

(1) ICG Calls ...

to derail the process. Both presidential candidates, Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah, claimed victory.

The September 2014 deal led to the creation of a Chief Executive Officer position, which was given to Abdullah, while Ghani became president. The CEO post was supposed to be turned into the role of prime minister within two years by a constitutional Loya Jirga or Grand Assembly.

That never happened and differences in the way supporters of Abdullah and Ghani interpreted the agreement led to infighting.

Abdullah believed the agreement gave him an equal share in government, while Ghani thought the ultimate authority rested with him. Many Afghans complained the "genuine and meaningful partnership" the agreement was supposed to generate between the two was missing from the start.

According to the International Crisis Group, both sides tried to stack civil and military posts with their supporters, mostly on ethnic grounds, with Ghani favoring Pashtuns and Abdullah favoring Tajiks.

The report says the squabbling led to delays in promised electoral reforms and parliamentary elections. It also led to a lack of leadership in addressing major challenges facing the government.

"Though the Afghan National Police is in urgent need of reform, the unity government's leadership has yet to tackle the corruption, nepotism and factionalism within it," the International Crisis Group noted. Senior NATO officials have also often cited lack of good leadership as one of the major reasons Afghan security forces have lost ground to the Taliban.

The ICG report says the only promising way forward is for Ghani and Abdullah to acknowledge the stability of the government and country requires they work together.

The report credits the government with some success in the economy. It says apart from maintaining macro-economic stability, the government managed to improve domestic revenues and secure donor commitments for the next several years.

Founded in 1995 The International Crisis Group says its mission is working to prevent wars and shape policies that will build a more peaceful world. (VoA)

(2) Govt. Rejects

merit not tribal lines.

Minapal said there was no political instability in Afghanistan and the leaders had consensus over national and international issues.

He said the Afghan forces were courageously defending their people and the soil and they conducted operations every day.

Javed Faisal, deputy spokesman to the CEO, also said the ICG report, which was published late, mentioned nothing important about the current affairs.

He said problems mentioned in the report had been resolved and currently there were no such problems.

He said the leaders were working together and had taken effective steps to reform the electoral regime. The election commissioners were replaced with qualified individuals, he added.

"All tribes are given representation in the government. The first vice-president is Uzbek, the second vice-president is Hazara and Cabinet members are from different tribes," he said. (Pajhwok)

(3) Kabul to ...

against terrorism and the Afghan peace process is supported," the CEO's spokesman Javed Faisal said. Russia is set to host an international conference on Afghanistan on 14 April bringing representatives from at least eleven countries together including China, Pakistan, Iran, India and five central Asian countries where they would hold discussions on how to strengthen the peace process in Afghanistan by dragging the defiant Taliban to the negotiations table.

It appears that the Afghan government is yet to finalize the level of its delegation that will participate at the Moscow meeting.

It is believed that Moscow talks can be a platform for boosting regional coordination on the issue of peace in Afghanistan, but keeping in mind that the Afghan government seeks the countries attending the talks to consider balance while dealing with the threats of the Taliban and Daesh.

"At the conference, Russia must be convinced that to suppress Daesh, the Taliban should not be backed, because both groups have the status of enemy," said Fawzia Kofi, an MP. This new development takes place at a time that bilateral relations between Afghanistan and the Russian Federation recently soured following the confirmation by Russian officials that

Moscow had been in talks with the Afghan Taliban.

But, what would be the impact of Moscow talks on the peace process in Afghanistan?

"Government should take advantage of this opportunity and reach an outcome with its regional partners so that all of them come forward to suppress extremist groups in Afghanistan," another MP, Abdul Hafiz Mansour said. The meeting will be the third of its kind with Moscow as host. (Tolnews)

(4) 11 Contracts ...

procurement of fuel for the VIP protection unit and food items for Nangarhar University.

Procurement of food items for several departments of the Ministry of Higher Education, fuel for the Salang Pass maintenance directorate and extension of contract duration for the Sharan-Angoor Adda highway were also approved. (Pajhwok)

(5) Dawi Oil ...

