

(1) Mostly Taliban...

oppose any agreement with the Taliban as well", Haqmal said. However, Samar said: "We cannot achieve peace with such acts. Peace would not come by begging, it needs comprehensive grounds," she said, adding AIHRC did not support revenge neither it wanted the justice to be denied.

On the other hand, Samar said guns and dictatorship still ruled Afghanistan and absence of law had allowed strongmen to become stronger.

She said her commission supported the government's move to arrest strongmen and illegal armed people but on the condition that the government should avoid torturing them and respect human rights.

Samar saw injustices in the country behind the prolonged war and said peace, security, justice and education were interconnected and achieving them needed serious efforts. (Pajhwok)

(2) US-Taliban Talks...

This comes in the wake of reports that US officials met with Taliban officials in Doha, Qatar, to discuss the possibility of peace talks to end the war in Afghanistan.

According to Crocker, no representative from the Afghan government was in the room during the talks between the Taliban and the US.

"It is different, not, I think, in a positive way for the United States - certainly not for the government of Afghanistan. These talks apparently took place without the Afghan government being present. That's a huge deal because the Taliban has long insisted that they are ready to talk to us but not with the illegitimate - their term - Afghan government in the room. They got what they wanted. It will further delegitimize the Afghan government. So this may lead somewhere. I don't think it's going to lead anywhere good for the Afghan government itself," said Crocker.

Meanwhile, Chief Executive Officer Abdullah Abdullah has said that the Afghan government is fully aware of these developments and that the main objective of the efforts by Washington is to pave the way for peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban.

According to Crocker, the US is staying in Afghanistan at the invitation of the Afghan government, but he said that when the Afghan government is not present in the room, it creates concerns about the legitimacy of government.

"Not at all. What it does is put the Taliban really on a - if not a legal plane with the United States, certainly symbolically. They are talking about the American withdrawal and the circumstances of that withdrawal. We are there at the invitation of the Afghan government. They're not in the room. So if we withdraw, to whom do we hand this over to, the Taliban? That's the symbol we've got out there now. That's what the country is seeing, that the Taliban is their future because that's who the Americans are talking to, not the government in Kabul," he said.

In addition, Hüseyin Avni Botsali, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to Afghanistan, has said that the OIC hopes a breakthrough is achieved regarding peace in Afghanistan in the next few months.

"I am hopeful that in the coming months ahead, there will be visible progress in our engagement and with the collective authority and support of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and its member

states, the psychological environment, the political environment and subsequently the economical and development environments also will start improving so that our modest contribution may add some momentum to the efforts and hopefully to the results towards building lasting peace," he said.

According to report, the first round of these talks between the US and the Taliban were held in the last week of July in Qatar.

Alice Wells, the US's Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs and Mullah Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanekzai, the head of the Taliban's political office, represented their sides in the talks.

Some media reports have however indicated that officials from the Pentagon and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) were also present at the talks.

The Taliban so far has not confirmed that these talks took place in Doha.

But media reports indicate that a number of Taliban officials have met with US officials on several occasions in the past few months.

Last month Wall Street Journal reported that Wells met with Taliban officials to discuss ways to lay the groundwork for peace talks.

The report said the aim of the discussion was to build on momentum created by the recent three-day ceasefire over Eid al-Fitr.

According to Qatar's The Peninsula daily, US and Qatari officials discussed recent progress towards an Afghan-owned, and Afghan-led peace process, and pledged to continue both countries' efforts toward combating terrorism and promoting regional peace and stability.

Last week President Ashraf Ghani met with Qatar's Special Envoy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Mutlaq bin Majed Al Qahtani, who was visiting Afghanistan.

According to a statement issued by Qatar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, they discussed bilateral relations and ways to enhance cooperation. The ministry said in a statement Ghani and Al Qantani also discussed ways to achieve peace and stability in Afghanistan and the efforts by Qatar in terms of mediation in bringing together various parties involved in the conflict. (Tolo news)

(3) OIC Stresses Trust...

peace talks to end the conflict. He said the 75-member OIC strongly supported the decision of ulema and reconciliation in Afghanistan. Bostali said trust should be first created between the Afghan factions, then with neighboring countries and in the third stage with the international community.

