

(1) CEO Sketches...

in ensuring transparent elections in the country in future and that it will help track the infiltration of terrorists. "As long as the national unity government delays the e-NIC rollout, this will pose threats to not only the parliamentary elections but also to presidential elections," said Yousaf Rashid, head of the Free and Fair Election Forum of Afghanistan (FEFA). The e-NIC department in recent months let go hundreds of its employees after donors withdrew financial assistance following constant deadlocks over the process. On Wednesday, some former employees of e-NIC department staged a protest in Kabul to express their outrage over the recruitment of new employees in the department. "Thousands of dollars were spent on each employee; these employees are educated and experienced," one of the protesters Assadullah Azizi said. "They promised us that if they rehire, they will take those who are former employees, but now procurements are conducted on the basis of nepotism and they want to recruit their relatives," said former e-NIC employee Ali Rahman. Implementing the necessary reforms in Afghanistan's election law and ensuring the rollout of electronic ID cards were among two key promises made by government, but two years after the establishment of the NUG, politics still holds back the e-NIC progress. (Tolonews)

(2) Violence Against...

was Farkhunda's case, who was killed in March, 2015, a death that caused mass protests across the country. Recent reports of the organization also highlighted the case of Zahra, 13. Her husband set her on fire. She was pregnant and died five days later in Istiqlal hospital in Kabul. According to AIHRC studies, among the most alarming situations in Afghanistan are included female suicide, social violence and the honor crimes. Women have poor economic opportunities, poor access to health services and education, and they lack of legal representation. According to Sultani, after four decades of armed conflict in Afghanistan, insecurity, violence and poverty hinder gender opportunities. (Prensa Latina)

(3) Oversight...

officials in fact is a deceptive and demagogic move to mislead the world and the nation in general. Declaration of assets and properties by government officials is an important factor in government's counter-corruption measures. This comes amid mounting international pressure on the Afghan government to address the challenge. Oversight groups have also rallied for legal action to be taken against those officials who fail to register their assets, arguing that the approach was a clear violation of the law. "Problems exist around certain fields such as ownership of property, vehicles, financial contracts, businesses and assets abroad. Some people transfer their assets abroad and we do not have the ability to register their assets abroad," said Fakhri.

"In some cases where there is doubt and there is no exact information, there is a need for more investigations and these individuals must be dealt with according to the law," said Sayed Ekram Afzali, head of Integrity Watch Afghanistan. Government officials' failure to declare their assets has drawn strong reaction from anti-corruption groups. "This remains secret and people are not informed about it, I don't understand what the government leadership really wants from the asset registration, they only deceive and pretend to the international community, this is funny," said Zaman Amarkhail, head of Afghan Anti-Corruption Network. (Tolonews)

(4) Amid Growing... in an exclusive interview with Pajhwok Afghan News, said 911 posts had been filled in one year. "We have announced 1,027 vacancies in 54 government departments, with 911 of them having been filled. But hundreds of positions are still lying vacant," he admitted, promising merit in future recruitment. The posts have been unfilled for the past four to five years, but the employment process has recently been accelerated. Sultani said educated people working for NGOs received high salaries until five years ago. Now they show no interest in working for the government. Some tribal figures and public representatives were trying to have their blue-eyed individuals appointed to the positions, something that has led to differences. But such attempts had been discouraged by Dr. Hamayun

Azizi, he added. He added the employment process was fully transparent and was based on an impartial exam. Each candidate was required to have a bachelor's degree and work experience in the relevant field, Sultani stressed, saying exams were conducted by a monitoring committee to prevent corruption in the process.

The monitoring committee is comprised of representatives from the Kandahar University, Women Affairs Department, provincial council, administrative reform, human resource offices and civil society activists, he maintained. During the Hamid Karzai presidency, unsuitable people were given jobs in insecure provinces, but the employment process under the current president has been reformed. A job-seeker must have a bachelor's degree and work experience. Most of posts are vacant in districts or departments that need professional workers, according to the official, who said many qualified individuals were unwilling to work in remote areas for low salaries.

"We prioritise women in the employment process in order to increase empower them economically. However, some cultural barriers and insecurity prevent them from working in government offices," Sultani continued. The Kandahar governor has ordered all posts be announced and filled on merit. Currently, 927 positions are vacant in the government departments but efforts are ongoing to fill them in the near future.