Oversight and Anti-Corruption (HOOC) said their documents indicate that Dawi's debt amounts to 67 million Afs in fuel contracts for Hamid Karzai International Airport.

"The HOOC and people expect government to investigate millions of dollars in Kabul Bank loans and also the 67 million Afs that Dawi owes from fuel deals as well as the airport contracts," the HOOC chairman Ghulam Husain Fakhri said.

A number of political analysts meanwhile said they do not believe that justice would be implemented in the Dawi case.

"Like Dawi, there are dozens of powerful men where government cannot implement rule of law on them. I am sure that the Attorney General's Office will try to investigate the case properly, but there are a number of interests in the country which will release some people and will implement the court's order on no one," said Sayed Eshaq Gailani, chairman of the National Solidarity Movement of Afghanistan. (Tolnews)

(6) MPs Call ...

urge President [Ashraf Ghani] to suspend the governor and bring him to justice. He should be prosecuted as a person who supported the enemy," MP Ghulam Farooq Majroh said.

"Giving the money, which is allocated to bereaved families of the security forces, to insurgents is not acceptable," another member of the Wolesi Jirga (Lower House of Parliament) Fatima Aziz said.

Meanwhile, Munira Yusufzada, a spokeswoman for the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, said the authority had started investigating the governor's claim.

"This is not the issue which we say that this money has been given to the Taliban; this is the issue which one citizen's right should not be given to another," Yusufzada said.

"The goal of the governor's remarks ... was about the incident that happened in Buz Kandahari region where 33 of our countrymen were martyred. The people who received the money were relatives of those who fought against government and were killed in the incident," said Sayed Mahmood Danish, spokesman for Kunduz governor. (Tolnews)

(7) EU Launches...

The campaign was aimed at to draw the attention of the Afghan Government and the international institutions to the need of removing the obstacles limiting the access to education of girls and of preparing female leadership in the country.

The campaign supported positive measures to promote the role of women in politics, in social institutions and in the community at large.

In Afghanistan, the environment for female human rights defenders was considerably difficult and dangerous. Over the past few years there had been a significant increase in threats, intimidation and attacks against those at the forefront of promoting and protecting women's rights.

Women acting in public life are particularly subject to pressures and threats from traditional social circles, and they are not adequately protected in the exercise of public functions in freedom and autonomy. Supporting the political and civic leadership of women in the country is therefore an essential policy to stimulate effective and sustainable change in local society. Empowering women's political and civil leadership means as well affecting structural factors of bad governance, and not merely dealing with its consequences.

Furthermore, Women for Change campaign believed that education was important to empower women and to prepare the ground for their participation in political and public life: no investment in education meant less female protagonism in political

life.

That was why Women for Change campaign asks to the Afghan Government to: 1) fully implement the laws on political participation and of the Elimination of Violence Against Women Law (EVAW Law, 2009), 2) re-establishing the 25% women quota for the seats at Provincial Councils, and apply similar mechanisms in District and Village elections; 3) implement the 2013 UNSCR National Plan on Women, Peace and Security; 4) investigate corruption affecting public education, involving civil society in the monitoring process, and collaborating with investigative journalists; 5) promote programs for female adolescents to empower their intellectual and cultural skills, and challenge the culture of conservatism in society and at school, which undermines their right to access and practice civil and political life; and 6) promote opportunities to facilitate women's economic initiative, being this often a pre-condition for an active presence of women in public life.

On the other hand, the International Community should make pressure on Afghan government to enhance women's participation in public life, working in collaboration with human rights defenders. (Pajhwok)

(8) Dozens of ...

attention to the problem.

"The security forces in Uruzgan have continued fighting despite them not having their wages paid on time and resources were not provided to them, but they continued defending the country; however, government has not paid the required attention to the security situation in Uruzgan," said MP Raihana Azad.

"Around 1,500 U.S. military troops went to the south [of Afghanistan]. This will boost the morale of the people. It will be appropriate if some of these forces are deployed in Uruzgan so that they can stay there for some time and cooperate in launching and planning military operations and help reopen the land routes," head of Uruzgan Provincial Council, Amanullah Hotak, said.

