

(1) 17th US Commander...

He appealed to the Taliban's sense of nationalism.

"To the Taliban I say, you don't need to keep killing your fellow Afghans. You don't need to keep killing your fellow Muslims. . . . Whose voice is more important? The outsiders who are encouraging you to fight? Or the voice of your own people who are encouraging you to peace."

U.S. officials as well as Afghans have long accused Pakistan of providing safe havens to the leadership of the Afghan Taliban — a charge Islamabad denies.

During June's cease-fire, Taliban fighters headed to the cities and hung out with Afghan civilians. Some of them even went to the extent of offering Eid prayers and taking selfies with their battlefield enemies in the Afghan security forces. Many of them admitted to journalists that they were tired of fighting but also reaffirmed their loyalty to their Amir in the Afghan Taliban, whom they consider their holy leader.

The brief respite from violence did not last long. The Taliban attacks after the cease fire were just as bloody as before. One of them, the attack on Ghazni, a provincial capital close to Kabul, was so organized and bloody that it rattled Afghan forces and led to the forced resignation of the National Security Adviser Hanif Atmar.

It took Afghan forces backed by U.S. airpower several days to clear the city of Taliban fighters.

Still, the emphasis in Washington and in Kabul continues to be to push the Taliban to negotiate. General Miller acknowledged it in his speech.

"We know the military component is only one part of this conditions-based strategy. It's necessary in order to create space for political progress," he said.

However, if these efforts fail to bear fruit soon, some in Washington fear President Donald Trump, who said while announcing his South Asia policy last year that he was going against his instinct to pull out, would lose patience.

According to The Washington Post, President Trump told Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky that he wanted to pull out of Afghanistan. One of the reasons for his impatience is the high price tag. The U.S. Congress has year marked more than \$46 billion for next year's military operations. In the last 17 years, the U.S. has spent more than \$1 trillion in the country, according to Congressional Research Service.

General Miller, like commanders before him, is in favor of a continued U.S. military presence in Afghanistan, at least till the country stabilized.

"There are groups in Afghanistan that want nothing more than to harm others. These groups thrive in ungoverned spaces. . . . We must maintain pressure on them. We must ensure that terrorists can never use Afghanistan as a safe haven to threaten the world," he said, reiterating his predecessors.

Afghanistan is not a new territory for Miller, who served here as the head of Special Operations a few years back. He was also among the American soldiers to be deployed to the country when the war started in 2001.

In his last job he served as the head of Joint Special Operations Command, which oversees some of the U.S. military's elite units like SEAL Team 6 — the unit involved in the highly risky operation that killed Osama Bin Laden deep inside Pakistan.

The strength of U.S. and NATO forces he now leads is around 23,000, down from a one-time high of close to 150,000 troops but slightly more than the almost 9,000 forces operating in the country by the time President Barack Obama left office. About half, or around 14,000, of these are American troops. (VoA)

(2) Afghan, French...

research would help attract more visitors from abroad.

Meanwhile, Bamyán acting information and culture director Ahmad Hussian Ahmad termed the research on the ancient city 'as an importance step' and hoped the researchers would be able to reveal the city belonged to which civilization.

An engineer in the Archeology Department, who wished to go unnamed, told Pajhwok that a French bone biologist was part of the research team. (Pajhwok)

(3) Islamic State...

the third IS-Khorasan emir killed by U.S. or Afghan forces since April 2017, when the estimated number of fighters dropped to about 600.

For now, senior U.S. counterterrorism officials believe the bulk of the remaining IS fighters, mostly local Afghans, as well as fighters from Pakistan and Uzbekistan, are in Afghanistan's southern Nangarhar province, with a small number also operating in the country's eastern Kunar province.

Some Afghan officials worry more may be lurking, warning that the terror group has been bolstered by an influx of foreign fighters — first a surge of about 3,000 from Pakistan and Uzbekistan, and later from hundreds of jihadists fleeing Iraq and Syria.

U.S. defense officials, including some familiar with border security measures that have been put in place by the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan and by Afghanistan's neighbors, are skeptical.

In either case, Nicholson said, there will be no letup in the effort against IS-Khorasan.

"United States counterterrorism forces and Afghan Special Security Forces will keep up the pressure until they are defeated," he said. "This reinforces the importance of the United States and NATO mission in Afghanistan, to prevent the resurgence of international terrorist groups from the region." (VoA)

(4) 60 Voter Registers...

officials, influential figures and MPs were used on the fake identity cards. A photo of Jabbar Qahraman, an MP and analyst, was used for five ID cards with stickers on them. Members of the coalition said some employees of the Independent Election Commission have helped them collect the fake identity cards.

