

(1) Afghan Taliban ...

Doha-based Taliban official said Pakistan was taken into confidence about the Qatar meetings, but they now believe Pakistan recently arrested some senior Taliban commanders to senior commanders to show their displeasure at being left out.

Another Taliban member said a few days ago Pakistani security agencies had raided a madrassa in Quetta and arrested another Taliban commander, Mullah Abdul Samad Sani.

"We don't know what's going on but this is second time during the past two months that Pakistani authorities raided a madrassa in Quetta to arrest senior Taliban member," the Quetta-based Taliban said.

Pakistan hosted the first and only round of official peace negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban insurgents to end a war that kills and maims thousands annually. A planned second round of talks was called off after news broke that founder Mullah Omar had been dead for more than two years, sending the insurgent leadership into turmoil. (Reuters)

(2) Delegation Only ...

Taliban and the Americans reportedly held many rounds of talks in Doha, making some headway. According to the influential newspaper, the Taliban are optimistic of a breakthrough, Mullah Haibatullah Akhundzada also wants to expedite dialogue with Kabul and Washington.

Meanwhile, Associated Press also said the trio travelled to Pakistan this week for a series of meetings with officials in Islamabad on recent contacts in Qatar with representatives of the Ghani administration. Ambassador Omar Zakhilwal confirmed the meetings. However, he declined giving details. But Taliban's spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the three-member delegation discussed with Pakistani officials issues being faced by Afghan refugees in the neighbouring country. The aim of the visit was to discuss arrest and harassment of Afghan refugees in Pakistan, he said.

He said the Doha-based delegation was also expected to discuss with Pakistani officials the reportedly closure of a number of schools and seminaries of Afghan refugees in Pakistan.

"The visit of the delegation was part of routine political visits to foreign countries. Similar visits had taken place in the past to various countries including Pakistan at different times," Mujahid explained.

He said the delegation visiting Pakistan had no other topic on the agenda as reported by some media outlets. He said no political issues or talks had been discussed by the delegation. (Pajhwok)

(3) 10pc of ...

and NATO was going to continue to work with them to help them improve. ANDSF performance this year, he claimed, had been better than last year. "There's been gradual progress, and we see it at the tactical level but we also see it at the institutional level. But again, that does not mean that things are perfect by any stretch and it doesn't mean that the war is over," Cleveland added.

"It does mean is that we do recognize that this is a tough fight and we do still have a lot of challenges in front of us that we'll continue to work at," he added.

Cleveland said right now, the Taliban controlled or influenced about 10 percent of the Afghan population. "We believe that the government controls about two-thirds of the population. Then the balance between the two is really the contested area," he added. (Pajhwok)

(4) ICOIC to ...

seminar, which ended in central Bamyan province on Friday, was part of the plan, Bawari said.

Deputy Governor of Bamyan Mohammad Asif Mubaligh called the Afghan constitution unique in the region, saying the basic law clearly outlined the responsibilities and powers of government organs and their duty toward citizens.

"It is the responsibility of all Afghans to accept and implement the constitution in letter and spirit," he remarked. The seminar discussed ways of overseeing implementation and violations of the constitution.

At the end, one square in Bamyan City squares was named as Afghanistan constitution. A statue will be also built at the site.

Governor Mohammad Tahir Zuhair described the current constitution the cornerstone of the new government and said: "Our constitution includes humanitarian and modern values and lays down the basis for all our activities." (Pajhwok)

(5) German Envoy ...

fighting corruption also setting now a clear agenda, clear commitment now on the election and so many things that I think are going to shape the development of Afghanistan in a very positive way we hope over the next years," she said.

The German official also reiterated concerns about the influx of refugees into Germany following the arrival of more than 200,000 Afghans in Germany since 2015.

"At the same time, many Afghans have come to Germany, we had 150,000 last year and about 50,000 again this year and many of those Afghans who come will not qualify to have asylum status, so we will look at every individual case, but in the end a great part of those who came will have to return home, in order to do that in a way that is orderly and acceptable and making it also easier for the individuals we have an agreement and a memorandum of understanding on migration," Sparwasser added.

She also called on the government to step up efforts its anti-corruption campaign.

"We need to take solid action against corruption to eliminate it, we must refer the corrupt people to the law," said senator Mohammad Asif Sediqi.

