

### (1) ERC Meets ....

their funding of the Afghan electoral system if reforms are not pursued, will shed light on how Afghanistan can learn from other electoral regimes around the world, especially regarding electronic voting systems.

"What we expect from international experts is help understanding, in line with the electoral experiences of other countries around the world, which method is more reliable and practical in Afghanistan," ERC member As-sadullah Saadati explained on Thursday. "We want them to provide us the necessary suggestions and hear their opinion on how it is possible for the ERC to incorporate electronic voting in Afghanistan to its work agenda in the long term," he added.

Thursday's meetings included a gathering with members of Afghan civil society and women's rights groups. The meeting involved discussion of a number of issues, such as providing greater awareness about the voting process to Afghan women, increasing women's participation in elections, and preventing the intimidation and defrauding of female voters.

"Electronic voting should be introduced for parliamentary elections to avoid the misuse of women's votes and to prevent riggers from filling the ballot boxes with names of women voters," civil society activist Suraya Parluka suggested.

Beyond procedural and technology-based reforms, those gathered on Thursday also pushed for personnel changes at the level of the electoral commissions, which have suffered major public image issues since the tumultuous 2014 presidential race. "We never supported members of the election commission being associated with a party," MP Raihana Azad said. "Sovereign and neutral people must be appointed to the election management bodies."

Talking about the various stakeholder meetings that have been held this week, ERC member Faizulah Zaki reiterated that the commission's top priority in the near term is starting to rebuild public trust in elections. "A variety of ideas were gathered, but the important issue is to see how we can rebuild trust among the people of Afghanistan toward elections, and, by implementing comprehensive and basic reforms, pave the way for holding free and transparent elections in order to resolve the uncertainties," he said.

The ERC plans to complete its consultations by the end of the week. It has set a deadline of one month for submitting its first round of recommendations to the government. (Tolonews)

### (2) MoD Prevents....

Dasht-e-Arche district of Kunduz, Almar in Faryab, Kohistanat in Sare-Pul and Nawzad in Helmand provinces collapsed to the Taliban. However, this did not mean the entire district collapsed to the Taliban.

He also spoke of planned programs for the next year regarding armed opposition groups and he emphasized that the ANA forces have conducted offensive operations against the insurgents and even foiled insurgent plans for the construction of military facilities in a number of provinces.

During the past four months operations by Afghan forces across the country has resulted in the deaths of hundreds of insurgents. In addition, over 700 were captured by government forces.

"During the past four months the ANA forces - with the cooperation of people - have rebuffed hundreds of insurgent attacks. We have rescued 41 districts from collapse which was the main target of the enemy, and as you are all aware that security forces had a bloody battle with enemies of Afghanistan in Badakhshan, Kunduz, Sare-Pul, Baghlan, Faryab, Ghor, Badghis, and several battles in Helmand and Kandahar provinces," MoD Operations Director General Afzal Aman told reporters.

"We have conducted more than 565 planned operations, clearing operations, special operations, commando operations and independent night operations," Aman told reporters. (Tolonews)

### (3) Peace Talks....

said that the peace talks "couldn't be a more clear moment" of op-

portunity for them to really embrace this reconciliation process. The US, he said, is aware that the presence of ISIL-affiliated militants in Afghanistan. "We are monitoring that very closely, whether their emergence will have any kind of meaningful or significant impact on the threat environment in the region," he said. (Pajhwok)

### (4) Senior Taliban ....

leadership of the Taliban, but the appointment of Mullah Mansour dismantled the plan," said Nazar Mohammad Motmain, an author and political analyst. Meanwhile, members of a banned Islamist militant group offered funeral prayers for Mullah Omar in Pakistan's Lahore city.

The prayer was led by Hafiz Saeed, the leader of Islamist Charity Jamaat ud Dawah (JuD), linked to outlawed militant group Lashkar-E-Taiba (LeT). While confirming the death of Mullah Omar, Taliban's spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said on Thursday that the late leader died of an illness which he said the leader had been suffering "for some time."

Omar, who was Afghanistan's 11th head of state from 1996 to late 2001, was believed to have been living in Quetta and Karachi cities in Pakistan.

Hi regime - which was overthrown by U.S.-led NATO invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 - was recognized by only three nations: Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. (Tolonews)

### (5) Second Round....

constructive discussions on different issues with Afghan officials.

Feldman also described he had meeting with officials from Afghan election commission who shared their plans regarding reforms in election commission. In his meeting with Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah, Feldman assured US complete support to unity government.

"We have come to know through media regarding Mullah Omar's death," he said, avoiding replying questions regarding whereabouts and time of Mullah Omar's death.

