

## German Expert Panel Agrees 2038 Deadline to End Coal Use

BERLIN — In a pioneering move, a government-appointed panel on Saturday recommended that Germany stop burning coal to generate electricity by 2038 at the latest, as part of efforts to curb climate change.

The so-called Coal Commission reached agreement in the early hours of Saturday, following months of wrangling that were closely watched by other coal-de-

pendent countries.

"We made it," Ronald Pofalla, the head of the commission, told reporters in Berlin. "This is a historic effort."

Germany gets more than a third of its electricity from burning coal, generating large amounts of greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming.

The 28-member panel, representing mining regions, utility companies,

scientists and environmentalists, suggests a review in 2032 could bring forward the deadline to 2035. The plan foresees billions in federal funding to help affected regions cope with the economic impact, and to shield industry and consumers from higher electricity prices. The energy transition will also need a huge overhaul and modernization of the country's power grid, the commission's members said. (AP)

### (1) Too Early to...

Stoltenberg acknowledged New Zealand was supporting the NATO mission in Afghanistan, saying the alliance had many partners working together in the war-torn country.

He said the alliance wanted to make sure Afghanistan did not once again become a safe haven for international terrorism. "We saw the consequences back in 2001, when the 9/11 attacks on the United States were organised and planned, from Afghanistan."

Not many years ago, the alliance had been part of a big combat operation, with more than 100,000 troops in a combat effort in Afghanistan, the secretary general continued.

"But the Resolute Support, which New Zealand is contributing to, is a train, assist and advice mission, helps the Afghans stabilise their own country and the Afghans are now taking over responsibility for security.

"And we highly value the contribution from New Zealand; the personnel from New Zealand are very committed, they are playing a key role in helping to educate and to build a national defence academy. And that's the best way to help Afghanistan, and that is to help them develop their own forces, so they can create security in their own country themselves."

In response to a query, he said NATO strongly supported efforts for a peaceful and negotiated solution to the crisis in Afghanistan. "We welcome the initiative taken by President Ghani and we welcome also talks between the US and the Taliban, and we hope that that can lead towards a process which includes, of course, the Afghan government.

"The way NATO supports those efforts is to support the Afghan government: political support, practical support, and also through our military presence, because the purpose of our military presence in Afghanistan is to send a message to the Taliban that they will not win on the battlefield. So, they have to sit down at the negotiating table and find a political solution."

He believed a political solution, a peace agreement in Afghanistan, would also address the issue of the presence of troops from other countries, including NATO. However, he explained, it was much too early to speculate exactly what kind of consequences that would have.

"We are ready to continue a partnership, cooperation with Afghanistan and our presence is conditions-based and of course, a new peace agreement will have an important consequence for NATO presence in Afghanistan." (Pajhwok)

### (2) NDS Survivors...

"In the attack I lost friends and many were wounded, and I want to return to duty after I recover and will take revenge," said Jawed another wounded soldier.

A suicide bomber detonated a vehicle laden with explosives early Monday morning at a training center in Maidan Shahr, the capital of Wardak province.

Eyewitnesses said that a suicide attacker first detonated a Humvee full of explosives close to the center and then four other attackers clashed with NDS forces.

According to eyewitnesses all the attackers were dressed in NDS uni-

forms.

After a five-hour clash, the bodies of many NDS personnel were found in the ruins of a collapsed building.

Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack and said a group of insurgents had stormed the base.

However, two days after the attack the NDS claimed in a statement that the mastermind of Monday's attack had been killed along with seven other "terrorists" in an airstrike on Tuesday night in the province.

"Commander Noman, the mastermind of Wardak attack, was killed in an airstrike in Maidan Shahr district of the province along with seven other terrorists," read the National Directorate of Security (NDS) statement.

Other members of this terrorist network will be tracked down and eliminated, the statement read.

However, on Wednesday afternoon, the Taliban issued a statement rejecting claims of Noman's death. (Tolo news)

### (3) Pakistan Plans to...

He said Pakistan Foreign Minister Mahmood Qureshi during his visit to Kabul announced a wheat package worth 1.7 billion rupees for drought-hit families in Afghanistan. Nasrullah Khan added a separate place for visa applicants would be built in Kabul and Jalalabad which would help the Afghans get visa easily.