Reports indicate that of the total six districts in Uruzgan, only Gizab is under full control of Afghan security forces. (Tolnews)

(9) Kabul Urges...

praised deminers, saying they risked their lives to protect others. He said UNMACA registered 20 attacks on deminers in Afghanistan last year, killing 10 individuals and wounding 10 others.

State Minister for National Disaster Management Wais Barmak said nearly 140 individuals suffered casualties on a monthly basis due to landmine explosions across the country.

He said about 3,600 kilometres square land had been planted with landmines in the past and current conflicts. Over the past 27 years, about 2,500 kilometres square of land had been cleared of landmines, but in recent years landmines were again planted on more than 400 kilometres square of land.

Barmak said clearing Afghanistan of landmines needed \$800 million and the task could be completed until 2023. He said the international assistance had been recently decreased by 50 percent.

He asked the international community to provide Afghanistan with needed assistance in this regard.

Deputy Foreign Minister Naseer Ahmad Andisha also called upon the international community to increase their aid to Afghanistan for demining operations.

He said despite the existence of landmines in Afghanistan, the international community had expelled Afghanistan from its priority list regarding demining. (Pajhwok)

(10) Women's...

in women's rights sphere," said minister of economy Abdul Sattar Murad. In 2016, more than 5,500 cases of violence against women were recorded by the AIHRC across the nation, raising alarm among rights groups over the spike in the trend.

"We have not made sufficient gains, women still face gender discrimination and inequality, problems exist in all spheres," said the Minister of Women's Affairs Dilbar Nazari.

The AIHRC argues that the efforts made by government towards improving the lives of women and their rights have not been enough.

Equality is a core component of fundamental rights protection. Yet gender inequality persists in today's society, and is often compounded by other forms of discrimination, preventing women from enjoying their full rights, said the AIHRC. (Tolnews)

(11) Senate ...

distribute it among the conflict-affected people.

But the delegation returned with 16 million afghanis back to Kabul, he said, warning against irregularities in distribution of the cash among victims.

He said distribution of money among families of dead Taliban would create distrust between the government and security forces.

Another member of the Meshrano Jirga, Lailuma Ahmadi, said the governor's views were concerning and asked the upper house to seek explanation from him.

Senate Chairman Fazal Hadi Muslimy said the issue needed further investigation and lawmakers should not make a decision until decided all aspects of the matter were investigated.

He asked the house defence commission to travel to the province and coordinate the issue with local representatives and present their report to the house.

When contacted, the spokesman for Kunduz governor, Syed Mahmood Danish, rejected if the governor had given cash aid to families of the Taliban.

He said the central government had sent only four million afghanis to the governor's house at the request of the residents of Pul-i-Kandahari area.

He said the aid had been distributed to the families. However, he did not say who the families were. (Pajhwok)

(12) WAC-DC...

Afghanistan and the US to exchange views.

Kabul-based political expert Javid Ghafor said experts and thinkers would have a platform to confer on important issues.

Afghan and US experts would share their experiences with each other at the facility, he said. (Pajhwok)

(13) 57 Militants operation by the National Directorate of Security (NDS) agents.

Meanwhile, security forces conducted seven clearing operations in the Achin district of Nangarhar, Ghoryan district of Herat, Darzab district of Jawzjan, the capital of Uruzgan, and Sayad district of Sar-i-Pul.

Separately, eleven Taliban insurgents were killed including a notorious commander Mullah Taj Mohammad and 12 others wounded during the clearing operation codenamed Mosam Alburz in Sayyid district of Sar-i-Pul province, local official said.

Governor Mohammad Zahir Wahdat told media on Tuesday casualties inflicted on militants in Pasta Mazar and Bilandghor villages of Sayyad district during the past 24 hours.

Meanwhile, Taliban rejected the security officials' claims. In a statement the Taliban said five security personnel were killed, two wounded and four security check-posts were captured by Taliban fighters during the clashes in Sayyad district. (Pajhwok)

(14) Hundreds...

Mohammad Ullah, a resident of Giro district, said the healthcare center in their district had been closed for unknown reasons for the past seven years.

