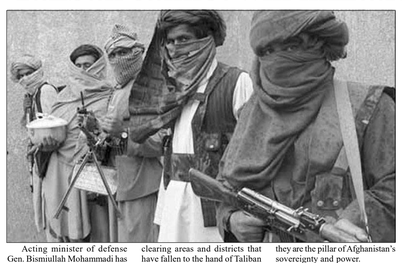
Taliban cannot win militarily, MoD



Acting minister of defense Gen. Bismiullah Mohammadi has warned the Taliban group that they cannot win militarily as the people are beside the country's defense and security forces and are ready to fight the group.

"War is not a way to resolve problems. If the Taliban wants to impose themselves on the people of Afghanistan through war and increasing violence, their dreams won't come true," Mohammadi said.

Meanwhile, large-scale military operations have been launched by Afghan defense and security forces in insecure provinces of the country.

The operations are aimed at clearing areas and districts that have fallen to the hand of Taliban in recent weeks.

The country's defense and security officials have informed of heavy casualties inflicted to the Taliban fighters in various parts of the country. The country's armed forces are successfully defending the country as they are fighting against the Taliban fighters in several provinces of the country.

In his recent remarks, acting minister of defense has declared that the real and spiritual owner of the country's defense and security forces is the people of Afghanistan, asking the people to strongly support the ANDSF as they are the pillar of Afghanistan's sovereignty and power.

This comes after thousands of people took arms in support of the country's defense and security forces to fight the Taliban and defend the country.

In recent weeks, Taliban fighters have intensified and increased their attacks on Afghan defense and security forces' bases in 20 provinces of the country. Continued war and violence in majority of districts have caused that the government welcomes uprising of the people against the Taliban fighters, but there are concerns over management of these uprisings when war ends.

Nevertheless, Afghanistan ministry of defense has informed of a plan to manage people's uprisings in various provinces of the country.

"Uprising forces have no criminal backgrounds and are currently fighting in support of the country's defense and security forces. Their intention is to defend the country as most of them are young educated people working with the government and private institutions," said Fawad Aman, a spokesperson to the ministry of defense.

He said that even religious scholars and figures have taken arms in Takhar to support the country's defense and security forces to fight Taliban and defend the country.

For the first time, people took arms against Taliban fighters in Ghazni's Andar district. The uprising forces in the district was welcomed by the government. Following surge in Taliban's attacks and violence in Herat, Takhar, Sar-e-Pul, Uruzgan, Baghlan, Faryab, Jawzjan, Kunduz and other provinces, uprising forces took arms in support of the ANDSF to fight Taliban fighters in the respective provinces.

Meanwhile, in recent days, Afghan Defense and Security Forces with close cooperation of the people and uprising forces have been able to recapture a number of districts in Kunduz, Takhar, Balkh, Baghlan, Faryab and Paktia provinces.

Lailuma Noori

Taliban commits national betrayal to transfer military equipment to Pakistan, experts

KABUL: Recently, the Ministry of Interior announced that it had proved and evidences that the Taliban group was trying to transfer weapons and equipment of government forces to Pakistan.

The act of the militants faced harsh reaction from the Afghans countrywide. Military experts, civil society activists and the Afghan citizens consider this act of the Taliban as a crime against humanity and a national betrayal and condemn it in the strongest possible terms.

They also say that the Taliban by transferring weapons and equipment of government forces, have acted contrary to Afghan values and at the behest of their foreign lords plundered the country's resources.

Ali Rahmani, a military expert, strongly condemning the transfer of weapons and equipment by the Taliban to Pakistan said: "Unfortunately, Pakistan has always interfered in Afghanistan's internal affairs by supporting the Taliban and other anti-government militants." Meanwhile, Acting Interior Minister Abdul Sattar Mirzakwal said the Taliban were trying to smuggle the government weapons into Pakistan and that there is also information that the Taliban are transferring a number of military tanks to Pakistan via Zabul."

So, the National Security Council and the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces have ordered the launch of a permanent air patrol to target any tank transported to Pakistan, said the acting minister of Interior.

"The equipment belonging to the security forces has been transferred to other side of the Durand Line," said Shamim Khan Katawazi, head of the Independent Directorate for Local Government adding they have pictures and evidence that Pakistani soldiers have taken pictures with smuggled equipment.

Fighting continues between government forces and the Taliban in Paktia, where Government forces managed to retake control of Mirzakah district.

Local officials in Paktia say they have detained Pakistani militants fighting alongside the Taliban in the province during the retaking operation of the district. Local Paktia officials say Taliban have set fire many security checkpoints and destroyed road as well as destroying government facilities and this is their clear message to the people.

This came as the Pakistani interior minister recently said that the Taliban dead bodies and wounded were being rushed to Pakistan and were being treated at Pakistani medical facilities. Dr. Hamdullah Moheb, advisor to the National Security Council said about the remarks of the Pakistani Interior Minister that the Pakistani Interior Minister praises Pakistan for revealing Islamabad's support for the Taliban and added that more brave Pakistanis needed to speak out against Pakistan's invasion of Afghanistan. However, a number of social media users say the transfer of government equipment by the Taliban to Pakistan shows that Pakistan supports terrorist groups.

Navid Elham, another Afghan expert, believes that by doing so, the Taliban have shown that they do not have the capacity to govern, strive for self-sufficiency and reconstruction.

"There is information that the group intends to take this equipment to Pakistan through Zabul and the government should take serious action in this regard," he said.