The US had initiated investigations and would share the findings soon after they were completed, he noted.

Feldman also mentioned that US strongly supported Afghanistan's President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani efforts for peace and relations with neighboring Pakistan.

The situation was favorable for peace process and the talks process was a moment of opportunity for the Taliban to become part of Afghan political system. (Pajhwok)

### (6) Taliban Say ....

he second round of peace talks would be held on Friday in Islamabad.

The first round of peace of direct negotiations was held in the tourist resort of Murree last month, with China and US attending the groundbreaking meeting as observers.

Haji Din Mohammad, a member of Afghan delegation, said in an interview that Taliban had assured them the second round of talks would take place after the Eid festival.

But the Taliban expressed their unawareness about the second round while the rumors about the death of their supreme commanders circulated in media since Wednesday. (Pajhwok)

### (7) Another Woman....

Abdullah also added that Miss Rasooly was introduced the member of the Supreme Court considering all the legal standards but she could not obtain enough votes from the lawmakers.

Rasooli who holds a degree in Law and Political Science from the University of Kabul was introduced to the Lower House of the Parliament - Wolesi Jirga for formal procedures by President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani to get membership of the Supreme Court of Afghanistan but she could not receive the vote of confidence on Wednesday's session.

She was introduced to the Afghan Parliament as part of President Ghani's promise to appoint a female judge in the Supreme Court

of Afghanistan during presidential campaign for the second round of election last year.

President Ghani said he has spoken with the religious scholars and the appointment of a female judge in Supreme Court does not have any legal or religious issue. He said the women have been deprived of their rights all these years and insisted to give them their rights.

Ghani said, "Our pledge is that we will have a woman Chief Justice in our government." (KP)

### (8) China to Back ....

council on Thursday unanimously elected Mullah Akhtar Mansoor as its new leader, Pakistani media reported on Thursday.

At a meeting late on Wednesday night, the Taliban's Quetta Shura elected Sirajuddin Haqqani, chief of the banned Haqqani Network, as the insurgent group's deputy leader. (Pajhwok)

### (9) Gen. Campbell ....

Meanwhile, reports stated that former President Hamid Karzai - who was recently accused of trying to derail the government - also met with Sayyaf during Eid Days.

Sayyaf was a former Jihadi commander who was well known for fighting the Soviet troops in Afghanistan. (Tolonews)

### (10) US Senate....

in neighboring countries as needed to promote regional economic integration.

It requires a report by GAO on long term development programming conducted by the US military, ways to improve coordination between the US development agencies and the US military and on Commander's Emergency Response Program.

It requires an annual report on potential cases of corruption by Afghan government officials or their relatives.

The bill seeks to promote increased accountability for US assistance in Afghanistan, while supporting programs that strengthen Afghan institutions tasked with combating corruption. With Afghanistan experiencing ongoing security and political transitions, this legislation seeks to ensure that continued US investments pay the greatest development dividends.

"Though Afghanistan stands at a crossroads, the National Unity Government is confronting the nation's challenges head on by demonstrating an important commitment to accountability and good governance," Menendez said.

This bill ensured the United States would take additional steps to bolster the capacity of Afghan institutions so that they can be more accountable and responsive to the country's citizens and international donors, he added.

"Our hard-fought gains cannot be reversed. We must provide the right tools to the Afghan government to make sure our investments are used wisely going forward," Menendez concluded. (Pajhwok)

### (11) Proscribed....

founded by Jalaluddin Haqqani - an Afghan guerrilla leader bankrolled by the United States to fight Soviet troops in Afghanistan in the 1980s.

In the 1980s, Jalaluddin was close to the CIA and Pakistani intelligence. He allied himself to the Taliban after they took power in Kabul in 1996, serving as a cabinet minister under the militia's supreme leader, Mullah Mohammad Omar.

When American attacked Afghanistan after the 9/11 attacks, Haqqani sought refuge in Pakistan's tribal district of North Waziristan and became one of the first anti-US commanders based in the border areas.

Jalaluddin had set up a base in North Waziristan following the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001, under which he was the minister for border affairs. He used his North Waziristan base to direct the Haqqani network's operations. The group is accused of being behind some of the deadliest attacks in Afghanistan.

The network is militarily the most capable of the Afghan Taliban factions and operates independently but remains loyal to Mullah Omar.

Unidentified gunmen attacked and killed Nasiruddin Haqqani, the group's chief fundraiser and another son of its founder, on the

edge of Islamabad in 2013.

Due to his ailment, the militant 'commander' had handed over operational command of the Haqqani network to his son, Sirajuddin.