Germany has also pledged to continue its military engagement in Afghanistan in its military base in Balkh province including a continued financial aid to the war-torn nation.

Germany has committed to provide \$2 billion USD to Afghanistan in the next four years. (Tolonews)

(6) Taliban ...

the security forces repelled the group, but the battles left scores of civilians dead and hundreds others wounded while hundreds of families fled.

"The operations must be planned in a very systematic way. There is a need for nighttime operations, offensive operations and siege operations to bring the entire area in Kunduz under control, if we thoroughly assess the geography of Kunduz, we can easily take control of the entire Kunduz," said Mohammad Ayoub Salangi, ex-deputy minister of interior.

"The area which you see belongs to the department of agriculture, on the backside, the opponents can move around easily, all residential homes in the area are under threat," said a member of Kunduz provincial council Amruddin Wali.

Kunduz has nine districts with three of them out of government's control. Taliban control the majority of these three districts.

Besides Kunduz city, the security situation in Kunduz-Baghlan and Kunduz-Khanabad and Takhar highway is also critical.

"The question is that the clearance operations were terminated. Why is time being given to the Taliban to make new arrangements and mobilize?" asked lawmaker Fatima Aziz.

"The decision and direction from the center is that there should not be any opponent in Kunduz and all areas need to be cleared," said Mohammad Masoom Safai, head of Kunduz security department.

Residents and military analysts argue that the Taliban could attack Kunduz in the spring again unless the government takes steps to address the security problems. (Tolonews)

(7) Raghistan ...

said.

People have voiced their concerns in this regard while Badakhshan police department said one month ago that they had cleared the insurgents from the area in a 40 day operation.

Some unofficial statistics show that Taliban earn around five million Afs monthly through extracting gold from the mine. (Tolonews)

(8) Tayyab Agha ...

to give up the title of Amir al-Muminin, or Leader Of The Faithful, and to drop the Taliban's formal name, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan.

"It will be better to employ the term 'movement' instead of 'emirate,'" he wrote, arguing that without either control over most of the country including the Afghan capital, Kabul, or recognition as a legitimate government it is impossible for the Taliban to pose as Afghanistan's legitimate government. "A reliance on media propaganda and forming [shadow] government institutions, control of rural territories, and most of the movement's leadership being in a foreign country [Pakistan] doesn't amount to a [legitimate] government in our country," he wrote.

"Instead of Amir al-Muminin, you should call yourself The Amir or leader."

Questioning the Taliban's current strategy, which mainly relies on over-running rural territories and complex urban attacks that often result in a high number of civilian casualties, Tayyab Agha urged Akhundzada "You should give up using violence and intimidation to force people to pledge their allegiance to you as the commander of the faithful until you can meet all the requirements [outlined in Islamic Shari'a law]."

"All the mujahedin fighters should be ordered to cease killing our opponents inside mosques and stop killing prisoners," he wrote. "Stop killing people under suspicion traveling on roads. Stop bombing bridges, roads, and other similar places. Stop killing

aid and construction workers who are helping our nation and building our homeland." This comes as the Afghan officials have long been criticizing Pakistan for allowing the Taliban group leaders to use its soil for executing attacks in Afghanistan which causes most of the casualties to the ordinary Afghan civilians.

However, Pakistan has repeatedly rejected the allegations although Pakistan's foreign affairs adviser Sartaj Aziz admitted earlier this year that the country has influence on the group and could use certain levers to force the group to join peace talks. (KP)

(9) Insecurity behind ...

displaced people begged due to absence of job opportunities.

Some of the beggars who are infected by diseases force passersby into paying some for them some money.

Qadir Farhmand, a resident of Herat city, the provincial capital, said: "Most of the beggars annoy other people by forcing them into paying money." People are obliged to pay some money to the beggars, he added.

He said most of the beggars were infected with infectious diseases and they transferred to the diseases to others upon touching or going close to them.

Nazir Ahmad, another resident of Herat, told Pajhwok Afghan News that increasing number of beggars could also be used by militants to carry out suicide attacks and drug traffickers for transferring narcotics.

He asked the government to generate job opportunities for the beggars, particularly for homeless poor women.

Meanwhile, a number of beggars in Herat said they were obliged to beg. Zahra, 38, is one of the women begging every day on Herat city roads. "Help me in the name of God," the words Zahra uses to say on seeing people every day to give her some money, but rarely some people respond.