He added Pakistan had offered 7,042 free visas to Afghans, the highest figure any other country offered. The envoy added the one month stay visa would be extended to two months according to the future plan. He said staff at Torkham entry and exit points would be increased in order to facilitate the passengers. (Pajhwok)

### (4) Turkey's Maarif...

due to resistance from parents' committees, Maarif has achieved the goal of school seizures, although that did not mean the end of Maarif's troubles, according to the report.

"Maarif officials have been involved in a number of scandals, ranging from forgery of documents to orchestrating defamation campaigns on social media to target and discredit opponents of the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan," the report said.

The report went on to cite several complaints expressed by anonymous students and parents that point to a dramatic setback in quality of education, a sharp decline in professional management and a steady deterioration in services provided to students, claiming that they reveal an underlying problem that Maarif has no central objective, no roadmap or plan for how to run and effectively manage newly taken over schools.

"The new breed of teachers only fuel disillusion among students; they do not instill confidence in families and they do not exhibit the needed qualities or flexibility to adapt to a new set of realities and environment. They display symptoms of political affiliation (with the government of Turkey) and espouse a similar political ideology and ideas sometimes bordered on mere propaganda. This point is particularly disturbing for Afghan people who had already grown disgruntled and disillusioned with ideological indoctrination or po-

litized education either under Taliban rule or the subsequent dysfunctional governments," the report argued.

Based on the account of parents, the report stressed that the first noticeable setback witnessed in a confiscated school is the lack of classes and the disappearance of discipline stemming from ineffectiveness on the part of the new teachers. Citing an example, the report reveals that a female teacher working in one of these schools used to work at a pizza store back in Turkey and applied for the position at the school through Maarif due to a higher salary designed to lure people to work in Afghanistan, and somehow got the job.

"My English is not good, I'll tell the course in Turkish," the teacher reportedly told the class. When she faced resistance from students, she acknowledged that she had previously worked at a pizza store back in Turkey," the report said.

"Courses of Turkish teachers pass in mere idleness. Teachers are unable to perform properly, and to deliver lectures. Instead, they talk about how Erdogan is a patriot and how he acts as the leader of Muslims around the world. In comparison, they present and portray Fethullah Gülen as a terrorist and traitor to his country," said a student who spoke on condition of anonymity for reasons of safety.

After police intervention and seizure of a school in Shibirghan, valuable material and equipment such as a CineVision player, security cameras, furniture, a refrigerator, computers and the personal belongings of former teachers were reported to be stolen or missing.

The new Maarif administration also allegedly burnt certificates and awards won by Afghan students in international science contests and competitions during the previous administration.

The report also included accounts of physical violence perpetrated on children at a school in Herat.

"An official called Ismail Turk take students who lodge complaints with the office of principal, to a locker room for physically beating them. To deter them from reporting this violence to their families, the official threatened to cut scholarship, to lower their grades, terminate their registry and relationship with the school and with other things," said a student who spoke to AST about the incident.

Following a 2016 failed coup attempt that claimed the lives of 249 people, Erdoğan launched an all-out war on the Gülen movement, which he accused of masterminding the abortive putsch.

Even though the movement's US-based leader Fethullah Gülen denied having any role in the coup attempt and called for an international investigation, it didn't stop Erdoğan, who once qualified the coup as a "gift from God," and his governing party from leading a massive crackdown on the movement inside and outside of Turkey. (Monitoring Desk)

### (5) Afghans Support...

Another gathering was held in Farah province where they said they also support the ongoing talks between US and Taliban officials, in Qatar, adding that the public's demand was for an end to the long-standing war in the country.

## Merkel Says Keeping Holocaust Memory Alive to Prevent It from Repeating

BERLIN - German Chancellor Angela Merkel has called for keeping the memory of the Holocaust alive and showing zero-tolerance to anti-Semitism and hatred.

In her latest podcast speech published on Saturday, one day before the International Holocaust Remembrance Day, Merkel said this day reminds us what racialism, hatred and enmity can do. "During the period of National Socialism, millions of people were

deprived of their rights, tortured, tortured and murdered," says Merkel, referring to the German government's commitment against anti-Semitic and misanthropic incitement.

Every single person in society has the task "of taking responsibility for showing zero tolerance for anti-Semitism, misanthropy, hatred and racial delusion, said Merkel, who added that "unfortunately that is of great urgency in our time". (Xinhua)

"We are brothers and we should sit together and we support the (peace) efforts," said Mohammad Sarwar, a Farah resident.

"We call on Taliban to sit and talk with their own people. Let's solve our problems by talking to each other," said Mir Ahmad, a Farah resident, as he stressed the need for an intra-Afghan talks to end the conflict.

