

### (1) Defense Ministry ...

of the new strategy, the United States will deploy thousands of additional forces to Afghanistan to deal with the threats that emanate from the region. The Pentagon in turn has announced that the new batch of US forces will be deployed to military and security training centers of the Afghan National and Defense Forces (ANDSF) around the country.

The US is however also expected to ramp up airstrikes against militant bases in the country and earlier this week, reports indicated that they could use both F-16s and B-52s.

Footage released on Saturday by the Pentagon shows a US B-52 bomber patrolling Afghanistan air space on August 29 (on Tuesday) and of it being refueled.

The US deployed B-52 bombers to Qatar in 2016 to join the fight against terrorism. The aircraft will still however be based there but will cover Afghanistan from Qatar.

This also comes after US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis on Thursday signed the deployment orders for additional American troops to Afghanistan, but said at the time that he wanted to work with Pakistan to defeat terrorists.

"I just signed the orders," Mattis said. "It's going to take a couple of days."

"By and large this is to enable the Afghan forces to fight more effectively," Mattis said. "It's more advisers, more enablers," such as "fire support" teams, which he declined to specify but could be artillery units. He said the additional US troops have not yet arrived in Afghanistan.

I have signed orders, but it is not complete," he said. "In other words, I have signed some of the troops that will go and we are identifying the specific ones...I'm not going to give you the details right now until I've talked to the Congress."

On the ground, US-Forces and NATO trainers continue to train Afghan Air Force (AAF) pilots as part of their efforts to boost the war capabilities of the AAF personnel and pilots.

AAF personnel are given weapons training from aircraft to training on how to supply and drop weapons and ammunition to ground forces on the frontline.

"With the training we have done with Afghan pilots right now, they are ready to do things ... because they can get into the areas and be safe in the process," said one foreign trainer, Gareth Roberts.

Currently up to 16,000 US and NATO forces are serving in Afghanistan within the framework of Nato Resolute Support Mission (RS). As part of Trump's new war strategy on Afghanistan, up to 4,000 additional US troops are likely to arrive in Afghanistan.

The Washington Post reported Thursday that the bulk of the roughly 4,000 additional troops headed to Afghanistan could be composed of thousands of paratroopers.

The Post stated that more air support - in the form of more F-16 fighters, A-10 ground attack aircraft and additional B-52 bomber support, or a combination of all three - is also probably on the way, according to a US official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss plans that had not yet been made public. The B-52s will remain based in Qatar but will be tasked to cover Afghanistan, he said. (Tolonews)

### (2) Hindu-Sikh ...

face of persistent harassment and now he used to study religion in the temple. "Families (Sikh and Hindu) who are rich have enrolled their children in private schools, but there too the children are not spared."

He said he was only taught religious education at the mandir (worship place) but he had no option.

Sikh families living in Ghazni City say nothing clearly is mentioned in the Afghanistan laws about the rights of Sikh and Hindi minorities and that is why they face numerous problems.

Local representative of the Hindu-Sikh minority in Ghazni, Dalip Singh, said the minorities were not given the attention they needed in Ghazni province like other provinces.

He said their children were being harassed at local schools and that was the main reason behind their illiteracy.

He urged the government to set up dedicated schools for the children of Sikh and Hindu minorities in Ghazni and other province in order they could continue their education.

A few years back, a small dedicated government school was set up for the Hindu and Sikh minority children in Ghazni, but the school was damaged after being hit by a mortar.

"Since the mortar attack, children had stopped going to the school due to fear," Dalip Singh said, warned of launching protests if their demand was ignored.

Ghazni Education director Mohammad Abid confirmed there was no dedicated government school for children of the Hindu and Sikh families in Ghazni province.

"There is one school where Hindu and Muslim children study together, I admit there are problems, we are trying to resolve them," he said.

Abid said teachers had been instructed to convince and persuade students not to harass their Hindu and Sikh classmates.

Nearly 600 Hindu and Sikh families are living in Afghanistan mostly in Ghazni, Kabul, Nangarhar and Paktia provinces. (Pajhwok)

### (3) US Defense Secretary ...

the number of US forces in Afghanistan, citing fight against the Taliban and other terrorist groups. Before his election, Trump had on several occasions voiced his frustration with the 16-year war.