Samim Khpalkw, the governor's spokesman, revealed the provincial administration had decided to fill all vacancies until the end of the current solar year through open merit. He acknowledged 677 posts in the education department, 102 in the municipality, 47 in public health, 34 in census registration office and seven in environment protection agency. Similarly, five slots in Haj and religious affairs department, 26 in agriculture and livestock, 12 in justice, 13 Kandahar University and five in the aviation department remain vacant. Qudratullah, a resident of the 9th police district, claimed hundreds of government posts had been vacant while a large number of youth were tired of seeking jobs. A graduate from the Kandahar Education University, he said most of youth previously working with NGOs were currently jobless. Hundreds of graduates from Kandahar universities could work in government departments, he believed, alleging those employed over the past 15 years did not possess the required qualifications or were appointed on the basis of favoritism and bribes. He asked the Kandahar governor to remove unqualified people from their positions and replace them with professional and qualified individuals, who could better serve the masses.

"It is very painful when educated people suffer joblessness while the illiterate land lushy slots," remarked Qudratullah. Most of uneducated government servants have having documents were appointed to various posts, he concluded. (Pajhwok)

(5) Over 2,000 ... A wheelchair-bound, grey-bearded man, Hazrat Shah, told the newspaper he had come to Chamkani from Mansehradistrict along with his family last night. But he had no idea how long they would have to wait for their turn to be de-registered. Another refugee, Nizamuddin, said though he and his family had Proof of Registration (PoR) cards, yet they had made up their mind to go back to their country due to the harsh treatment they were being meted out by security personnel. (Pajhwok)

(6) Operations ... widespread propaganda, spreading terror among residents. But a security official in the district told Pajhwok Afghan News that they possessed enough weapons and military gear. He said the insurgents had captured Banadar area of the district and they were still in control of the area. The official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said security forces were in control of only the district centre in Khanshin and the rest of the areas were with the Taliban.

However, security officials declined to comment about the situation in Nad Ali district. But some sources said only the district administration building and Chah Injeer area were under government control and the rest had been captured by the rebels.

A member the local council in Nad Ali, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, that some security posts in Loy Bagh area had fell to Taliban and a clash was underway in Chah Injeer area. A tribal elder in Chah Injeer area, Amanullah, told Pajhwok Afghan News: "A mortar shell hit my house

last night and injured my three sons." The clash between security forces and insurgents entered a third day on Wednesday.

A day earlier, officials said 800 fresh security forces would reach Nad Ali district soon. (Pajhwok)

(7) Over 5,000 ...

enjoyed sightseeing in the area. "Our family has been living in a rented tent for the past three days. My family members go around recreational areas in daytime and return to the tent at night."

Abdur Rahman Ahmadi, the governor's spokesman, said a thousand cars carrying tourists from different provinces enter Bamyan daily for sightseeing. Generally speaking, around 5,000 tourists visited Bamyan on a daily basis, he said.

Abdul Hamid Jalia, director of historical sites, also confirmed the rising number of tourists this year. "Most of the tourists directly travel to Band-i-Amir Dam," he said, acknowledging both routes through Parwan and Maidan Wardak provinces were insecure and air travel was expensive. Lutfullah, who came here from Maidan Wardak said, "Bamyan really is a picturesque place, when we arrived here, I thought Afghanistan is a war-free country because whoever comes to Bamyan feels peace and calmness here."

Bamyan has eight UNESCO-listed heritage sites, including the two huge Taliban-dynamited Buddha statues, Kakrak Valley, Qul Akram, Zahak City, Ghulghula City, Qul Ghami caves and some other Buddhist-era grottos.

In addition with the historical places; Band-e-Amir dam contains seven sub-dams and lakes having natural beauty and thousands of visitors daily thronged to the park named as Band-i-Amir National Park.

At the Band-i-Amir dam, tourist attractions have been put in place, including 10 hotels and tents and rental homes. Those spending nights could avail themselves of the services available. Band-i-Amir was declared the first-ever national park in 2007 in accordance with a presidential decree. The park is a huge resort situated 70 kilometres north of Bamyan City. The park is spread over 41,000 hectares of land and had six natural lakes. (Pajhwok)

(8) Hundreds of ... Asian states, might find Afghanistan as a safe haven. But our own nationals who are fighting in Syria and Iraq would prefer moving back to Pakistan.