"Our patients most of the time seek God's help, some of them recover but most die," he said.

However, the provincial public health director said the TB diagnosis system was active in majority districts of the province.

Two major TB diagnosis centers were active in Ghazni city alone, he said. He confirmed problems in some areas and said efforts were underway to resolve them.

Two days back, health officials in Nangarhar said nearly 4,500 people were suffering from TB in the province. (Pajhwok)

(15) Strongmen, ...

are cut down every year, this area relates to the border police commissary, border officials do not care about the forests and even they themselves cut the jungles," he said.

Khairullah, a resident of Jungle area of Sher Khan Bandar, said trees were cut down every year by some military officials and powerful individuals.

"Deforestation causes the Amu River to inundate farmland and destroy crops on hundreds of hectares of land, we ask the government to stop this," he said.

Provincial agriculture and livestock department confirmed the issue and said they were unable to prevent it.

Nabi Raoufi, the agriculture and livestock director, said most jungles were cut down by powerful individuals and local people in Kunduz, particularly in border districts including Imam Sahib and Qala Zal.

He said jungles existed in Imam Sahib, Chahar Dara, Qala Zal and Aliabad districts. Besides local people, strongmen also have a big hand in cutting of the forests, he said.

Police chief Brig. Gen. Abdul Hameed Hamidi said everyone involved in illegal cutting of forests would be ar-

rested no matter how much strong they were.

He said no credible sources had so far complained to police about deforestation. Police would take action against any person who violated the law.

Kunduz has jungle spread over around 40,000 hectares of land, with fruit trees covering 20,000 hectares of land. (Pajhwok)

(16) Kandahar ...

told Pajhwok Afghan News not only the municipality's revenue increased under Rokhan but development activities also accelerated.

He said right now development projects costing millions were ongoing and in progress in Kandahar city. He was happy the mayor's GPM membership would connect Kandahar city to other cities of the world.

GPM is a global democratic governance draft which was established in September 2016 in Hague, Netherlands by mayors of all small and large cities. (Pajhwok)

(17) Rashid Khan ...

ability to bowl quicker through the air made him difficult to score against in the T20 format.

"We thought he is something special and different than other leg spinners, because he bowled little bit quicker than the others and he has variations," he said.

"He has played his part in the first two matches and done well for us. It is a good sign and we thought he will do well and he is fulfilling our expectations," the legendary spinner, who scalped 800 Test wickets, said.

Asked about death of Sri Lankan players in the IPL, Murali rued that once they start producing quality players, who do well at the international level, they will be automatically picked by the franchises.

"Obviously, we don't have talent back home (in Sri Lanka). So actually, we are lacking (good players). We had great teams, great players but they all retired. New guys are coming up but until they perform, franchises won't pick them," Muralitharan said. The spin wizard also hailed the contribution of IPL saying it has helped the development of Indian players.

For Muralitharan, the other T20 leagues in foreign countries like Australia's Big Bash or South Africa's upcoming T20 league won't make it big unless the top Indian players are allowed by the Board of Control for Cricket in India to participate in these tournaments.

"Whatever said and done, if Indians players are not going to playing in those tournaments, its not going to be a big hit. Because everyone wants Indian players, (otherwise) it won't have big impact as IPL," he stated. (Agencies)

(18) Cycling ...

and has rendered it vulnerable to disinformation, false reporting and uncritical acceptance of certain socio-cultural and historical narratives.

In a statement, organisers said that well-read societies were better prepared to build a brighter future for themselves and for future generations. This tour will call on Afghans to adopt regular reading habits to lead successful lives. (Pajhwok)

(19) Displaced ...

family had been given 8,000afghani in cash and other relief.

He promised more families would be provided aid after a second survey was completed. However, the director stopped short of giving a specific date. (Pajhwok)

(20) Scores of Cops...

abandon such attempts."

He claimed raising the issue at every security meeting but their attempts had not yielded any results. Many districts needed more police personnel and pick-ups, the public representatives said.

A civil society activist in Takhar, Jamroz Khan Hadafman, alleged pick-ups and policemen were at the disposal of former jihadi commanders and families of government officials killed in the war.