In an executive order issued back in February, Trump tasked Mattis with devising an Afghan strategy that was expected to be delivered in mid-July, but the timeline has reportedly been thrown off by the president's demand for revisions.

The US-led occupying force officially announced to end its combat operations against the Taliban in the country at the end of 2014, and its current mission is to "train, advise, and assist" Afghan troops.

But General Raymond Thomas, commander of the US Special Operations Command, has said that the new Trump administration would permit more direct engagement between US forces and the Taliban.

The United States -- under Republican George W. Bush's presidency -- and its allies invaded Afghanistan on October 7, 2001 as part of Washington's so-called war on terror. The offensive removed the Taliban regime from power, but after more than one and-a-half-decade, the foreign troops are still deployed to the country.

After becoming the president in 2008, President Barack Obama, a Democrat, vowed to end the Afghan war -- one of the longest conflicts in US history -- but he failed to keep his promise.

Trump, who has spoken against the Afghan war, has dubbed the 2001 invasion and following occupation of Afghanistan as "Obama's war" (Press TV)

### (4) Ghani Reaches out...

accuses Pakistan of harboring Taliban insurgents, while Islamabad says its enemies have found sanctuaries in Afghanistan.

The two countries also squabble relentlessly over the border that separates their two countries. Known as the Durand Line, Afghanistan refuses to accept it as the international border. Firefights between the armies have broken out as Pakistan seeks to fence it. (AP)

### (5) Moscow Should ...

The Russian ambassador pointed out nobody ever triumphed in Afghanistan militarily.

Nebenzia also added that history has proved on numerous occasions there is no military solution in Afghanistan, which makes the existence of a political process absolutely crucial to bringing about a solution.

Moreover, Nebenzia expressed Moscow's concern over the increased presence in Afghanistan of the fighters belonging to the Daesh terror group and the persisting problem of drug production and trafficking.

US President Donald Trump has announced a new strategy for Afghanistan that would give more freedom to US military commanders to use force and pledged to keep and increase US troop levels until extremist threats were eliminated.

In a press briefing, US Defense Department Joint Staff Director Lt. Gen. Kenneth McKenzie said approximately 11,000 US troops are currently stationed in Afghanistan. (FNA)

### (6) Air Force Pilots...

to complete his education while an AAF engineer needs five to seven years.

"Right now the Afghan Air Force has been able to take over major phase inspections so that is one more step of becoming more capable and they have done that with the maintainers they have now, as they grow with more airplanes, they will need more maintainers, it is one step at a time," said US Air Force trainer D. Ellis.

Currently 80 percent of repairs and maintenance is done by contractors and the rest by local forces. There are hopes that the engineering capability of the AAF doubles by the year 2020. (Tolonews)

### (7) Threats Hinder...

circumstances," said Naeem Ayoubza-

da, chairman of the Transparent Election Forum of Afghanistan (TEFA).

The assessment of 90 percent of polling stations across the country have been completed, but IEC staff have not managed to review polling stations in areas under threat, said IEC spokesman Abdul Badi Sayyad.

According to Sayyad, tribal elders in these districts are now engaging in negotiations with armed opponents to let IEC staff work in the districts under the control of militants.

"We are in contact with the security institutions to pave the way for our staff to assess the polling centers, we are also in touch with the tribal elders in certain regions to convince the armed opponents to let our staff enter these areas for assessment of polling stations," said Sayyad.

The election commission has said that there is a need for more polling centers to be established in the country for holding free and transparent elections. But the election monitoring groups say that security threats, lack of capacity within the election commission, lack of public trust in the election commission, possible meddling of powerful elements in the elections, and lack of public awareness about elections could undermine the credibility and legitimacy of the elections in the country. (Tolonews)

### (8) Pakistan's NSA ...

had been misquoted following a meeting with Janjua where they discussed Trump's new strategy on Afghanistan and South Asia. (Tolonews)

### (9) BRICS Should ...

the Meeting of Counter-Terrorism Working Group, the Meeting of Cyber-security Working Group, and the Consultation on Peacekeeping Operations. "These efforts aim to strengthen consultation and coordination on major international and regional issues and build synergy among BRICS countries," Xi said.

The Chinese leader said they should uphold the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and basic norms governing international relations, firmly support multilateralism, work for greater democracy in international relations, and oppose hegemonism and power politics.

