulnerable to IS.

IS fighters have captured territory in Syria and Iraq and gained a foothold in Libya, Yemen and elsewhere in the Middle East, with alliances as far afield as Nigeria, with Boko Haram.

Afghanistan's thinly spread security forces are increasingly having to DEAL with the threat from a self-styled Islamic State group, which is looking to make inroads in the troubled country.

In September, it launched coordinated attacks on police checkpoints in Nangarhar, killing at least three officers. (Monitoring Desk)

### (8) US Troops ...

coalition spokesman and Afghan official said.

It was the first report of on-the-ground clashes between Taliban militants and foreign troops supporting their Afghan allies during three days of sometimes heavy fighting for control of the strategic city of 300,000.

Kunduz is the first provincial capital to fall to the Taliban since the hardline Islamist movement was toppled from power in 2001.

Writing at his blog on Wednesday morning, historian Juan Cole argues the fall of Kunduz offers a key lesson for today while also speaking directly to the inherent flaws of U.S. foreign over the last fifteen years by symbolizing the "final collapse" of the failed nation-building program executed by former President George W. Bush.

"Those who want the US to go into Syria in a big way should just consider what the Kunduz events mean," writes Cole. "Fourteen years after the US went into Afghanistan, it still has not been able to stand up a successful army to which it could hope to turn the country over. How many orphans do the hawks want to adopt?"

In article that appeared in The Nation earlier this summer, Cole predicted that despite the acknowledged death of its leader Mullah Muhammed Omar, the Taliban would continue to make strategic battlefield gains if serious efforts weren't made to find a political solution for Afghanistan.

Without predicting the outcome of the current battle, Coles argues on Wednesday that the situation in Kunduz is likely to result in continued bleakness for those hoping that Afghanistan could be freed from the trappings of endless war and the presence of foreign troops on its soil.

Unfortunately, writes Cole, "The US response to the return of the Taliban will likely be to insist on keeping 10,000 men in Afghanistan, virtually forever. But that move sets up the paradox that it makes Ashraf Ghani look like an American puppet, and encourages even more young Afghan men to join the Taliban." (Reuters)

### (9) WH Renews...

he claimed. Washington remains committed to supporting the Afghans as they take responsibility for security situation. (Pajhwok)

### (10) Hakimi, Canadian...

Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan (CSTC-A), Law and Order Trust Fund-Afghanistan (LOTFA), and the European Union (EU) to review the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) requirements as outlined by the government of Afghanistan, a statement from the Ministry of Finance said.

Hakimi and Lyons agreed that the next full level meeting has to give the donor community confidence in the Afghan system, and pave the road to Warsaw, and Brussels. Lyons took over the co-chairmanship of the Oversight and Coordi-

nating Body (OCB) from the German Ambassador last June.

Established as a result of the 2012 Chicago Summit, OCB coordinates donor funding for Afghan security forces.

NATO allies and ISAF partners decided to provide support to the Afghan Nation Security Forces (ANSF), as appropriate, based on the understanding that the Afghan government will make increasing financial contributions to these efforts.

At the 2014 NATO Wales Summit, donor nations renewed their financial commitments to support the sustainment of the ANSF through the end of 2017.

The OCB was established to provide overall coordination of the funding contributed to ANSF and to ensure donors can confidently commit their support; while, strengthening transparent, accountable and cost-effective funding mechanisms.

The group meets on a recurring basis and consists of representatives from the donor nations and the Afghan government. (Pajhwok)

### (11) 1,000 E-ID ...

trial launch of e-ID cards distribution drive was put on hold by President Ashraf Ghani amid differences with the Chief Executive Office over some unsettled issues. Ministry of Communications and Information Technology spokesman Nusrat Rahimi had previously said the president wanted to settle the issues linked to the new ID cards before launching the distribution process.

Earlier, similar protests have been carried out in Kabul, Nangarhar, Kunar, Balkh, Paktika and some other provinces, in which hundreds and thousands of people have taken part.