But IEC chief Abdul Badi Sayyad said in response to the move that by displaying all the fake IDs, the coalition is trying to sabotage Afghanistan's upcoming elections.

"We call on the Grand National Coalition of Afghanistan and any political party to share their reports, such violations, with the election commission," said IEC chief Abdul Badi Sayyad

The IEC further stated that it is the job of Afghanistan's Central Civil Registration Authority (ACCRA) to identify fake ID cards and not the job of the IEC.

"Afghanistan's Central Civil Registration Authority has the responsibility to determine the authenticity of the IDs," said IEC commissioner Sayed Hafiz Hashemi.

But ACCRA officials have said that they were fully aware of the fake ID cards and have sent a letter to the Ministry of Interior (MoI) to probe the case and arrest the individuals who are involved in the forgery.

"ACCRA has asked the Ministry of Interior and other intelligence agencies to investigate the fake Tazkeras collected by politicians," said ACCRA spokesman Rohollah Ahmadzai.

He said that ACCRA has also called on the Grand National Coalition to provide information on the Tazkeras to the people and to the Central Civil Registration Authority of Afghanistan.

"No Afghan citizen can vote with a fake Tazkera or use multiple Tazkeras. Any Tazkera which is not registered with ACCRA is invalid. To ensure transparency, all distributed Tazkeras since 1353 (1975) will

be entered in to the database. Of the 5 million newly distributed Tazkeras, 3 million have been entered in the database and the remaining 2 million will be entered soon. This process will be completed soon," added Ahmadzai.

The IEC has said that the preliminary list of voters will be finalized by the end of the Persian month of Sunbola (in less than 20 days) once the process of entering details into the database is completed.

According to the election commission, more than nine million people have registered to vote in the upcoming parliamentary elections in the country. (Tolo news)

(5) Reactions Over...

"Based on my experience in the education sector of the country and with respect to all religious scholars, I must say that the religious scholars don't have teaching skills in schools," said another school teacher Shah Chaman Jawadi.

"This plan of Education Ministry is a failed plan and it should be reconsidered, otherwise, it will harm the education sector," he added.

Some teachers, meanwhile, said that the Education Ministry has so far failed to hire those in schools as teachers who have higher education, adding that lack of professional teachers in schools is a serious challenge in the country that needs to be addressed. (ATN)

(6) Mohib Welcomes...

operations," the NSA added Addressing Miller, he said: "You take the command of RS when there is a generational change happening in Afghanistan, a generation of young leaders born and raised in war, who see it as an ill that has destroyed our society and economy. "This generation is not here to build empire or militias but to build institutions to serve the people," the advisor remarked.

"My colleague deputy minister of finance Naheed Sarabi said it best that security and stability are not just the absence of bullets, but instead the realisation of a set of rights values and principles.

"We stand with shoulder to shoulder to fight the enemies of freedom and justice. Together we will eliminate the menace of terrorism from Afghanistan and region." (Pajhwok)

(7) Govt and International...

order to address problems in Afghanistan.

"The donors need to implement their commitments, and these commitments are crucial to building a climate of trust between government and the international community," said Hasibullah Mohid economic lecturer at Kabul university.

It is expected that in the next two months, the progress of the mutual commitments of the Brussels Summit in Geneva with the participation of representatives of the Afghan government and the international community is to be reviewed.

A number of economic analysts say that government should fully participate in this in order to make sure further aid will be granted to Afghanistan in the coming years. (Tolo news)

(8) Police 'Ignore'...

ignored the issue despite it being a violation (of the law) and crimes that might have been committed (by Nuristani). The authorized persons ignored the issue because they belong to a specific tribe or group (with Nuristani) and wanted to have such people (Nuristani) by their side in future," MP Erfanullah Erfan said.

According to the documents, the ACJC summoned Nuristani to appear before them in order to answer to allegations of him having taken over one million AFs from Herat's Milli Bus Enterprise.

The Ministry of Interior would not comment when asked why police had not yet arrested Nuristani in accordance with the arrest order issued by the ACJC.

Nuristani however said he had paid the one million AFs on Herat province's debt and for expenses

relating to the province.

"I may have signed the letter as a governor, I even do not remember that I have signed the letter, or my deputy did, but there was a financial and administrative directorate. I have not taken the money personally and am not aware of it. Also I did not send anyone there (to take the money) nor did I bring it (the money) to my house. The money was for the province's expenses and was spent on the province," said Nuristani.

Nuristani was recently appointed as a senator to the Meshrano Jirga (Upper House of Parliament) by President Ashraf Ghani.

"Based on article 102 of the constitution, Nuristani should appear at ACJC to answer questions. The only immunity that the MPs and senators are entitled to in legal and judicial investigations is that they will not be detained. But based on article 129 of the constitution of Afghanistan, if the court issues a decree over Nuristani's crime, he has to implement the court's decree himself," Abdul Wahid Farzaee, a member of Afghanistan's Lawyers Union said.