Jalaluddin was also on the UN Sanctions list since January 31, 2001. (Pajhwok)

### (12) Mullah Omar's ....

this week, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and officials from the National Directorate of Security claimed that the reclusive former Taliban chief had in fact died two years ago, in 2013, at a hospital in Karachi, Pakistan. While, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid confirmed the death of Omar, he suggested it occurred more recently.

Looking ahead, while government peace delegation members remain optimistic about the future of talks, the High Peace Council has said it unclear when and where the second round will take place. "After the Taliban determine their new leader, it will be made clear when and where the second round of peace talks will be held," HPC member Qazi Mohammad Amin Waqad said.

Nevertheless, interviews with former Taliban commanders and experts on the group have lent credence to the claims of negotiators regarding the likelihood of continued talks. "I think there are lots of people among the Taliban who are in favor of peace talks and the death of Mullah Omar won't affect peace talks," former Taliban commander Syed Akbar Agha told TOLONews.

According to Pakistani political analyst, Kahlid Rehman, Islamabad and all the key stakeholders within Pakistan are still on board with the peace process regardless of the death of Mullah Omar. "Pakistan's government, the Pakistani armed forces, Pakistani political parties, Pakistani public opinion and Pakistani opinion makers all are on the same page, and every one of them is interested in negotiations taking place and finally leading toward stability in Afghanistan," Pakistan Institute of Policy Studies Director General Khalid Rehman said. "So, on the part of the government of Pakistan, I don't think there is any chance of withdrawing from the process at this stage." (Tolonews)

### (13) Chabahar Port ....

of the key advantages of the new port will be that it will offer an alternative to Pakistan's Karachi port, which has long been the only option for exporting for Afghan traders. High tariffs and shakedowns from local officials have been a persistent problem for many in the Afghan business community trying to pass their goods through Pakistan.

"We have a strong need for access to the Chabahar Port; this will enable our investors to get access to world markets," economic analyst Ibrahim Shams told TOLONews. "Afghanistan has large amounts of natural resources and mines which need to be discovered and extracted and transferred. Chabahar Port can help Afghanistan's industrial and commerce development process." Beyond the purely economic benefits of the port, analysts have said that the project will also help enhance broader diplomatic ties between Afghanistan, India and Iran.

It is also said that a number of other countries are also willing to join the Chabahar trade agreement. According to the Iranian Ambassador, Oman intends to access Central Asian markets via the Chabahar Port and Afghanistan. (Tolonews)

### (14) Peace Talks....

not succeed in their designs," read the statement.

This announcement comes only hours after Pakistan media reports stated that Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour - Mullah Omar's close aide - has been appointed as the new Taliban leader.

The new Taliban chief, Mansour, previously served as the second-in-command of the movement.

According to Pakistan media, the Afghan Taliban Shura (Executives Council) appointed Mansour after the Afghan government confirmed Wednesday that Omar had died two years ago in a Karachi hospital.

Meanwhile, former chief and the

movement's founder, Mullah Omar led the militant group to victory over competing Afghan militias in the 1990's after the withdrawal of Soviet troops.

The Taliban government was ousted after the US-led forces invaded Afghanistan in 2001.

On Wednesday, a spokesman for Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and Afghanistan's intelligence agency officials claimed that the reclusive former Taliban chief died two years ago at a hospital in Pakistan. (Tolonews)

### (15) Campaign ....

caught by Hepatitis A.

The health ministry officials ensured that a drive had been kicked-off to know the exact number of Hepatitis affected persons and would provide them with treatment. (Pajhwok)

### (16) Mullah ....

Habibullah, a member of Taliban Quetta Shura; and Sayed Tayib Agha, head of Taliban's political office in Qatar are among the senior Taliban members that disagree the appointment of Mansour - who was Mullah Omar's deputy.

Also, some Pakistani media reports suggested that Omar's son, Mullah Mohammad Yaqoub, was himself hoping to succeed his father - a move that was reportedly opposed by some members of the group.

While confirming the death of Mullah Omar, Mujahid said the late leader died of an illness which he said the leader had been suffering "for some time." (Tolonews)

### (17) Flood-Affected....

flour edible oil, beans and salt, he said.

Red Crescent also had provided 26 tents, tarpaulins, kitchen utensils and 186 tents, he added.

The flood affected families had warned last week that their children would die of hunger had they not been provided with immediate assistance.

Separately, local elders in Kunar demanded emergency assistance from Governor Wahidullah Kalimzai.

The elders said that displaced families did not have shelter while floods had wreaked havoc and destroyed culverts, irrigation channels, crops and roads and caused transportation problems. The flood affected families had not received any support so far, they said.

The elders urged on provincial government to demand assistance from the central government and accelerate efforts to get the attention of international community for assistance.

