

**(1) President...**

president's deputy spokesman, told Pajhwok Afghan News the Presidential Palace's legislative committee, led by second vice-president Sarwar Danish, was working on a third presidential decree. After being completed, the decree would be soon (today or tomorrow) released, he said. Sharifa Zumrati, a member of the Independent Election Commission (IEC), said the president's legislative decree would possibly be released today. She opposed legislative decrees and said government leaders were trying to divide the election commissions and parliament in the name of electoral reforms. The Wolesi Jirga's five-year mandate expired on June 22, 2015, but President Ghani extended its

Zumrati said the first and second legislative decrees were not approved because of personal interests of some lawmakers. She said the new decree would also bring under question the legitimacy of the election system.

"Government leaders have power, they can remove election commissioners by force, but such acts would lead the government towards illegitimacy," she said, without providing more details. A number of election observers have welcomed the ICOIC's opinion about implementation of new legislative decree. But some lawmakers said a new legislative decree should not be released until the fate of the second decree was decided. Meanwhile, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Dr. Abdullah Abdullah told a Cabinet meeting on Monday that the electoral reform issue was recently paid more attention in different meetings.

He said the aim of the discussions was to bring reforms to the election system. He assured that the reforms would be applied to the electoral regime. (Pajhwok)

**(2) CEO Claims...**

regular meetings held under the chairmanship of the president to review work on the global community's demands. NATO and donor countries are scheduled to meet in Brussels, the capital of Belgium, to discuss future economic assistance to the war-torn country. (Pajhwok)

**(3) 43 ISIS, Taliban...**

The surrender of the militants in the mentioned districts comes as the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces are busy conducting a major counter-terrorism operation in this province.

The operations were launched more than two weeks ago in Kot district to eliminate the loyalists of ISIS terrorist group who were attempt to expand operations in this province. (KP)

**(4) Taliban Supports...**

problems in Afghanistan in order to make new ways for continued occupation and horror. As regards possible changes in Afghanistan's National Unity government, the Taliban spokesman said appointment of Afghan officials is within the purview of Americans, which is why such changes are not going to solve anything. The Kabul administration does not seem like an active government, as all political, security and even economic affairs are under the control of foreigners and are being handled by their special military forces and advisers, he deplored.

Asked about the recent rise in the Taliban's armed operations in Afghanistan, Mujahid said heightened actions in western and northern region of the country signify that the Afghan nation is resolved to tackle occupation.

"The more the Americans insist on continuing the occupation Afghanistan, the more the nation will be mobilized against them and enhance cooperation with the Islamic Emirate fighters," he added.

In early July, new Taliban leader Maulawi Haibatullah Akhundzada called on the US to end its occupation of Afghanistan in his first mes-

sage since being appointed the group's leader in May.

"Admit the realities instead of useless use of force and muscle show and put an end to the occupation," Akhundzada said in a speech.

"Our message to the American invaders and her allies is this: the Afghan Muslim people neither fear from your force nor your stratagem. They consider martyrdom in confrontation with you as a cherished goal of their life," he stated; Tasnim News Agency reported. (Agencies)

**(5) Centralised...**

oversee implementation of the strategy, monitor medicine production and ensuring transparency in, and efficiency of, the procurement mechanism, the minister said.

He added the policy had an effective audit and evaluation mechanism that would address probable flaws in the best possible way.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Dr. Abdullah, who also participated the meeting, hailed the proposed plan as effective. He hoped it would help promote domestic products, investment in the private sector and improve the quality of imported drugs.

Ghani praised the painstaking efforts of government institutions for evolving the strategy. He said international pharmaceuticals, particularly Indian and Brazilian companies, be contacted on ways of lowering prices and improving the quality of drug imports.

The strategy would initially focus on meeting the requirement of the government organs to assure the people of transparency in the procurement process, Ghani said. The plan will be discussed with the private sector.

The Ministry of Public Health will play a basic role in implementation of the strategy. Ghani said the Ministry of Commerce was responsible for making Afghanistan an export-oriented country. (Pajhwok)

**(6) Negotiation...**

Ghani has made some real efforts to reach out to Pakistan. Last December, he traveled to the Heart of Asia summit in Islamabad. That was actually the beginning of the quadrilateral process. We would continue to encourage Afghanistan and Pakistan to work together in face of common challenges.

Q: Under what circumstances could Afghanistan-Pakistan rapprochement be possible?

Olson: Working together on a reconciliation process offers great potentials for improvement of relations. Pakistan has taken very important steps over the past two and a half years to take actions against groups threatening it domestically. Pakistan has made it clear that it does not want its territory to be used by groups against its neighbors. We continue to encourage the Pakistani government to pursue that policy with full vigor.

Q: The Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG), which consists of China, the US, Pakistan and Afghanistan, is criticized for failing to push the peace process forward. What obstacles are there?

Olson: I think it has worked very well and has served several useful purposes. It has brought together four countries that have a real stake in creating peace in Afghanistan. We had intense engagement terms of reference and a roadmap. The only challenge and problem is that we called for the Taliban to come and negotiate with the Afghan government and the Taliban declined to do so.

There were two calls for the Taliban to come to the table, after the third and fourth meetings of the QCG. The first one was rejected by the Taliban political commission in Doha and the second one on behalf of then leader Omar Mansoor.