The Helmand Peace Convoy

They got the name when a group of at least a dozen activists staged a protest in Lashkargah City last year in March against an attack that killed around 16 people that month. About a month later, the activists left Helmand on foot for Kabul.

The activists walked through towns and villages, crossed provinces and met with local residents along the way. For 38 days, they walked and as they progressed, so their numbers grew.

About 700kms later, the group of eight had grown to an estimated 100. They arrived in Kabul on June 18 and handed over demands for a ceasefire and peace to both the Afghan government and the Taliban. During their stay in Kabul, they held sit-in protests outside diplomatic offices in Kabul. They also met with President Ghani on a Kabul street where they asked him to accelerate the peace efforts.

The activists, whose ages ranged from 17 to 65, came from all walks of life and include students, athletes and farmers among others. It was these and other activists that then extended their walk from Kabul to Balkh. (Tolo news)

### (6) Balkh Journalists...

change people's mind positively toward the government", he said. "Some officials in Balkh try to censor journalists, which is against the law", Ansari said, warning to boycott covering reports of departments reluctant to help share information with journalists.

Arif Musavi, a journalist with Tolo News in Balkh, also said that government offices in Balkh often denied did information to the media. Pointing to Friday's incident in which police surrounded the Afghan-Turk School in Mazar-i-Sharif, he said no one provided them information about the issue.

He said he tried to reach the incident area but police did not allow him to take photos even from hundreds of meters from the area.

"Such acts of government organs create problems for freedom of speech and the officials concerned should stop it", he added.

A number of journalists in Balkh say government organs' interaction with the media has been discriminatory.

Lotfullah Raufi, a local TV station manager in Balkh, said most of government officials used to share information with only popular media outlets or those they had relations with.

He said discriminatory interaction of government officials with local media remained hurdle to its development. Raufi asked journalist associations and the Balkh governor's house to address the problem.

Mubina Khair Andish, head of Nai, an organization that supports open media in Afghanistan, also said they had received many complaints from Balkh journalists in recent past.

She said a defence committee comprised of journalists and media outlets would be created to respond to the mentioned problems. The Balkh governor's house refused to comment on the matter. (Pajhwok)

### (7) Afghan Pilot...

to the widow of his close friend — Utah National Guard Maj. Brent Taylor, killed in an attack Nov. 3. The post was shared and liked by thousands, drawing the attention of the international media and eventually reaching Taylor's family.

"I wanted to convey a message to his family that the one who killed him does not represent Afghanistan," said Rahmani, who calls himself a member of a new generation hoping for change, during an interview with Stars and Stripes at an Afghan air base in the capital.

For Rahmani, Taylor was yet another friend lost to the fighting in his country, which has reached a bloody stalemate since the U.S. and coalition forces pulled out most of their combat troops in 2014 and transitioned to an advisory mission the following year.

In the past four years, Taliban insurgents have gained ground and are believed to hold or contest more territory now than since the 2001 invasion. More than 45,000 police and soldiers have died since the Afghan security forces took over the main job of fighting the militants, President Ashraf Ghani said Friday.

Rahmani's online dispatches praise government reforms, tout successful commando missions, highlight video footage of deadly strikes on enemy compounds and denounce insurgent violence.

He has also found a voice through traditional media, including a recent column on India's efforts in Afghanistan in Hindustan Times, and other on a U.S. defense website decrying the influence of Iranian propaganda. Prior to that, he published a book of stories about life in the beleaguered "heart of Asia."

The decades of conflict here have left only him to carry on the family name, he said. His father and three uncles all died fighting Soviet invaders in the 1980s. (Agencies)

### (8) Afghan...

The statement further added "Among the drugs and materials, 1600kg of liquid opium, 561kg of ammonium chloride and some amount of chemical substance which has been used in making heroin, were also destroyed."

"960 AK-47 bullets were also seized by joint forces," MoI said, adding that "The Ministry of Interior is committed to the fight against narcotics and Afghan National Counter-narcotics Police are having major success in fighting against smugglers and narcotics, which will continue." (KP)

### (9) University Student...

Another source said the victim of the blast was the daughter of an official of the NGO. She was on her way to the university. There has been no claim of responsibility so far. (Pajhwok)

### (10) 3 Detained in Kunar...

of timber in Khewa district. The governor informed the three individuals captured in connection with smuggling were currently under investigation. (Pajhwok)