He also called on BRICS countries to take a constructive part in the process of resolving geopolitical hotspot issues and make due contributions.

"I am convinced that as long as we take a holistic approach to fighting terrorism in all its forms, and address both its symptoms and root causes, terrorists will have no place to hide," he said.

He believed dialogue, consultation and negotiation could create conditions for achieving political settlement of issues such as Syria, Libya and the Palestine-Israel conflict. (Pajhwok)

### (10) Kandahar ...

320 million afs had been spent on development activities and services, but the revenue generation continued.

The residents of Kandahar City have been proactively playing their role in monitoring implementation of development activities. A professional academic council has been created in this regard. University teachers, religious scholars and women are members of the council.

The Kandahar mayor mentioned a number of projects which have been completed or being completed in the 15 police districts of the city.

Wolasmal said so far 20 kilometers of roads had been asphalted in various parts of Kandahar City. He said 11 acres of land was converted into a green zone last year and another 20 acres would be converted this year.

The mayor said installations relating to the Zahir Shahi Canal had been completed and the area would be converted into a green zone until Aino Mena township.

Similarly, the Mirwais Mena road area would be changed into a green belt till Bagh Pul locality.

The mayor said work on 1300 shops and commercial zone in Ahmad Shahi area had been 80 percent completed and another 400 shops were being built in partnership with local residents.

He said work on 100 shops north of Kandahar City had been completed and a women's market containing 30 shops was being constructed in Chawni area.

Markets for dried fruits will be constructed on western outskirts of Kandahar City and the foundation stone of a huge food market will be laid in Kotal Morcha area, according to the mayor.

He said the sketch of 400 trade centers in various parts of Kandahar city was being prepared and practical work on the project would be launched soon.

Wolasmal said work on reconstructing and expanding major squares in the city like the Jamhoriat Monument and

relating squares would be carried out to deal with increasing traffic.

"This way, the development process will be extended to the neighborhood from the central parts of the city," said the mayor.

He said his department had been able to utilize 50 million afghanis provided by the Ministry of Finance in constructing a boundary wall around a 375-acre land for a recreation park. The land was formerly used by the Afghan military in the heart of the city.

The mayor also talked about the incomplete Omar Bin Khitab mosque, saying the mosque would be completed with financial support from the Ministry of Finance.

He also asked the Ministry of Finance to help the municipality acquire the home of Ahmad Shah Baba because the municipality alone could not do it. Hindu-Sikh minorities lament lack of dedicated schools

Wolasmal said besides these achievements, his department was able to obtain foreign aid, including \$1.8 million from the European Union currently being used to execute the Pak and Zarghon Sharh project.

The mayor also mentioned some upcoming projects including embanking of the Zahir Shahi Canal and construction of the Taimur Shahi park.

He said they had created 300 councils in 15 police districts to carry out economic and development activities worth \$550,000 in three years for each 1000 families.

Wolasmal recently visited Turkey where he met the World Bank leadership. He said two major programs -- City Investment Program (CIP) and Urban Development Support Project (UDSP) -- would be implemented in the country's five zones with the World Bank's assistance.

He said the two projects would cost \$12 million and \$250 million respectively and included clean drinking water supply, canalization and other development and economic schemes.

The mayor said residences and commercial areas would be registered with the help of UN Habitat in order to prevent corruption in collection of the cleanliness tax.

He also mentioned a USAID-funded vocation training program "Shahr. (Pajhwok)

### (11) Key Taliban ...

launched the operation against a group of Taliban insurgents in which "two of the insurgents were killed so far."

Three security forces were also wounded in the operation, Asim said. However, he did not provide further details.

The Taliban have not yet commented on the operation. (Tolonews)

### (12) Kabul Students...

deputy higher education minister Abdul Tawab Balakarzai.

Balakarzai suggested the Ministry of Higher Education should be given a separate code for holding seminars and symposiums and other needed tasks.

He hoped the country's higher education system would further improve due to the president's special attention.

Later, deputy border and tribal affairs minister Mohammad Yaqub Ahmadzai said his ministry, besides dealing with its own affairs, had worked to strengthen education in border areas. He said students of Khushal Khan Baba and Rahman Baba high schools, which are associated with the border and tribal ministry, had always earned good score in the university entrance test.

He said students of the two schools, who were sent abroad for higher studies, had been successful.