The interior ministry said while the Taliban have been taking equipment to Pakistan, a number of insurgents detained on the battlefield had been mostly Pakistani nationals.

The Afghan government has always tried to maintain good relations with Pakistan on the basis of good neighborliness and diplomacy, but unfortunately the neighboring country's politicians have never been honest with Afghanistan.

At the same time by the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan, they are destroying their military bases in Afghanistan and transferring their equipment to Pakistan, which was accompanied by reactions from the Afghan government, the House of People and the Afghan citizens.

Suraya Raiszada

What's next for Afghan women: an interview with judge Najla Ayoubi

It was years ago, in 1992, but the day is etched in Judge Najla Ayoubi's memory. She was at home, on the outskirts of Kabul, when she heard the crack of a gunshot nearby. She ran outside to find someone collapsed in the street. Anxious to help, Najla hurried past a neighbor who told her it was her father. As he lay bleeding, dying, Najla went to grab a head covering she dared not leave without and rushed her father to the hospital. It was too late. Eight other people were assassinated that day.

Afghanistan remains the archetype of a fragile state. Even before the United States' post-9/11 intervention in 2001, the country had been all but destroyed after years of war, poverty, and repression, with women in particular bearing the brunt. A recent index by Georgetown University's Institute for Women, Peace and Security ranks Afghanistan as the second-worst country to be a woman, just behind Yemen.

Najla's family was a target for jihadis and extremists because of their liberalism and support for human rights. Smart and educated, Najla dreamed of serving in a powerful position. She became the first woman from the conservative Parwan province to go abroad to study; Najla completed her master's degree in law and politics in Tajikistan. When she returned to Afghanistan and took her seat as a judge on the Parwan provincial court—another first for a woman—her brother was murdered by a conservative jihadi group, Hizb-e-Islami, after being kidnapped and tortured for more than a month.

"There was a lot of pressure," Najla recounted. "We were on the shortlist to be assassinated for believing in freedom." As tensions mounted for Najla and her family, she fled to Kabul and was forced to leave the judiciary. She was further marginalized when the Taliban came to power in 1996 and stymied women's rights. For years under Taliban rule, women were all but under house arrest—Najla was unable to leave her home without a male escort, even if the escort was only her neighbor's four-year-old son.

"Age didn't matter as long as you were with a male. It was so humiliating," she remembered.

Charged with supporting her family after her father and brother were killed, Najla worked as a tailor and ran an in-home tailoring school for forty or so other young women who lost male family members.

With no access to radio, television, or electricity, renting books through an underground network was a lifeline. "We would pass the books from person-to-person, reading each one by candle- or gaslight," Najla recalled.

When the Taliban was overthrown by the Northern Alliance in 2001, Najla returned to legal work, helping to develop Afghanistan's new constitution and prepare for the first presidential and parliamentary elections. Following a trip to London where she met with female activists, the judge began to speak out more about women's issues in Afghanistan. She found certain provisions of Islamic law to be highly discriminatory. When it came to dividing property among family members, for example, two brothers were equal to four sisters. As witnesses to a crime, two women counted as a single witness. Additionally, a man could easily initiate divorce, but a woman had to prove that her husband could not give her a child or provide for her.

Violence against women also drew Najla's attention. Though poorly documented, Human Rights Watch estimates that 87 percent of Afghan women experience at least one form of physical, sexual, or psychological abuse in their lifetime, with at least half of women reporting abuse at home. Afghanistan's religious and political leaders took notice of Najla's outspokenness.

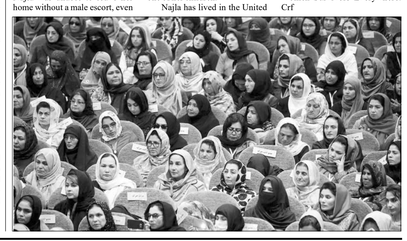
"The more vocal I became, the more I became a hard target," she said. Najla had to hide for close to a year, inside and outside of the country. Najla's mother feared that extremists would kill another one of her children.

Najla has lived in the United States since 2015, though she would like to go back to Afghanistan once it is safe. Her mother passed away in Afghanistan on Mother's Day last year, without her. She worries the U.S. withdrawal will cause greater insecurity, and at the same time, recognizes that the country must be able to stand on its own. She fears history will repeat itself.

"I lived under the Taliban for five years. I know what that looks like. You can't breathe. You lose even the right to breathe. Everything will be gone," she said.

Najla has seen progress, however, over the last twenty years, with more girls in school and greater numbers of women in leadership positions in government and civil society. The women's movement has also become more organized. Still, in the past few months, hundreds of human rights and women's rights activists have been assassinated.

"No one is owning it. The Taliban, extremists, the government, Islamic State, Islamist parties. It's very hard. There is a level of impunity: no follow-up, no arrests, no investigations," she told me.

What sustains her now? Her work with Every Woman Treaty, a coalition calling for a global treaty to address all forms of violence against women and hold governments accountable. Najla believes a treaty would show Afghan women that there is a clear international standard when it comes to gender-based violence and would provide a platform for women and girls to see justice in action.

"I feel it in my bones," she said. "This sector needs more work and attention." Judge Ayoubi wants to ensure the next generation of Afghan women does not suffer as she did. Karen Sherman is a board member of Every Woman Treaty and the president of Akilah, East Africa's preeminent institute for women's leadership and career development. She is the author of Brick by Brick: Building Hope and Opportunity for Women Survivors Everywhere. Crf