"My son has been killed, I have to feed his five children and four children of my daughter, I have no option but to beg," she said.

While tears coming down on her face, she said her grandchildren had been without food for the past several days. She begs until late in the night so if some kind people pay her money, but some people even harass her instead of helping.

Zahra is not the only begging woman, but a large number of women in Herat suffer from poverty and have to beg for feeding their children.

On the other hand, security officials expressed concern over the increasing number of child beggars in Herat.

Herat police spokesman, Abdur Raouf Ahmadi, told Pajhwok Afghan News that besides begging, a number of children were involved in stealing too. "These children are used for stealing and other crimes, last year we arrested eight children

He said some female beggars were also involved in crimes and their number was also high, but no incident committed by woman beggars had so far been registered with police.

Meanwhile, Basira Mohammadi, provincial acting labour and social affairs director, confirmed a large number of beggars existed in Herat. She said a plan for collecting child beggars from Herat had been shared with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and UNICEF in 2011, but the plan was yet to be finalized.

"We have no policy for collecting women beggars some of whom are suffering psychological problems and others are involved in different crimes," she said.

Experts believe the growing number of beggars has unwanted consequences for society. A social affairs expert, Enayatullah Enayat, said major causes of increasing number of beggars were poverty and joblessness.

"The government is responsible to first ensure security, generate job opportunities and then collect beggars from cities," he said. (Pajhwok)

(10) Nimroz Residents ...

corruption in government organizations and said some public representatives and powerbrokers used to appoint their relatives on high-income positions illegally and without considering eligibility.

Nimroz shares border with Iran and Pakistan and that is why the province has better revenue compared to other provinces, but unfortunately the government has ignored the province, some of the protestors told Pajhwok Afghan News.

Maulvi Bashir Ahmad Khatibi, Imam of the Khatim-un-Nabien Masjid in Zaranj, said President Ashraf Ghani had made many promises regarding development projects and preventing corruption in the province but unfortunately none of them had been kept.

"When we want our voice to reach the government and stage a rally, officials prevent us from doing so as they tell us the security situation isn't stable; but no one is paying attention to innocent people dying, they are just busy pocketing money."

He mentioned half completed projects kile Kamal Khan Dam, Zaranj city ring road and construction of road from Zaranj to Kang district. He warned of erecting protest tents in front of the governor's house if their demands weren't met in a week.

Baz Mohammad Nasar, the provincial council head, said "if the government didn't respond with positive answers to the righteous demands of people, then I would also shut the provincial council office."

However, Eng. Abdul Aziz Mohammadi, the provincial public works director, recalled the gravelling of 21km road in Charbarjak district, advertisement of 12km road construction in Kang district and asphaltting of 5km road in Zaranj as the current year's activities.

About a 10km long and 60m wide ring road of Zaranj city, a \$19million project, he said. "We have contacted officials of the ministry concerned in this regard and they had promised the project's contract will be finalised next week."

The contract for a 10km road in Kang district had been also finalised at a total cost of 180million afghanis provided by the World Bank, he added.

Meanwhile, an official said on the condition of anonymity that many government organs heads, including transport affairs, public works, information and culture, customs duty and other directors had been transferred or relocated in order to prevent corruption in the province. (Pajhwok)

(11) Urban Population...

displaced persons have either returned or are dislocated from their homes.

"As minister for urban development and housing, I am witness to the potential of urban areas in driving social mobility, providing livelihood opportunities, and offering stability to vulnerable groups, refugees, returnees and IDPs," he said.

He listed achieving dynamic, safe and livable urban centers - hubs of economic growth and social inclusion as his mission. The minister called it an enormous undertaking under the existing circumstances in Afghanistan. "I am proud to say the largest housing scheme in the history of our country is underway. Of a total 16,500 affordable housing development project, more than one-third has already been constructed," he explained.

Nearly 80 percent of the Afghan population is below the age of 35 years, as youth add to the vibrancy of cities and create an atmosphere of optimism. This also necessitates creation of almost 400,000 new jobs every year, according to the minister.

He continued the urban sector's policy and priorities were grounded in three core principles: Inclusive growth, participatory approaches and transparency and accountability. A National Urban Council, headed by the president, has also been established.

Naderi described Afghanistan's Urban National Priority Programme as a high-level policy blueprint with three focus areas - strengthening urban governance and institutions, adequate housing and basic services for all and harnessing urban economy and infrastructure.