Intelligence reports suggest the fighters, planning to return home, are gathering in Afghanistan to take refuge in tribal badlands, where several insurgent groups like Taliban, Al-Qaeda and Islamic State are already active. (Pajhwok)

(9) Love and Unity... been hit by brutal terror attacks in recent weeks, but from Paris to Baghdad, Mogadishu to Kabul we stand united against these attempts to divide us. The Hazara people are in mourning for the precious lives they've lost, and the world has linked arms with them to show that love and unity will always beat hate and division." (PR)

(10) Key Taliban ... further added that 2 security personnel also lost their lives and six others sustained injuries during the same operations but the local residents did not suffer any casualties. The Taliban militants group however rejected the report regarding the heavy casualties of the group's militants during the operations. Badakhshan has been witnessing growing instability during the recent months as the Taliban group attempt to expand insurgency in northern and northeastern parts of the country.

The province also witnessed deadly attacks last year and a number of the districts were briefly captured by the militants while numerous Afghan security personnel lost their lives during the deadly clashes. (KP)

(11) Nangarhar ... said they had been provided residence facilities in Sheikh Mesri, Chamtal and Qasimabad areas. A township would be also built in Behsud district to resolve refugees' residence problem, he said, adding the township would help refugees belonging to Nangarhar to have homes. He said all houses illegally built in Sheikh Mesri City that created problems for refugees were destroyed today. "Refugee townships are for families returning to their country, other people are not allowed to build houses there," he said.

A day earlier, the Ministry of Refugee and Repatriation said around 200,000 Afghan refugees had returned home during the past six months. According to the United Nations High

Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), around 1.5 million registered and one million unregistered Afghan refugees still live in Pakistan. (Pajhwok)

(12) 45 Militants ...

Taliban commanders. Zwak said nearly 800 fresh forces would reach Nad Ali until the end of the day to strengthen security there. He said areas lost to the rebels in Nad Ali would be recaptured soon. A number of families were displaced from Nad Ali district due to clashes between security forces and Taliban militants. The clashes began two days ago.

Zwak said a commission had been tasked with delivering assistance to the displaced families. A member of the Nad Ali local council, who declined to be named, told Pajhwok Afghan News all areas, except the district centre, in Nad Ali were under Taliban control.

A resident of the town, Mohammad Nabi, said clashes were still ongoing in the district. "The Taliban are capturing areas very quickly and without any resistance."

"People cannot come out of their homes because all roads are closed. The residents of Loya Bagh area were allowed to travel to Lashkargah after they begged the Taliban," he said. Taliban spokesman Qari Yousaf Ahmadi said the fighters had captured five security posts in Marja district, killing 15 security personnel and destroying their weapons and equipment.

The Taliban are in control of Helmand's Nawzad, Musa Qala, Baghran and Dishu districts. Elsewhere, security officials said five Taliban militants have been killed and six others captured alive in southeastern Paktia and eastern Laghman provinces.

Paktia police chief Brig. Gen. Qadir Gul Zadran told Pajhwok Afghan News the Afghan security forces and Taliban militants clashed last night Sahak area of Zurmat district. Five militants were killed and seven others injured, with the Afghan forces escaping unhurt, he said.

A resident of Sahak area, Sherdad Khan, told Pajhwok Afghan News that a heavy clash took place between security forces and insurgents in the area last night, he had no information about casualties.

In Laghman, intelligence officials have detained six Taliban militants. A statement from the National Directorate of Security identified the detainees as Rahmatullah, Habib Rahman, Syed Yaqub, Abdul Saboor, Ghufuran and Zahid.

The statement said the detainees wanted to carry out a gun attack in Mehtarlam, the provincial capital. Three Kalashnikovs, two pistols, two binoculars, bullets and some military equipment were recovered from the detainees, it claimed. (Pajhwok)

(13) Bakhshi ... against stiff competition in his 90+kg weight division. Eight-times world Judo champion, Teddy Riner, will also perform and will carry his country's flag during the Rio 2016 opening ceremony on Friday. Afghanistan competed in the Games for the first time in Berlin in 1936. In all the years, Afghanistan has only brought home two medals - both bronze. One from Beijing 2008 Games and the other from London 2012 Games.

