

### (1) IEC Records...

12,000 people have registered their names, of which 25 percent were women," said Hashimi. "Women's turnout (on Monday) has increased compared to the last two days, it means as each day passes, the number of male and female voters increase," said Saadia Gulabzoi, a voter registration officer in Kabul.

"People committed to serving the nation must be elected," said a Kabul resident who had just registered.

"It took only two minutes to register," said another resident of Kabul, Mohammadullah.

Another resident Fazel Ahmad meanwhile said: "Our expectation is that people should come and participate in the elections." The IEC has said that greater participation in the elections will prevent vote-rigging and fraud in the elections.

According to IEC officials, Kabul has 374 voter registration centers. Officials said they hoped 37,000 people would register at these centers every day.

The IEC has so far established 1,419 voter registration centers across the country and estimated the cost of the voter registration process will be \$30 million USD. The commission has hired over 11,000 people for the duration of the registration process.

The IEC and government have earmarked 7,300 polling centers across the country, however, nearly 1,000 of these centers are located in areas out of government's control. (Tolo news)

### (2) Border Clashes...

Security officials told TOLO news that the route across the Durand Line was being used by Taliban insurgents and that a joint military operation between Afghan army and commandos, accompanied by US forces, were carrying out an operation to safeguard the route and establish check posts when they came under fire from Pakistani soldiers.

The officials said the Afghan security forces responded.

Dand-e-Ptan district is close to Zazi Maidan district of eastern Khost province - both of which border Parachinar district in Kurram Agency in Pakistan. Zazi Maidan on Sunday came under fire by Pakistani troops.

Clashes broke out when the Pakistani troops reportedly tried to take control of an Afghan check post. Local residents responded until security forces arrived in the area. Three Pakistani soldiers and two Afghan civilians were killed in the skirmish.

The 203rd Thunder Corps commander, General ShaurGul, said on Sunday that the skirmish started when Pakistani soldiers started shooting at a check post close to Jandighar area in Zazi Maidan district.

"At eight o'clock Pakistani military started attacking our local people and security forces fired back, killing three Pakistani soldiers. Three others were arrested, and our two Afghan civilians were killed, and two others were wounded," Gul said.

The Jandighar check post is located on top of a hill. Officials have said the Pakistani military has tried on numerous occasions to capture the check post. However, on Sunday when they again tried to take control, local residents retaliated.

Video footage received by TOLO news shows a Pakistani army officer named Brigadier Akhtar ask an Afghan army officer to handover at least three Pakistani

nationals. However, in the video, the Pakistani officer did not specify whether these nationals were dead or alive.

This comes after Ghani Samim, Kunar governor's spokesman, said last week that in only a few days nearly 1,500 missiles had been fired on Kunar province from Pakistan.

Samim said after a break of two days, shelling started up again last Monday night. Almost 400 missiles landed in Kunar province overnight, he said.

In February last year, the Ministry of Defense (MoD) warned that Pakistan's missile attacks on the eastern regions of the country would have serious consequences, suggesting that a diplomatic solution to the issue between the two neighbors was needed.

However, Pakistani officials in the past have claimed that they targeted only terrorist groups by firing off the missiles but residents said the missiles hit their houses and the surrounding forests. (Tolo news)

### (3) Taliban Rejects...

He also said the Taliban should prepare themselves to take part in the elections adding that elections were a means to end disagreements.

But the Taliban said in their statement that Afghanistan is occupied, with thousands of foreign troops in the country and that major political and military decisions are "taken by the occupiers".

"We have seen in past elections that people have been cheated and the final decision was taken by John Kerry (former US Secretary of State), and the National Unity Government was created at the US embassy in Kabul," the statement read.

The group also called on the people to boycott the elections.

The Taliban has still not however responded to Ghani's peace offer made at the Kabul Process meeting at the end of January.

Calls meanwhile for the group to join the peace process have been growing - from within Afghanistan and the international community.

