

(1) 'Most Candidates...

- who had received many complaints against.

Almost all the candidates who could be disqualified have lodged appeals against the decision, said IEC officials.

"Some of the candidates whose names are dropped from the list could be reinstated on the list, some of the candidates who were issued warnings could have their warnings reversed and instead face disqualification," said the IECCs spokesman Ali Reza Rouhani.

"We expect that actions are taken in line with credible evidence and documents available; undoubtedly, there are some elements whether outside or inside government who want to interfere in this respect," said Mohammad Haroun Nusrat, a member of Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan (TEFA).

Meanwhile officials from the Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan (IEC) have said that the work of the IECC has not been carried out in line with the electoral calendar and that delays have had an impact on the IECC's performance.

"We need to prepare the (candidate) list from the beginning, we would need at least 35 days to send the list abroad for printing and bring them back and would need to pack them again and send them to the provinces; it means that this process would need time while we have very little time now. We hope that our colleagues in the electoral complaints commission study the calendar again if they have not studied it correctly; based on the calendar, these are the ones who are supposed to give us the list," said IEC commissioner Sayed Hafiz Hashemi.

Based on IEC statistics, over 2,300 candidates across Afghanistan have nominated themselves to run in the upcoming parliamentary elections scheduled for October 20.

The IECC's special commission started assessing about 200 complaints against hopeful candidates last month. The commission later changed its mechanism of assessment and assessed 137 complaints.

From 137 complaints, the commission disqualified 25 candidates and issued warnings to eight others.

Reports indicate that Fawzia Kofi, an MP from Badakhshan, Allah Gul Mujahid and Shir Ali Ahmadzai are among the 25 names removed from the list.

"They have made the allegations, but even a child knows the character of Mrs. Kofi. They want to impose political damage to me because of my resistance with the people. They have forgotten that this is not damage this is an honor for me," Fawzia Kofi said. "The complaints commission is not independent. They are doing what government orders them. This is unjust," Allah Gul Mujahid said. (Tolo news)

(2) AIHRC Asked...

corruption and human rights violations, but the violations still continued on a high scale, he said.

Reforms could be applied if the public strongly supported them and reacted to human rights violations and if the government strengthened relations with the people, Zuhair concluded.

Ibrahim Tula, a civil society activist in Bamyan, said: "Unfortunately the AIHRC is yet to publish the names of human rights violators so the people know about them."

He said naming human rights violators would help take them to justice as the public would press the courts and the move would reduce crimes in the country as well.

The participants suggested that the AIHRC should prioritize revealing human rights violators and sharing their list with the media. (Pajhwok)

(3) 9.9m Children...

if every child is protected through vaccination. Polio teams will revisit households where children were missed the first time the vaccinators visited to ensure that all children are vaccinated and protected.

"This campaign is a great opportunity for us to take yet another step towards a polio-free Afghanistan," says WHO Representative for Afghanistan, Dr Richard Peepkorn. "Although the programme is reaching more children now than ever in past, we know that there is active transmission in some areas of the country. We need to maintain the gains made in population immunity in the pockets where polio still exists to ensure we can end it for good. I call on all Afghans to participate in our joint effort. The last steps are not easy, but they are possible," he adds.

The polio vaccine is safe and effective and has no side effects. It has been strongly endorsed by prominent local and international Islamic scholars. It is critical to vaccinate all children under five across the country to stop the virus, including all sick children and newborns, whose immunity is weak against this disease. (Pajhwok)

(4) Suicide Bomber...

spokesman, said in statement. "The invaders had to bring three helicopter ambulances to protect their forces," he said. (Reuters)

(5) Insecure...

set up in the park to serve tourists but the services declined." Ahmad Hussain Ahmadpur, acting director of Information and Cultural Affairs Department, said promotion of tourism was their top priority but some external factors caused the industry to decline in Bamyan and the central government should cooperate in this regard.

He said security on highways and arrangement of air transport was government's responsibility. (Pajhwok)

(6) Fruit Exports...

left the country for India on Friday.