Rohullah Nikapai brought moth medals home following his success in taekwondo. This year however, he will not participate but will be the country's official flag bearer. (Tolonews)

(14) Samangan Melon... this year in the province. Faiz Mohammad, resident of the Ghaznigak village of Hazrat Sultan district, told Pajhwok that melon and watermelon production in their area had shot up this year.

Agriculture officials taught farmers new cultivation methods and the use of pesticides and the change in cultivation time. Farmers would grow the fruits once a season in the past but now they cultivate them every 20 days. Qari Taj Mohammad, a farmer from the Larkhabi area of Hazrat Sultan district, saw a 25% rise in his watermelon and melon production this year.

He called the improved system, including cultivation inside greenhouses, the main factor behind the considerable profit. This year, he has cultivated the fruits inside glasshouses, boosting the yield. He planted watermelon and melon on 75 acres of land this year, hoping for 254,000kg and 140,000kg yields respectively. Samangan's watermelon and melon, in addition to local sales, are also sent to Kabul, Balkh and other provinces.

Taj Mohammad said he would earn 8.1 million afghanis from selling his fruits. He added the price of per 7kg of

watermelon was 50af and the same quantity of melon 60af. The fruits are widely cultivated in Farah, Jawzjan, Baghlan, Faryab, Kunduz, Balkh and other provinces. (Pajhwok)

(15) Afghan Cricket ...

including ACB CEO Stanikzai told reporters the Europe tour came to a successful end because the Afghan team not only achieved the fixed aim but also achieved the top position in the ICC Intercontinental Cup. Captain Asghar Stanikzai told Pajhwok Afghan News they played well in both the departments - bowling and batting.

He said the Afghan side had already played against Ireland and had tasted defeat at their hands, but this time there had been a lot of improvement in the players' abilities.

(16) 3 Soldiers...

western Afghanistan but the anti-government armed militants have recently increased to their insurgency activities in a number of its remote districts. The Taliban insurgents and militants belonging to the other militant groups are frequently using magnetic bombs to target the government and security personnel.

At least two incidents of magnetic bombing have been reported in capital Kabul during the past two weeks. (KP)

(17) Taliban's District...

policemen were killed in adjoining Paktia province. The police chief, Brig. Gen. Qadir Gul Zadran said the insurgents stormed two security checkpoints in Janikhel district. The overnight firefight, lasting several hours, resulted in the killing of at least three policemen and several insurgents, Zadran said, without providing exact figures.

Meanwhile, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid claimed the fighters overran three security posts in Janikhel and Chamkani districts. Many security personnel suffered casualties in the attack, he said. (Pajhwok)

(18) 7 Rebels...

Afghan security forces, supported by US troops, launched the major operation against the terror group in Kot district nearly 10 days ago. (Pajhwok)

(19) Airport Officials...

\$1,000 USD. The street value for 1kg in India is \$12,000 USD. "I graduated from the faculty of computer science in Herat, I was working in airline ticketing services but I did not have enough money to pay my bills and cover the cost of my wedding. One day one of my friends told me to speak to someone in Kabul about moving drugs to India in exchange for money. I joined two other people and went to his (the drug smuggler's) home.

"The smuggler told us that if we act normally (at the airport) no one will suspect anything and we will not be arrested," said Fawad. Fawad, who underwent surgery to remove the capsules containing heroin from his stomach is recovering well at the police hospital in Kabul.

"I want to warn all youths not to be deceived by the mafia and to stay away from them, my health is better now, but I feel pain all over my body, I even feel pain when I cough," he said. Police officials at Hamid Karzai International Airport have said that the majority of these drugs are smuggled to India and to the United Arab Emirates. "Mafia must remember that they are no longer able to smuggle drugs from this airport and we warn them in this respect, these people who make the smuggling attempts are poor men and women and are exploited by mafia. The issue defames the country," said Mohammad Asif Jabbar Khail, commander of border security forces at HKIA.