Governor Kalimzai assured to send survey teams to the area and would provide every possible support. Several other families in other districts had been affected by the recent flash floods triggered by heavy torrential rains.

Gul Aqa who hails from Dawam district in Panjsher said around 600 meter road, 25 acres agricultural land, hundreds of fruit trees in orchards had been completely destroyed in recent floods in the area.

Rahili Aatayee, deputy head Panjsher provincial council, said floods had destroyed roads and agricultural lands in Dawam, Abshar, Qaulandur and Aanabi districts. (Pajhwok)

### (18) 7-Man Gang....

detected their residence and arrested them all.

The official said 25 landmine's remote control devices, 25 kilograms of ammonium nitrate, 40 metres of wire, three landmines, two rocket shells and other ammunition were recovered from the seven-member gang.

NDS officials have previously arrested a large number of people accused of murders and other crimes. (Pajhwok)

### (19) Nangarhar Drone....

area in which insurgents have activities and frequently attack the local security forces.

Foreign troop drone strikes have increased markedly in the eastern parts of the country recently. Just last week at least five insurgents were killed in a foreign troops drone strike in the same province. The incident took place in Lalpoor district when a foreign troops drone targeted them, a spokesman for Nangarhar Police Chief, Hazrat Hussain Mashriqiwal said.

Lalpoor district is a known insecure area in which insurgents have activities and frequently attack the local security forces. (Tolonews)

### (20) Ghazni Collision....

Samiullah, an eye witness, said the bus hit the car and killed all its occupants. The driver was a drug addict, he added. The Kabul-Kandahar road sees the highest number of accidents in the country. (Pajhwok)

### (21) Prices of Fuel....

in Wazirabad locality, said that the rate of one litre of petrol up from 43 to 46 afghanis and the same quantity of diesel increased from 41 to 42 afghanis.

Fazal Rahman, head of the Food Traders' Union, said with the surge in prices of gas and oil the prices of necessary edible items had also jumped. According to his information, 49-kilogram sack of Pakistani flour accounted for 1,260 afs, 16 litres of Momen oil for 970 afs, 24 kilograms of rice for 1,550afs, 50 kilograms of sugar for 1,620afs, and a kilogram of African black tea for 210afs in the outgoing week. But a retailer in the Dahan-i-Bagh area of Kabul, Ahmad Farhad, sold a 50-kg bag of flour for 1,370afs, a 50-kg sack of sugar for 1,850afs, a 24-kg bag of rice for 1,850afs and a 16 liter tin of Momin ghee for 1,060afs.

Mohammad Fawad, a jeweler in the Taimur Shahi square, said due to decline in the value of Afghan currency the price of one gram Arabic accounted for 1,950afs and the price of one gram Russian gold accounted for 1,600 afs.

Afghani currency has somehow lost its value in the outgoing week against foreign currency. Moneychanger Ahmad Shah said the buying rate of one US dollar was 61,300afs, while 1,000 Pakistani rupees accounted for 589 afs. Last week's exchange value of one dollar stood at 61 afs and 1,000 Pakistani rupees at 581afs. (Pajhwok)

two weeks of tough negotiations in Vienna, Austria's capital city, between Iran and the P5+1 -- Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States, plus Germany. The landmark deal is expected to put Iran on the path of sanctions relief but more strict limits on its nuclear program. (Xinhua)

### (22) EU Starts....

member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, attended a celebration in the Olympic Park in Beijing on Friday evening. Liu spoke highly of the success of the bid, and expressed thanks to all the people involved. Liu said, "The 1.3 billion Chinese people embrace Olympic Movement again. This not only helps develop the winter sports in China, but also strengthen the friendship and mutual understanding between the Chinese people and the people from other countries. (Xinhua)

### (23) Beijing's win....

refugees, because local authorities do not have the capacity to address the challenge alone, Cocherel said, adding that emergencies require bold and immediate action. "We fully recognize that Greece is in a difficult financial situation, but we are not talking about a developing country," he stressed, noting that the key problem in Greece was "lack of coordination" among different levels of authority to face the challenges.

### (24) Greece, EU....

In Cameroon for example refugees are receiving the level of assistance, medical aid and food that is not seen in Greece, the expert said, underlining that the situation in Greece was "abnormal."

"What we experienced on a daily basis on the islands is chaos, lack of organization," he said, insisting that this is a "manageable challenge."

Greece needs to increase its reception capacity, Cocherel said. (Xinhua)

### (25) US Stocks Little....

benefits grew at their slowest pace in 33 years in the spring, the Labor Department said, stark evidence that the improving job market still isn't lifting paychecks much for most Americans. The slowdown likely reflects a sharp drop-off in bonus and incentive pay for some workers. (AP)