"The next cargo flight will carry over 36 tons of commercial products mainly fresh fruit and is expected to depart from Kandahar airport for Delhi this week. This will be our 137th cargo flight to India. We also plan to export another 100 tons to Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Kazakhstan during the current week," said Rasa. air corridors have boosted export volume of Afghanistan fruit, traders say that the sector still faces serious problems in terms of getting the produce out of the country overland.

are grappling with problems on the land routes, especially at Torkham crossing. They stop the fresh fruit convoys for a long period. You know that fresh fruit rots quickly. We have discussed the issue with the deputy head of customs and revenues," said Akhtar Mohammad, the head of the fresh fruit exporters union. Meanwhile, a number of fruit sellers have said they are hoping the sector's revenue will increase this year.

"You know that our fruit season has arrived, grapes are coming, but apricot season is ending, a lot were exported to Pakistan; God willing, there will be some improvement," said one fresh fruit seller Mohammad Saber. Based on government statistics, over 2,600 tons of fresh fruit worth \$56 million has so far have been exported to foreign markets via the newly established air corridors. (Tolo news)

(7) Laja Mangal Clash...

retook a security check-post from Taliban insurgents, he concluded.

On the other hand, a security official, who wished to go unnamed, told Pajhwok the district intelligence director along with two others security personnel were also killed in the clash but the spy-network had rejected the claim.

The district police headquarters officials said that Taliban militants have also destroyed the Salaam telecom tower in the nighttime firefight.

The Taliban have not spoken about the incident. (Pajhwok)

(8) Jawzjan Daesh...

head of Daesh says that government will ignore their previous deeds.

"The government has made us certain promises, the government has said that we will join the peace process, if the government wants, we will be hired," said Daesh commander, Mawlawi Habiburrahman.

When asked about human rights violations and reports of Daesh fighters having raped women and children in Darzab district, Mawlawi Habiburrahman said: "If someone comes up with evidence to prove this, we are prepared for the perpetrators to be served justice."

Darzab has been one of the most insecure districts in the province and has been the scene of heavy clashes in the past three years between government forces, Taliban and Daesh insurgents.

According to the Daesh commander, some foreign nationals - including two French fighters and two Indonesians have joined the Taliban.

"The Taliban came and took over our base, they burnt the houses and escaped and we surrendered to the government," said one Daesh fighter Abdul Qudoos.

In December, AFP quoting Afghan and international sources, reported that French and Algerian fighters, some arriving from Syria, had joined the ranks of Daesh in the northern Jawzjan province where the militant group had established a new base.

The report said that it was the first time that the presence of French Daesh fighters had been recorded in Afghanistan. At the time analysts also said they expect that foreigners may be heading for the war-torn country after being driven from Syria and Iraq. (Tolo news)

(9) MoU Signed...

the Ministry for Investment and Development of Kazakhstan said Kazakh investors are keen to invest in Afghanistan.

"Different companies have visited Afghanistan and have been able to find their joint ventures in this country. We continue our efforts to speed up the process by improving trade and transit ties between Afghanistan and Kazakhstan and increase the number of private sector meetings," said Arystan Kabikenov Deputy Minister of Investment and Development of Kazakhstan. Afghan investors have asked government to further strengthen trade and transit ties between the two countries. (Tolo news)

(10) MoHE Rejects...

Ministry of Higher Education says Tehmina daughter of Abdul Saboor has secured the first position by securing 353 marks.

Mohammad Emauddin from Herat has secured the second position while Mukhtar has secured the third position.

Similarly, Mohamad Hadi son of Dost Mohammad has secured the fourth position and Safdar son of Mohammad Naeem has secured the fifth position. (KP)

(11) ANA Personnel...

said, three ANA personnel were killed and injured in the clash. The Taliban have not commented about the clash. (Pajhwok)

(12) Nazari to Represent...

Swimming Federation said meanwhile that Nazari is an extremely good swimmer and that he has experience in foreign competitions.

Federation officials also believe that he will do well in the upcoming event.

Nazari will take part in the 50 meter freestyle event and the 50 meter butterfly event.

The Jakarta Palembang 2018 Asian Games will start on August 18. Forty five nations will attend and from Afghanistan 80 athletes will take part in 16 sporting codes.

Meanwhile the Indonesian ambassador Arif Rahman to Kabul on Sunday met with all 80 Afghan athletes who will take part in the games.