He made it clear the OIC recently voiced its support for the Afghan peace process and that the organization would never impose or dictate its decisions on others.

"We don't compete with other countries and organizations regarding the Afghan peace process, we just want to play our own part." He said the OIC fully supported all regional and international efforts for the Afghan peace process.

Bostali hailed the ceasefire during Eid-ul-Fitr and added that fighting and money could not resolve issues. He said the Eid-ul-Fitr ceasefire had positive outcome. (Pajhwok)

(4) UNICEF...

18 out 34 provinces."

"To enable mothers to breast feed in privacy, with WHO, UNICEF was setting up breast feeding spaces in the therapeutic centre where the biggest reason for admissions has been failure to breastfeed.

These safe spaces enable mothers to breast feed, and to have more contact with the child, encouraging early stimulation," the UNICEF representative said.

With partners, the UNICEF planned to train, coach, and mentor 12,990 from 7 out of 34 provinces of community health workers and volunteers. These trained health workers would support caregivers for improved optimal infant & young child feeding and caring practices.

He added: "I would like to highlight that all of these efforts would not have been possible without the strong commitment and support of Government of Afghanistan and its ministries, partners, and donors."

Yet, to further promote breast feeding in Afghanistan, strengthened consolidated and coordinated efforts are needed. "We must urgently and collectively scale up our support to mothers to enable them to give their babies the best start in life, for which they deserve." (Pajhwok)

(5) 'Ghost Voter' Storm...

had not yet been registered in the ACCRA database. However, this issue is being dealt with, officials said.

The IEC said it plans to create two special commissions that will be tasked with preventing fraud and vote rigging in the elections.

"The Independent Election Commission, Central Statistics Organization and ACCRA sat together to share details about the databases to find out how accurate they are," said IEC commissioner Sayed Hafiz Hashemi.

But critics have said at least five if not six million ID cards are of ghost voters.

Amir Mohammad Akhundzada, a member of the Grand National Coalition of Afghanistan said he was sure at least six million are fake.

"I am confident that there is no more than 1.5 million clean votes in Afghanistan," he said.

But Afghan political parties have insisted that government and the IEC must use a biometric system for elections to prevent fraud. However, the IEC and government have not agreed to this - at least not for October's parliamentary elections.

Members of major political parties and movements have met with government representatives and election commissioners to discuss their demands regarding the upcoming elections, but the meeting ended in a stalemate.

Political parties representatives accused government and the election commission of not being committed to holding a transparent election.

The IEC meanwhile said that there is not enough time to roll out such a process before October 20 elections.

The political parties have called for changes to be brought to the electoral system, the suspension of the voter registration process, rolling out a biometric system for voter registration and declaring each province a single constituency. (Tolonews)

(6) Need for...

The meeting also held that among other fragmentation of nationalist forces, absence of clarity on the national issues, weak organisational structure at the street level, challenge of dynamism and inaccessibility of leadership, failure of managing perception were important factors for the defeat in the election.

They suggested the nationalist parties to conduct analysis of the poor performance in the general election and come up with a new

strategy. (Pajhwok)

(7) IECC Adds 104...

and technical coordination with each other and that will prevent the delay in working process of the commissions," said Naeem Ayoubzada, head of TEFA.

Following the matter, a number of civil society activists criticized the assigned investigation committee of IECC for dropping 25 names from the candidates' list particularly, the current parliament member Fawzia Koofi, urging reconsideration on the decision.

The IECC, however, stressed that the work of the committee for investigation of possible links of some candidates with illegal armed groups was part of the task to address the electoral complaints and that major of part of the issue is related to IECC to assess and then make a final decision. (ATN)

(8) CEO: US-Taliban...

representatives of a number of political parties termed the voter registration process as inappropriate, fraudulent and demanded fresh registration of voters using the biometric system.

The parties, including Hezb-i-Islami Afghanistan, Jamiat-i-Islami Afghanistan, Wahadat-i-Islami Afghanistan and Junbish-i-Milli and some other parties, stressed transparency in upcoming polls by switching to Multi-Dimensional Representation (MDR) from the current Single-Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV) system.