Nuristani meanwhile urged the legal and judicial centers to investigate Herat provincial administration in order to uncover the truth. (Tolo news)

(9) Nangarhar Patients...

Separately, Pakistan Ambassador to Kabul Zahid Nasrullah also called on Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani and discussed various issues of mutual interest including the peace process.

Rabbani stressed over the immediate probe into the closure of visa service in Jalalabad Consulate and urged for the immediate opening of the facility.

Both sides discussed improvement in political, security and economic ties.

Nasrullah reiterated Pakistan's support for Afghan led and owned peace process. (Pajhwok)

(10) Pentagon Cancels...

on Tuesday that combating militants would be a "primary part of the discussion."

Experts on the Afghan conflict, America's longest war, argue that militant safe havens in Pakistan have allowed Taliban-linked insurgents in Afghanistan a place to plot deadly strikes and regroup after ground offensives.

INCREASING PRESSURE

The Pentagon's decision showed that the United States, which has sought to change Pakistani behavior, is still increasing pressure on Pakistan's security apparatus.

It also underscored that Islamabad has yet to deliver the kind of change sought by Washington.

"It is a calibrated, incremental ratcheting up of pressure on Pakistan," said Sameer Lalwani, co-director of the South Asia program at the Stimson Center think tank in Washington.

Reuters reported in August that the Trump administration has quietly started cutting scores of Pakistani officers from coveted training and educational programs that have been a hallmark of bilateral military relations for more than a decade.

The Pentagon made similar determinations on CSF in the past but this year's move could get more attention from Islamabad, and its new prime minister, Imran Khan, at a time when its economy is struggling.

Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves have plummeted over the past year and it will soon decide on whether to seek a bailout from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or friendly nations such as China.

"They are squeezing them when they know that they're vulnerable and it is probably a signal about what to expect should Pakistan come to the IMF for a loan," Lalwani said. The United States has

the largest share of votes at the IMF.

Khan, who once suggested he might order the shooting down of US drones if they entered Pakistani airspace, has opposed the United States' open-ended presence in Afghanistan. In his victory speech, he said he wanted "mutually beneficial" relations with Washington.

A Pakistani official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said he was unaware of a formal notification of the U.S. decision on assistance but said one was expected by the end of September.

Pakistan has received more than \$33 billion in US assistance since 2002, including more than \$14 billion in CSF, a US Defense Department program to reimburse allies that have incurred costs in supporting counter-insurgency operations. (Tolo news) Officials at the Ministry of Finance said that so far 55 percent of Brussels' commitments have been fulfilled.

Thumbnail

Based on the Afghanistan Ministry of Finance's 2017 and 2018 report both the Afghanistan government and the international community have not entirely met their commitments made at the 2016 Brussels summit.

According to the ministry's report, a total of 24 commitments were made by the Afghan government and the international community at the summit.

Of these, eight are the responsibility of the international community and the rest are government's.

MoF officials said 80 percent of foreign aid destined for Afghanistan's priority programs is through these eight commitments. (Tolo news)

(11) MTN Afghanistan...

the dormitories, launching blood drive campaigns, provision of food and first aid provision items as well as sending teams of medical volunteers to the countryside in the event of natural disasters are also worth mentioning as some of the activities MTN Afghanistan's Foundation has undertaken. (PR)

(12) Ashraf Stages...

to a question about fast bowler Dawlat Zadran, Mangal said, "The health reports we have receive about Dawlat Zadran indicate that he still has not fully recovered and he would continue to undergo treatment over the next few weeks. Therefore, he has not been included in the squad."

Addressing the press conference, Abdul Wali Amin, member of the ACB Selection Committee, said: "Selection of the squad was not an easy task as we witnessed commendable performances from players in different national team setups including Under-19, A and Emerging teams that recently played several matches against each other."

Asia cup will be played from 15th - 28th September in UAE. Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka form Group B while Pakistan and India will be joined by third team that will be decided after the Asia Cup Qualifiers. It will be Afghanistan's first Asia Cup after obtaining Full Member status of the International Cricket Council in June 2017. (Pajhwok)

(13) Efforts Underway...

education department.

"Students are the future of our country and they are our national asset and the rescue of students means the rescue of the country and we plan to set up hundreds of (tent) schools in different parts of Kandahar city for poor families," said Sayed Ahmad Selab, the head of this organization.

Both parents and students have been vocal about the closure of schools and have called for efforts to be made to improve the situation.

According to the education, of a total 447 schools in the province, 120 are closed. (Tolo news)