As part of flagship projects, the president has launched the "City for All" programme, with a commitment to providing secure tenure for more than a million families in next three years. This programme is the first of its kind developed by any nation in the 21st century.

"We are also pioneering the "Jobs for Peace" programme to promote stabilisation, peace-building and local service delivery in our metropolitan areas, transit hubs and border towns by creating jobs for the vulnerable households," he said.

Naderi reiterated his commitment to concrete action-oriented approach to deliver results promised in the Urban National Priority Programme, and flagship projects such as City for All, Jobs for Peace, Clean and Green Cities, and Citizen's Charter. (Pajhwok)

(12) Security Forces...

told Xinhua.

Several more militants have sustained injuries, the official said.

Taliban militants, who controlled some districts of the poppy growing Helmand province, have tightened the noose around provincial capital Lashkargah and attempting to overrun the key southern city.

Government forces have been fighting tooth and nail to dislodge militants from around Lashkargah and expand its control across the restive province. (Xinhua)

(13) Afghan Agricultural ...

Agricultural Exhibition here to find new buyers and markets for his products, the farmer lamented that he had harvested more fruit but had earned less money than last year due to lack of buyers.

Afghan farmers at the agricultural fair, including women, have been displaying their products including handicrafts at more than 230 stalls to attract customers.

When asked why he has been unable to shift the requisite amount of produce to meet his quota, Amanullah explained to Xinhua that a poor communication system, pitiable connectivity between villages and cities and, above all, increasing tariffs and custom duty imposed by the Pakistani government on Afghan truckers, have negatively impacted the volume of fruit and vegetable exports to Pakistan.

"The main market for our fruits in the past was Pakistan but this year the Pakistani government has restricted measures for Afghan truckers to cross the border in the wake of brief exchanges of fire in June at Torkham, the border crossing point linking two countries," Amanullah said dejectedly.

Amanullah is just one of Afghanistan's population of 30 million people, 80 percent of whom rely on the agriculture and livestock industries to make a living.

To boost the sector in the foreign-aid dependent country, the government has, however, been encouraging Afghan and foreign companies to invest in both agricultural and livestock industries.

"The Ministry for Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock constructed new fruit plantations on 24,800 acres of land in spring and will continue to build more plantations on a further 8,000 acres of land in autumn," Afghan Minister for Agriculture Assadullah Zamir said in his opening remarks at the Agriculture Exhibition Along with highlighting the importance of modernizing the agriculture system in the country, officials including Zamir, also noted that the government is encouraging national and international companies to invest in the agriculture sector here, including fish farms. (Xinhua)

(14) IDPs, Waziristan...

displaced due to deteriorated security situation in the province.

Security issues have forced dozens of families into fleeing Omna district, taking refuge in Urgun, Khairkot and Sarobi districts of the province, Bakht Spinwal, a resident of Omna district, told Pajhwok Afghan News on Monday.

He said the families faced many economic and other issues and should be provided with food items and other assistance before the arrival of winter. Meanwhile, another resident of the district, Aminullah said: "People have nothing to eat or wear and if they are not aided, many will die."

On the other hand, a number of families belonging to Pakistan's north Waziristan also held similar views.

One of the refugee, Sultan Mir, said: "Firstly the weather has turned very cold and secondly we don't have homes to live in. We are currently living in tents and if the situation continues, we will be in great trouble." He asked government officials to consider their issues and provide them with aid in-time.

However, Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA) department's officials in the province said they had assisted hundreds of families so far. (Pajhwok)

(15) District Police...

killed and three others injured in a roadside bombing.

Jawzjan governor's spokesman said that the dead included a woman and two children. A man and two children were injured in the incident. (Pajhwok)

(16) In Europe,...

soon. In exchange, Kabul's government is to receive \$15bn from the EU over the next four years.

Although the agreement does not mention exact numbers, tens of thousands of Afghan refugees could be deported in the near future.

Following a deal between the EU and Turkey, the movement of refugees to Europe has slowed considerably.

According to government statistics, Austria received nearly 25,000 asylum applications from Afghans in 2015. As of September this year, less than half that number - 10,000 - have applied for asylum.

In March, a leaked document revealed that the EU is planning to deport at least 80,000 Afghans whose asylum requests have been rejected.