Daesh or IS surrender in Jawzjan Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, talking about Daesh rebels surrender to the government in Jawzjan province, said: "They were detained during clashes with security forces, their surrender does not mean they are innocent or the government should ignore their crimes."

He said that the surrendering Daesh militants should be dealt with in accordance with their deeds. A discussion about the issue with security officials would also be held, he said.

According to reports, around 250 Daesh insurgents joined the government in Jawzjan last week.

Peace talks

About rumored handover of some areas to the Taliban, the CEO said that these rumors were baseless and the government would never give any area to the rebels.

"It is a wrong rumor, Taliban are enemies of the Afghan people until they continue fighting. Al Qaeda, Daesh and many other insurgent groups are operating here and none are better than the other," Abdullah said.

Pointing to the Taliban-US talks in Qatar, he said the Afghan government was in close contact about the talks.

He said the US-Taliban talks would pave the ground for direct talks between the insurgent group and the Afghan government. Peace talks are under full leadership of the Afghan government and nothing else is above it, he concluded. (Pajhwok)

(9) NPC Approves...

Other contracts the meeting approved were about preparing deep storages for Khash district of northeastern Badakhshan province and preparing the Salang highway from Chokk village to Pul-i-Farishagan (around 930. 23 kilometers) till Baghlan province.

Two more contracts were about extending the Noori Fiber Optic project from Wakhan district of Badakhshan to China's border based on government to government contract and the second for constructing of four school buildings related to the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing. (Pajhwok)

(10) Karzai Holds...

comes a day after the fifth round of meetings between the IEC, political parties and the government ended in a stalemate.

Political parties met with government on Sunday over the upcoming elections, but the trilateral meeting ended in a stalemate.

"The meeting ended in a stalemate after government's proposal to introduce a biometric system for presidential elections next year, and not for parliamentary elections in October, was rejected. Political parties refused to accept this and said they would protest the move," a source familiar with the talks told TOLONews on Sunday.

Representing government at the meeting was Second Vice President Sarwar Danish, who chaired meeting, representatives from Central Statistics & Tazkera departments, a presidential advisor and an advisor to the CEO. IEC representatives also attended. Political parties including Hizb-e-Islami, Jamiat, Hizb-e-Wahadat Islami, Mahaz-e-Milli & Afghan Millat, said the source.

On Monday's meeting, Natiqi said: "Former president and his supporters were there at his residence, delegations from the Grand Coalition including a delegation from the Council for the Protection and Stability of Afghanistan. Discussions were held on the issue of elections and peace process."

Meanwhile, IEC has expressed hope that these meetings continue. "We hope that the meetings will continue, we have little time before elections; it is difficult to implement these recommendations at this time," said IEC commissioner Sayed Hafiz Hashemi.

According to political parties, Karzai also announced his support for the plan tabled by the political parties to the IEC and government.

"Discussions have not completed regarding the agendas; consultations are expected to continue until the end of the week, I hope that we reach a final conclusion by the end of the week," said Massoud Tarishitwal, spokesman for the Council for the Protection and Stability of Afghanistan.

The political parties have been calling for changes to be brought to the electoral system, the suspension of the voter registration process, rolling out a biometric system for voter registration and declaring each province a single constituency. (Tolo news)

(11) Hundreds of...

Commission (AIHRC) in Kabul. At the same event, the head of AIHRC, Sima Samar said that the human trafficking had not been a crime in Afghanistan in the past and that despite a high number of children being smuggled to various places no individual or organization had been there to address the issue.

This comes as in May, the AIHRC reported that there are more than 30,000 people being held in prisons and detention centers in Afghanistan. (ATN)

(12) Logar Residents...

"The complaints aren't related my ministry and assessment by development councils is no insult to the people," he said.

He urged residents to approach judicial organs to scrutinise the number of development councils and identify the ghost committees. The minister said his doors remained open for the public to come and share with his ministry any complaints regarding corruption and injustice. (Pajhwok)