However, last week, Hakimullah Mujahid, a former member of the insurgent group said the Taliban are holding discussions about Ghani's peace offer.

Mujahid, who is now a member of Afghanistan's High Peace Council (HPC), said: "The Taliban are conducting consultations and there is the possibility that they give a positive response to the Afghan government, at a time that the war is going on, we hope that the Taliban come up with a positive response."

Pierre Mayaudon, the European Union's Head of Delegation to Afghanistan, also commented on the issue recently and said the Taliban's failure so far to reject the offer raises hopes that the group will act in a positive manner.

"The absence of a response by the Taliban is not a sign of refusal, may be it is a sign that they are debating about what kind of response they can give to this peace plan which is very complex. So we are not so concerned about the absence of a response," said Mayaudon. (Tolo news)

### (4) Afghan Soldiers...

front of a parade.

But the defense ministry responded to the criticism and said the Afghan soldiers, along with their counterparts from other countries, had attended the military exercise in order to become better prepared for counter-ter-

rorism actions.

"The exercise is only for making preparations to fight terrorism, insurgency and other groups that might emerge in these countries. So they will be prepared on how to act against them and which capabilities they need," defense ministry spokesman Mohammad Radmanish said.

Brigadier Abdullah bin Hussein Al-Subaie, a Saudi spokesman for the exercise, said the initiative had been conducted to enhance military capabilities and to forge closer cooperation between the military from various countries.

"The aim of the military exercise is to enhance the soldiers' capabilities and to create close cooperation between them in addressing regional challenges. Joint military exercises by different countries enhances the soldiers' abilities and finally helps us to strengthen the security of the region," said Al-Subaie.

The Joint Gulf Shield military exercises are believed to have been the biggest of its kind in the region to date - not only in terms of countries that participated but also regarding the types of weapons and equipment used.

On Monday, leaders of Arab countries, and others, headed to the eastern city of Jubail in Saudi Arabia to attend the final phase of the Joint Gulf Shield-1 military exercise.

The armed forces of 24 Arab and Islamic states participated in the second phase of the exercise, which was launched on April 2 in Saudi Arabia. The first phase was conducted late March.

The one-month exercise came under the auspices of Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz. (Tolo news)

### (5) Iran Backs...

as well as human rights cooperation between Iran and Afghanistan, he added.

Fawzia Koofi, the head of the Civil Society, Human Rights and Women Rights of Parliament who led the delegation described the meeting as being very fruitful.

Grounds for the expansion of international cooperation between Iran and Afghanistan are well prepared, Koofi said.

Exchange of views and cooperation between the two sides' officials will help improve the status of human rights and the amendment of existing rules and regulations, she said. (Tolo news)

### (6) Terrorism Has...

The summit welcomed the decision of the UN General Assembly on Al-Quds, commending the states that supported it. They promised continued efforts to re-launch effective Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations on ending the political stalemate resulting from the intransigence of the Israeli position.

The conflict could be ended through a two-state solution that guarantees the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with the July 1967 borders and East Al-Quds as its capital, the declaration says.

"This is the way to achieve security and stability in the region, as per the announcement of the Palestinian president at the Security Council on February 20, 2018," it added

The participants also denounced targeting 119 missile attacks by Iranian-backed Houthi militias on Saudi Arabia through, Makkah and a number of other cities.

They affirmed full support for the kingdom of Saudi Arabia in

all measures taken to protect its security and capabilities.

The global fraternity was asked to toughen sanctions on Iran and its militias, prevent it from supporting terrorist groups, supplying Houthi militias with missiles manufactured in Iran and launched from Yemen toward Saudi cities and to abide by the UN Resolution No. 2216.

Pledging all necessary efforts to eliminate terrorist gangs, their supporters, its organizers and sponsors at home and abroad such as Iran and its arms in the Middle East and Africa, the summit hoped the free world would back their quest for peace, security and development.