In the same month, the country's Interior Ministry of Migration launched a campaign in Afghanistan, urging Afghans to be better informed before deciding to go there and warning that "human smugglers lie" and that "without an income, you can't relocate your family".

Fearing the 'next bomb' With his asylum application being rejected three times, Mirwais might be among the new wave of deportees - his lawyer has told him that his future in Austria is precarious and that he might be forced to leave.

"The authorities told me that Kabul, my home town, is safe enough for living," Mirwais told Al Jazeera.

"Living in Afghanistan is dangerous. I don't want to be killed by the next bomb. Many friends and family members of mine have already been killed, just because they were at the wrong place at the wrong time," he said.

Ahmad, 23 is in a similar situation. (Al-

jazeera)

(17) Bamyan Traffic ...

attend a wedding party when faced with the incident.

The injured were evacuated to local hospitals for treatment. The health condition of some of the injured was said to be critical. (Pajhwok)

(18) 8 Militants ...

no casualties on civilians and security personnel, the official said.

Taliban militants who are active around Kunduz city haven't commented. (Xinhua)

(19) Soldier Arrested...

bullet shot.

The brutal incident has also sparked rage and furor among the local residents with a local resident warning to close the schools permanently if the perpetrator is not tried openly for his brutal act.

The district administrative chief Captain Ikhlas also confirmed the incident to VOA and said a warrant has been issued for the arrest of the soldier.

However, the deputy district administrative chief Abdu Wali Sahi said an investigation is underway to confirm the main motive behind the brutal act. Sahi admitted that the act is against the human rights principles and the local residents have been promised to award the harshest penalty if the charges against him are proved as true. (KP)

(20) Fierce Fighting ...

tempt to extend the ceasefire in order "to create a conducive environment for a long-lasting peace" in Yemen, he said in a statement.

He met late Friday with Yemen's Vice President Ali Mohsen al-Ahmar in Riyadh, Yemeni state media reported.

Ahmar said government forces were "exercising restraint" and stressed that there were orders to "abide by the truce and respect UN efforts. (AFP)

(21) US Defense...

major offensive to drive out the IS militants from its last major stronghold in and around Mosul in northern Iraq.

On Oct. 17, Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, who is also the commander-in-chief of the Iraqi forces, announced the start of a major offensive to retake Mosul, the country's second largest city. (Xinhua)

(22) Egyptian Court...

during the 2011 uprising against longtime president Hosni Mubarak and a life sentence for spying on behalf of the Palestinian group Hamas.

The Islamist Mursi became Egypt's first freely elected president in June 2012. An army takeover stripped Mursi of power in 2013 following mass protests against his rule. Hundreds of Islamists have since been killed and thousands arrested. (Reuters)

(23) Solid Majority ...

marijuana use, according to Gallup. Support for legalizing marijuana use has increased among most subgroups

in the past decade, climbing 33 percentage points to 77 percent among adults aged 18 to 34, and increasing 16 points to 45 percent among adults aged 55 and older, Gallup said. If recreational marijuana use becomes legal in California this year, many other states will likely follow because the "Golden State" often sets political trends for the rest of the country, Gallup said. (Xinhua)

(24) Death Toll in ...

than usual, for the road from Yaounde-Douala was disconnected early Friday morning because a bridge collapsed over it in Manyai, a village about 68 kms to Yaounde, after heavy rain. Many passengers who planned to take bus had to choose train, which forced the railway authorities add more cars to the train. (Xinhua)

(25) Iraqi Forces...

known as Nineveh Plain, which lies to the east and northeast of Mosul, the capital of Iraq's northern province of Nineveh. Various religious and ethnic minority groups, mostly Assyrian Christians, inhabit the villages and towns of the vast plain. (Xinhua)

(26) Libyan Pro-...

The IS had taken Sirte, the hometown of former leader Muammar Gaddafi who was toppled in the 2011 uprising, for over a year before the pro-government fighters took control of most of the city, assisted by U.S. air strikes. (Xinhua)

(27) 20 Turkish ...

influence near its borders.

At some point, a confrontation between the Turkey-backed rebels and the Kurdish-led ones seemed inevitable, due to Ankara's main aim to thwart the momentum of the Kurds. (Xinhua)

(28) UNHCR Says ...

with the UNHCR to repatriate the over 300,000 Somalis living at Dadaab, the world's largest refugee camp. It said earlier this year it would close Dadaab, citing security concerns. (Xinhua)