The cards issuance was earlier scheduled to begin before last year's presidential election, but it had to be delayed for some reasons. The distribution drive is a joint venture of the ministries of interior and telecommunications. Residents of different province have joined anti-government protest demonstrations to push for adding the words "Afghan" and "Islam" to the cards. They have staged a series of protests Kabul, Nangarhar, Kunar, Balkh, Paktika, Ghazni and other provinces. (Pajhwok)

### (12) Up to 100 ...

he said, adding a search operation in the area was ongoing since yesterday.

Achin district chief Ghalib Mujahid also claimed the IS fighters had sustained heavy casualties during the ongoing operation. He said clashes in some areas were still underway.

The group has so far said nothing about the operation in Achin. (Pajhwok)

### (13) Nangarhar Police ...

TIVITIES in remote areas of Nangarhar province.

The group carried out two large-scale attacks on SECURITY posts in Achin District of this province in three days.

Both of these attacks were rebuffed by SECURITY forces by killing more than hundred of the group's fighters.

One attack was carried out on Sunday which lasted about eight hours but ultimately security forces repelled the attack and at least 90 militants were killed.

The second attack was carried out early on Wednesday morning in which 100 militants were killed and as many wounded. (KP)

### (14) Taliban Claim ...

Samadyar said the Taliban had laid siege to Qorghan area for the last 26 days and that was why the security posts were relocated.

Without going into details, the police chief said the district had been without administrative head and other officials and government services did not reach residents.

The governor's spokesman, Mohammad Yunas Rassouli confirmed the police chief's account, saying the Khak-i-Safed district chief, Abdul Khaliq Noorzai, who also serves as the district police chief, had gone to Saudi Arabia for the performance of hajj.

He said since Noorzai had gone to Saudi Arabia, no other officials performed duty in the district, but stopped short of going into further details.

Telephonic services do not work in the district, thus Pajhwok Afghan News inability to contact local residents. (Pajhwok)

### (15) Experts Urge...

are helping to eliminate Taliban members controlling Kunduz, adding that the strikes also targeted a Taliban gathering inside government facilities and those looting properties.

According to U.S Department of Defense, air strikes in Kunduz have left at least 200 Taliban dead. While ANSF pushes to break the Taliban siege on Kunduz, experts again called on NATO and U.S to equip ANSF with modern military hardware and artillery so as to enable them to tackle the war against insurgents effectively. "Air strikes remain supportive in areas where the insurgents operate, numerous terrorists were eliminated as a result of air attacks," spokesman for the Afghan Ministry of Interior, Sediq Sediqqi said on Wednesday.

However, the Taliban carried out more assaults on Wednesday targeting ANSF forces deployed around Kunduz airport in an attempt to gain more strategic locations. But the Taliban was thwarted after US-led coalition troops bombed their positions. (Tolnews)

### (16) Attacks on ...

against media outlets, journalists and other civilians. Attacks on civilian targets constitute war crimes."

Afghan Independent Journalists Association head Rahimullah Samandar told the media watchdog: "Some of the journalists were forced to flee by their own means to Kunduz airport, to which the government troops had retreated. All of the media have stopped working."

Afghan Independent Journalists Association and Afghanistan National Journalists Union, have also condemned the attacks in Kunduz and have appealed for assistance for Roshani Radio and TV. (Pajhwok)

### (17) Badghis Doctors ...

hospital would be resolved soon. Deputy Public Health Director Dr. Abdul Ghani confirmed the non-payment of salaries and said they had tried their best to resolve the issue and the Ministry of Finance needed to take measures in this regard.

About the lack of medicine at the civil hospital, he said the Public Health Department had not received any written information in this regard. He said measures would be taken to resolve all the issues soon.

Public Health Ministry spokesman Dr. Wahidullah Mayar said the salaries of Badghis hospital staff could not be paid due to some problems between the Finance Ministry and the World Bank.