"The government has assigned only two policemen to each of VIPs, but they have 10 policemen and thereby create security problems in the province," the activist complained.

Shabir Ahmad, a resident of Taloqan, the capital of Takhar, also grumbled that assigning pick-ups and police personnel to warlords had created problems. "Some of the vehicles are driven by children, threatening other cars by violating traffic rules."

He charged the people illegally using government vehicles were also complicit in kidnappings, robberies and murdering cases. (Pajhwok)

(21) 13 More ...

law and order. So far as many as 243 Daesh rebels, including seven notorious com-

manders, had been killed and seven wounded in the operation, said Lt. Col. Sherin Aqa Faqir spokesman for 201st Selab military corps.

It is pertinent to mention that security officials claimed last year 1,500 Daesh rebels existed in the eastern part of the country but if the number of dead and wounded IS insurgents was counted it would surpass the earlier mentioned figure. (Pajhwok)

(22) MoD Officer ...

Meshrano Jirga member, expressed concern over the law and order situation in Kabul. She said the attacks were well-planned and executed, asking the government to prevent such incidents. (Pajhwok)

(23) G7 FMs,...

foreign ministers and their five Middle Eastern counterparts would be "significantly united," Ansa news agency quoted Alfano as saying.

The G7 Foreign Ministers' meeting in Lucca, and its extraordinary enlarged session focused on Syria, came after the recent airstrikes by the U.S. against Syrian government's forces, a move, the U.S. administration said, was intended to deter the Syrian government from using chemical weapons again.

Both meetings also occurred only hours ahead of a sensitive visit of U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson to Russia.

Regarding the Syrian crisis and the alleged chemical weapons attack, Alfano said he held phone talks with Iranian counterpart Mohammad Javad Zarif on Monday. (Xinhua)

(24) France's Fillon ...

prime minister under president Nicolas Sarkozy from 2007 to 2012.

Other accusations of financial impropriety have piled up since the claims first broke in January, including that Fillon failed to declare an interest-free loan and that he accepted gifts of bespoke suits from a wealthy friend.

Fillon's lawyer Antonin Levy confirmed that investigators seized "contracts for studies" during a raid of the candidate's parliamentary offices in late January but said they were of "no interest" to the probe which he said reaches back only to 1997. (AFP)

(25) G7 Ministers ...

that climate change was set to be a hot topic in international diplomacy this year, given the mixed signals from the United States. Before the election, Trump said climate change was a "hoax," and last month he took steps to dismantle domestic rules put in place to confront climate change. (Xinhua)

(26) Kenya, Qatar ...

The Memorandum of Understanding on tourism cooperation provides for the creation of conditions for long-term collaboration in tourism through exchange of expertise, statistics, marketing and promotion.

The agreement on education, higher education, scientific research and technology provides a general framework for cooperation in these fields through exchanges of information, expertise and visits. (Xinhua)

(27) Palestinians ..

months. Lebanon's Palestinian camps, which date back to the 1948 war between Israel and its Arab neighbors, mainly fall outside the jurisdiction of Lebanese security services. There are some 450,000 Palestinian refugees living in 12 camps in Lebanon. (Reuters)

(28) Malala Receives ...

Somalia. The education activist came to prominence when a Taliban gunman shot her in the head in 2012 as she was leaving school in Swat. She was targeted for her campaign against efforts by the Taliban to deny women education.

"The extremists tried all their best to stop me, they tried to kill me and they didn't succeed," Ms Yousafzai said on Monday. "Now this is a new life, this is a second life and it is for the purpose of education." She now lives in Britain, where she received medical treatment after she was shot. (Monitoring Desk)

Tashkent was abruptly cancelled in February.

Uzbekistan first banned flights from Tajikistan in 1992 after the outbreak of civil war in its smaller neighbour to the east. (Agencies)

(30) Chinese Official...

military and nuclear activity, and reserving it exclusively for scientific research.

The treaty has 53 parties, including 29 consultative parties. The consultative status means all parties have the right to vote in Antarctic affairs. (Xinhua)