On behalf of other students, Zikrullah, Abdul Rafi Anzoor and Shehnaaz Tannin thanked the president and the first lady for meeting them and keeping the Presidential Palace's doors open for the youth.

They highlighted problems including the lack of standard curriculum, resources for practical studies and others and proposed teaching to students of the universities in Kabul in both the official languages.

President Ghani told the students that their parents were national heroes for sending them far away from home to get education.

"Our youth should have a strong resolve for ending the country's crises," the president said, who called the youth as the country's investment and asset.

"I am aware of the problems in hostels," Ghani said, directing the deputy higher education minister to take all needed measures to their solution.

He said no Afghan was inferior from the other and the students should learn the culture and ignore thoughts that fueled disunity.

The president said the university cur-

riculum was being standardized and reformed and he himself would head the reform committee.

The president insisted students at the Kabul University should be taught in both the official languages, but efforts be made to prevent the language from becoming a source of ethnic tension.

The president said due to sacrifices of the Afghan security forces and good foreign policy, Afghanistan was not alone today and work towards peace would continue with wisdom. (Pajhwok)

### (13) Australia Investigates ...

Conflict by Australian forces in Afghanistan, or rumors of them, to contact the inquiry," the statement read.

New South Wales Supreme Court and Army Reserve officer Judge Paul Brereton made a public plea for further information and asked for anyone with relevant information to come forward.

"[While the inquiry has already spoken to many sources, we would like to hear from anyone else who has any relevant information," Major-General Brereton said. "Whether you saw something yourself, or heard others talking about it, we would like you to contact us."

Brereton, who is in charge of the inquiries, said, "Arrangements can be made for information to be received face-to-face," and promised that the identity of people providing information would be kept confidential.

In July, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) reported on an alleged cover-up of the killing of an Afghan boy in Kandahar Province in 2012 as well as hundreds of pages of secret defense force documents leaked concerning the secretive operations of Australia's Special Forces.

Leaked documents also reported the deaths of an Afghan man and his six-year-old boy during a raid on a house in September 2013. Australian troops, who were looking for a target thought to be a Taliban member, allegedly shot and killed the child, who was hidden in blankets near the target, who was also killed.

The Australian Federal Police also investigated another 2013 incident in which Australian troops shot dead an Afghan man and woman riding a motorcycle.

In May, Australia sent an additional 30 troops to Afghanistan to join the NATO-led mission against the Taliban and other militant groups, bringing the total Afghan deployment to 300 troops.

Australia, which is not being a member of NATO, has had an active role in Afghanistan since the US-led invasion of the country in 2001.

The invasion removed the local Taliban militant group from power, but has failed to stop its militant activities in the country. The ongoing chaos has also paved the way for the Daesh terror group to gain a foothold in Afghanistan's east. (FNA)

### (14) Faryab Man...

public health official Dr. Sameer Inayat said the bride had received bullets in the chest.

Provincial council head Syed Hafeez Fitrat urged security organs to arrest the killer and bring him to justice. (Pajhwok)

### (15) 1 Killed, 12...

civilians was in critical condition. He also informed about throwing a hand grenade by militants at Public Order Police personnel in Kotwal area of the capital.

He said one dead body and two injured personnel had been brought to the hospital from the scene.

Security officials and the insurgents have not yet commented about the two incidents. (Pajhwok)

## Afghan MMA Fighter Bahadzura Beat his Australian Rival

KABUL - Back on track at last, Afghan MMA fighter Siyar Bahadzura targets Matt Brown, an American MMA fighter next, for UFC title by 2019.

Competing for the first time since March 5, 2016 "The Great" Afghan Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) fighter Siyar Bahadzura needed only a little over eight minutes to finish his Australian rival Rob Wilkinson in their middleweight bout at UFC Rotterdam in The Netherlands on Saturday.

Bahadzura confirmed at the post-fight press conference that he will drop back down to 170 pounds for his next fight and he wants to test himself against veteran Matt "The Immortal" Brown.

"I think Matt Brown will be a good fight," Bahadzura said. "He says that he's immortal, but I will show that he's pretty much mortal."

It makes sense that the 33-year-old Afghan fighter would target a peer known for his resiliency, as Bahadzura himself had to fight through adversity just to get back to competition. (Tolonews)