But that problem had been resolved and the hospital staff would be released salaries, he said. (Pajhwok)

### (18) Thousands...

the city and chaos erupted in different parts of the city and the evening the power transmission line was hit, plunging the entire city into darkness."

Other residents said the Taliban not only torched the electricity department, but several others government and non-governmental buildings.

One resident, who declined to be named for his safety, told Pajhwok Afghan News almost all government and foreign offices had been plundered and some torched. He said the Taliban plundered all government departments, the governor's house, the police headquarters and others on the first night of their attack.

He said those torched included the electricity department, the National Directorate of Security (NDS) office and others.

Civil society activists in Kunduz City said some media offices had also been caused damages and some had been set alight.

Activist Shukrullah told Pajhwok Afghan News buildings of Roshni Radio and Television and Khawar Radio Television had been torched. He said Kehand Radio building was not torched but its equipment was looted.

Due to the ongoing battle, import and export activities at the Sher Khan Port have been brought to a halt, but private and public in-

stallations at the port remain unaffected.

An official at the port, Mohammad Aslam, told Pajhwok Afghan News all activities at the port had come to a standstill since the first day of the Taliban attack on Kunduz City. He said all types of vehicles had stopped plying the road between Kunduz City and the dry port. However, he said there were no clashes at the port site.

Residents said they were fed up with the ongoing situation and clashes and urged the government to find an early solution. (Pajhwok)

### (19) Afghan Army ...

fensive will start tomorrow morning," Shayestehbaz Nasserli told FNA. "The mop-up operations will begin soon," he added.

Noting that the Afghan forces also had an attack on the Taliban positions on Tuesday, Nasserli said that they could regain control of key regions, including the new command building and the city prison. Afghan forces started an operation to retake the city of Kunduz, after suffering a military reverse when it was seized by the Taliban on Monday.

The president said security forces were "retaking government buildings" and inflicting "heavy casualties". The Taliban had forced Afghan troops and officials to retreat to the airport and freed hundreds from jail, in one of their biggest assaults since 2001. (FNA)

### (20) Afghan ...

respect the 'pact for the protection of media and journalists' that they undertook to implement," said Reza Moini, head of the Reporters Without Borders Afghanistan desk.

"The law on access to information, which President Ghani signed shortly after taking office in 2014, must be implemented," he demanded. This year, Afghanistan ranked 122th out of 180 countries in the Reporters Without Borders press freedom index. (RFE/RL)

### (21) Taliban's ...

military tanks, four Ranger pickups and 15 other vehicles along with a large quantity of weapons and ammunition.

Kunduz residents say the city has become a battlefield and residents cannot come out of homes due to ongoing clashes. The Ministry of Public Health said a day earlier 16 bodies and 170 wounded people were shifted to the Kunduz Zonal Hospital. (Pajhwok)

### (22) 5 Passengers ...

to another report, one man was killed and another injured in a bomb blast in central Uruzgan province. Provincial police chief Col. Rahimullah said the explosion took place on Tuesday afternoon near a crowd of people in Chora district. The police chief did not provide more details about the incident. (Pajhwok)

### (23) Russia...

positions in Syria. A U.S. led coalition has been targeting IS militants in Syria and Iraq since last year. Russia and the U.S. are at odds over the Russian involvement because Washington has said Syrian President Bashar Assad, who is a key ally of Moscow, must be removed from power. (AP)

### (24) Kurdish ...

ties are still underway as the Peshmerga forces are fighting to free more areas from the IS militants, he said.

"The offensive is progressing successfully, while our explosive experts are working to defuse dozens of bombs in the villages liberated by the Peshmerga so far since the morning," the source added. (Xinhua)

### (25) UN has Key ...

international recognition of a Palestinian state.

"It has no ability to directly affect the circumstances on the ground, but its ability in building consensus and shaping positions of the international community is tremendous," said Liel. Since Israel and Egypt signed the 1979 peace treaty in Washington, the peace talks in the region have been under the monopoly of the United States, Israel's closest ally. The Middle East Quartet, the Arab League, and other key players have been sidelined. (Xinhua)