According to security sources at the airport, those trying to smuggle heroin will swallow between 60 and 150 capsules - which will total about 1kg. (Tolonews)

(20) Obama's Trade ... do precisely that," he argued. Obama hoped that the TPP trade deal could still pass during the so-called lame-duck session of Congress after the November general election, the final time window before he leaves White House on Jan. 20. (Xinhua)

(21) Syrian Gov't...

government-controlled part of the northern city of Aleppo over the past 24 hours, killing five people, and eight others suffered suffocation. (Xinhua)

(22) THAAD Deployment...

Sivkov said the deployment of the territorial missile system would reduce the potential of Russian and Chinese tactical nuclear weapons, which served as a means of nuclear deterrence. He said the data collected by radars of the system were suited for spotting and monitoring targets not only on the territory of the DPRK, but also China and

Russia. (Xinhua)

(23) 9,000 Terrorists...

stormed army positions in al-Ramoussiyeh by detonating a long tunnel. The Syrian Armed Forces have dispatched a large number of fresh forces to the entire battlefields across Aleppo and beat the terrorists back.

"In the end, the third phase of Jesh al-Fatah's operation to save their comrades in Eastern districts of Aleppo was completely unsuccessful," several army and Hezbollah commanders confirmed in Eastern Aleppo on Wednesday afternoon.

Reports said earlier today that Syrian Army troops and popular forces repelled offensives of Jesh al-Fatah in al-Ramoussiyeh in the Southern parts of Aleppo city, army sources said, adding that the clashes left 74 terrorists dead and 41 other injured. (FNA)

(24) HK Seeks...

Hong Kong visitors visited Japan in 2015, while Hong Kong received about 1 million Japanese visitors last year. Bilateral trade remains robust, and Hong Kong continues to be the No.1 export market for Japanese agricultural and food products in 2015, amounting to about 180 billion yen (1.78 billion U.S. dollars).

"Besides strengthening economic and trade ties between Hong Kong and Japan, another important mission of our office is to promote cultural exchanges," said the principal representative, shouldering the mission to promote closer economic and trade ties, understanding and cooperation, as well as cultural and tourism exchange between the two places. (Xinhua)

(25) UN Calls... thousands of people, he said, adding that as a result of the destruction, "many of the facilities are no longer functioning."

Further attacks on civilian infrastructure, including those on July 31 and Aug. 1, reportedly damaged Aleppo's electricity and water distribution infrastructure, Dujarric said. "This has resulted in an electricity blackout throughout the city and has left residents throughout Aleppo with no access to water through the public water network."

"The UN continues to call on all parties to the conflict to end the destruction of hospitals and other civilian infrastructure that is essential for the civilian population, and to respect their obligations under International Humanitarian Law and the International Human Rights Law," he said. (Xinhua)

(26) Canada Announces... just before Justice Thomas Cromwell retires in September this year. Former Canadian Prime Minister Kim Campbell will chair a seven-member, non-partisan advisory board who will recommend three to five candidates to Trudeau for consideration. But their recommendations are non-binding. (Xinhua)

(27) Abe Not... its rules to allow for its presidents to serve a third term. The current LDP party rules limit its presidents to just two terms, however. Nikai had previously said if it served the party's and the leader's interests he would support an extension for a third term. (Xinhua)

(28) DPRK's New... Seoul's decision to host a battery of the U.S. global missile defense system has triggered massive protests in the country, threatening to rip apart the society. The Washington-Seoul agreement also drew criticism from China and Russia as the X-band radar of the system could easily snoop on the territories of the two countries. (Xinhua)

(29) Myanmar Transforms income tax exemption while a five-year tax exemption can be received for those in developing regions and states. Meanwhile, the draft eases the restriction for the manufacturing businesses which are able to export, in order to free from custom duty for importing raw materials although the former government offered as a three-year tax exemption.

Not only foreign direct investments but also citizen investments which are registered by MIC will be granted with those offerings. But alcohol and cigarettes businesses will no longer receive. (Xinhua)

(30) P5+1 Not... obstacles." The Iranian president added that the US Congress is also seeking to create problems for the implementation of the JCPOA. "Had the US implemented the JCPOA in good faith, we may have trusted the opposite side and agreed to enter into negotiations with them on another issue, which would have served the interests of the region, the US, Iran and others; however, they did not score well on their test," the Iranian president said. (Presstv)