"We strongly condemn attempts to link terrorism and Islam. We call upon the international community ... to issue a unified definition of terrorism. Terrorism has no religion, no homeland and no identity."

All countries were urged to shoulder their responsibilities to combat this dangerous scourge. "We deplore the distortion by some extremist groups of the image of the true religion of Islam by linking it to terrorism, and warn that such attempts serve terrorism itself." (Pajhwok)

### (7) Afghan Forces...

manage to detonate it.

In the meantime, the security forces discovered and defused an improvised explosive device in the 5th police district of the city in Kote Sangi area, the officials said.

According to the CID officials, another hand grenade was discovered and confiscated before the militants manage to detonate it near a residential house in the 6th police district of the city. (KP)

### (8) MoCN Admits ...

insecure and rural areas. We have mentioned in our research that poppy cultivation are mostly in areas under the control of opposition groups," said Ahmad Seyar Yazdani, researcher.

Afghanistan is the world's top producer of the poppy from which opium and heroin are produced.

Afghanistan is at a cross-roads; the country is emerging from more than twenty years of political and social unrest as the leading global producer of opium in a geographic region widely affected by drug use, particularly injection drug use, and blood-borne infections, including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). (ATN)

### (9) Pakistan Asks...

through Pakistan every year. Alokzay urged Afghan government to take similar action against Pakistani products.

"Pakistan is stopping our goods, but we are allowing their goods to be exported into Afghanistan," he said.

In addition, he asked Afghan traders to think about alternative markets for their products.

At the same time, Musafir Qoqandi Spokesman for the Ministry of Commerce and Industries (MoCI) told Ariana News that all these issues will be discussed with Pakistani officials in a meeting which is scheduled to be held in Islamabad in the near future. (ATN)

### (10) MoCN Admits...

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searcher.

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### (11) ISIS Hideout ...

militants have been attempting to expand their foothold in some remote parts of the province during the recent years.

This comes as counter-terrorism operations and airstrikes are underway in different parts of the country against ISIS and other militant and terrorist groups.

The 201st Silab Corps of the Afghan Military in the East said Saturday that the US forces based in Afghanistan carried out a series of airstrikes on ISIS hideouts in Khogyani district.

The source further added that the militants were targeted in Zawa area of the district by unmanned aerial vehicles and as a result at least six militants were killed. (KP)

### (12) Joint Airstrikes...

Zafar Corps, the airstrikes were carried out around 3 am local time to suppress the militants.

Several key commanders of the militants including Mullah Ibrahim - leading a group of 40 insurgents, Hafiz Niaz Mohammad - leading of 30 militants, Haji Basir commander of 20 militants and Saleh Moammad who was in charge of a group of at least 10 militants were among those killed.

At least one Afghan policeman also lost his life during the clashes and two others were wounded, the Zafar Corps added.

In another incident in BalaBolok district, at least two key commanders of the Taliban group identified as Mullah Abdul Qayoum and Hesamuddin were killed, according to Zafar Corps. (KP)

### UK PM to Meet Commonwealth Leaders over Windrush Deportation Row

LONDON (United Kingdom) - British Prime Minister Theresa May will meet Commonwealth leaders this week to discuss a growing row over threatened deportations of people who moved to Britain from the Caribbean in the 1950s and 1960s, her spokesman said Monday.

More than 140 British lawmakers have called for action over the "inhumane" treatment of members of the so-called Windrush generation, named after the ship that brought over the first group of West Indian immigrants in 1948.

They were invited to work in Britain after World War II and given indefinite leave to remain, but many who failed to get their papers in order now risk being uprooted if they cannot prove their legal rights.

Immigration minister Caroline Nokes conceded that "we have made mistakes", revealing that in some cases people were asked to provide four pieces of documentary evidence for every year spent in Britain. Leaders of the 53 Commonwealth countries are in London for their biennial heads of government meeting, and some member states have expressed alarm at the situation. (AFP)