Rahman met with the athletes at the Department of Physical Education and Sports. He wished them all well and assured them of his country's support to them while in Indonesia. (Tolo news)

Iran Guards says it held Gulf drills as U.S. tensions rise

DUBAI - Iran's Revolutionary Guards confirmed on Sunday it had held war games in the Gulf over the past several days, saying they were aimed at "confronting possible threats" by enemies, the state news agency IRNA reported. U.S. officials told Reuters on Thursday that the United States believed Iran had started carrying out naval exercises in the Gulf, apparently moving up the timing of annual drills amid heightened tensions with Washington.

"This exercise was conducted with the aim of controlling and safeguarding the safety of the international waterway and within the framework of the program of the Guards' annual military exercises," Guards spokesman Ramezan Sharif said, according to IRNA.

The U.S. military's Central Command on Wednesday confirmed it has seen increased Iranian naval activity. The activity extended to the Strait of Hormuz, a strategic waterway for oil shipments the Revolutionary Guards have threatened to block.

Guards commander Mohammad Ali Jafari "expressed satisfaction over the successful conduct of the Guards naval exercise, emphasizing the need to maintain and enhance defense readiness and the security of the Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz and to confront threats and potential adventurous acts of enemies," IRNA quoted Sharif as saying.

One U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said possibly more than 100 vessels were involved in the drills, including small boats.

U.S. officials, speaking to Reuters on condition of anonymity, said the drills appeared designed to send a message to Washington, which is intensifying its economic and diplomatic pressure on Tehran but so far stopping short of using the U.S. military to more aggressively counter Iran and its proxies. (Reuters)

Saleh Muhammad Wins NA-13 Mansehra after Recounting

MANSEHRA - After seven days of recounting of votes in NA-13 Manshera, the PTI supported independent candidate once again won the general elections against PML-N candidate.

Saleh Muhammad Khan won the elections by securing 108850 votes while the PML-N candidate of Sardar group Sardar Shahjahan got 106688 votes.

Saleh Muhammad Khan was resident of NA-14 Mansehra but he contested elections from NA-13. During the previous general elections, he won Provincial Assembly seat on the ticket of PML-N, this time he resigned from PMLN and contested election independently in support of PTI. (Monitoring Desk)

Iraq Election Commission Ignored Warnings over Voting Machines - Document

BAGHDAD - Iraq's election commission ignored an anti-corruption body's warnings about the credibility of electronic vote-counting machines used in May's parliamentary election, according to investigators and a document seen by Reuters.

The devices, provided by South Korean company Miru Systems under a deal with the Independent High Elections Commission (IHEC), are at the heart of fraud allegations that led to a manual recount in some areas after the May 12 election.

The results of the recount have not yet been announced and political leaders are still trying to form a government.

Concerns about the election count center on discrepancies in the tallying of votes by the voting machines, mainly in the Kurdish province of Sulaimaniya and the ethnically-mixed province of Kirkuk, and suggestions that the devices could have been tampered with or hacked into to skew the result.

Iraq's Board of Supreme Audit (BSA) expressed reservations about the vote-counting system in a report it sent to the IHEC on May 9, three days before the election.

The BSA said in the report, seen by Reuters, that the IHEC had not responded to 11 concerns it had raised - including over contractual procedures, the inspection of company documents and a failure to properly examine the devices for any flaws.

"Hereby, we found that ignoring and not responding to the report's findings is considered a clear legal violation contributed to the passage of the electronic vote counting devices despite its unsuitability and easiness of being tampered," the BSA said in the report.

The report also referred to a letter from the Iraqi embassy in South Korea saying Miru Systems had assembled but not manufactured the equipment sent to Baghdad, and suggesting the price tag should have been lower.

The IHEC's failure to act on the report's findings could fuel calls for the election to be rerun, a concern for populist cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, leader of the political bloc that won on May 12.

A Miru official who spoke on condition of anonymity dismissed the assertion in the letter, saying the company had manufactured the equipment. He also said the "equipment does not lie" and that he and five other Miru employees had traveled to Iraq to examine the machines and found no evidence of hacking.

"We have checked our election device provided to Iraq after the fraud allegation erupted, and found out that there has been no malfunction in the device nor its system," he said.

"We have already submitted the report to Iraq's national election commission after making a thorough check on the device."

Sadr has expressed concern about the situation.

"There are fears that the recount process will be a preamble to repeat the election and infringe on people's votes. (Reuters)