From our perspective, there is great utility in the QCG. It is an established modality for peace and what is absent is the willingness of the Afghan Taliban to come to the table and discuss with the Afghan government. The QCG agreed that all members would use their leverage and influence to bring the

Taliban to the table. From the standpoints of the US, we will continue to be open to any possibilities for advancing the course of Afghan-led and Afghan-owned reconciliation. But at the end of the day, it will be up to the Taliban to find their own interests and come to the table.

Leverage and influence is a common policy adopted by the four members of the QCG. We all recognize that different members of the group have levels of leverage and influence with regard to the Taliban. This was the decision taken by the four.

The US has been very clear that we have no preconditions for the reconciliation process. That is also the position of the QCG that talks should begin with the Taliban and the Afghan government and the US government have three "end" conditions. We have three conditions that must be met before we could agree to any particular arrangement. The three conditions are that the Taliban would have to break with Al Qaeda and international terrorists, that they would have to cease violence and that they would have to accept the Afghan constitution, including provisions related to minorities and women.

Q: How possible is it to bring the Taliban back to the table since the US killed its ex-leader Omar Mansoor?

Olson: It has to be recognized first of all the decision was made based on the fact that Mansoor and the Taliban do represent an active threat to the US. The Taliban are attacking US forces and others within Afghanistan. Beyond that, Mansoor twice rejected the peace overtures made by the QCG. In that regard, we believed Mansoor was an obstacle to peace.

Q: It has been reported that Afghan Taliban officials came to Beijing to talk with Chinese officials on Afghanistan's peace process. What do you think of China's role in this process?

Olson: We think it is a very positive thing that China is taking a more active interest in its neighbor and the security in Afghanistan. We welcome China's initiatives to support the Afghan government and security forces in the provision of security to ordinary Afghans. (Agencies)

**(7) NUG Finalizes ...**

Foundation of Afghanistan. Reports indicate that President Ashraf Ghani will issue another decree in order to implement the new draft law on electoral reforms.

On the delay over the issuing of the decree, the head of the Afghan Civil Society and Elections Network (ACSEN), Jandad Spinghar, said: "There are a number of figures that have an influence on government and parliament. It will be difficult for government to bring reforms as long as these figures are there."

According to reports, the Attorney General's Office, the Supreme Court, the commission for monitoring the implementation of the Constitution and the Justice Ministry are busy preparing the draft. Once complete President Ashraf Ghani is expected to issue a decree ordering its implementation. (Tolonews)

**(8) UN Asked ...**

only bread winner in their family.

"Our country needs more effort to be made to keep its citizens safe," she said.

The mass rally was organized by the Enlightenment Movement in protest over government's plans to route a 500kv power line through Salang to Kabul opposed to via Bamayan. (Tolonews)

**(9) Security...**

honoured yet."He deplored the government had ignored Qala-i-Zal.

Police Chief Brig. Gen. Mohammad Qasim Jangalbagh, meanwhile, confirmed fierce fighting between security forces and militants was underway in Qala-i-Zal district.

"Last month, Kabul-based security officials visited the province and assured a huge operation will be launched against insurgents. With military action

yet to be initiated, there has been a stalemate in the district centre," he remarked.

Taliban Spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said Qala-i-Zal had been under the sway of the militant movement. The district is situated north of Kunduz City, the provincial capital. (Pajhwok)

**(10) 700 Insurgents...**

under control of security forces, he said.

Attacks by insurgents in Helmand and some other southern areas had increased because the rebels wanted government forces to lesser their focus on the east, the senior MoD official said.

The insurgents are yet to comment on the MoD assertions. (Pajhwok)

**(11) Ghor's ...**

the security situation in the town. He said seven Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers were killed and nine others injured during the latest clash.

"The district lacks good leadership and coordination among security forces," he said, adding if the government didn't pay attention, the district would soon collapse and there was also no way to escape as hundreds of security personnel would be wasted and their facilities would fall into insurgents' hands. (Pajhwok)

**(12) Shpagheeza ...**

players would have a positive impact on cricket and would be helpful for local players to learn from them.

Stanikzai said young players zonal teams had been provided an opportunity to play with seniors in the Sphageeza tournament.

He said the matches would be telecasted through 14 cameras and including two for run-out and the cameramen would strive to present the matches in an attractive manner to the viewers.

After the end of Sphageeza tournament, he said, a Chinese company would be tasked with improving the cricket ground and installing floodlights and other facilities, he added.

Stanikzai warned if political interference increased in the ACB's affairs, the International Cricket Council might suspend its assistance like it did with Nepal and the USA cricket boards. (KABUL)

**(13)6 of A Family...**

Ghaws Malyar, said the era IED went off when addicts were taking drugs in a ruined place. However, a resident of the area, Mir Wali, claimed all victims were Afghan Local Police (ALP) personnel. He said the ALP personnel were traveling in a pick-up that struck the roadside bomb.

Farah Civil Hospital Director Dr. Abdul Hakim Rasuliconfirmed receiving three injured people, including two ALP members and a civilian. (Pajhwok)

**(14)12 ISIS...**

district from the presence of ISIS militants.] The operations were launched amid concerns that the terror group is attempting to expand insurgency activities in the country.

The group claimed responsibility behind a deadly bombing in Kabul that left at least 80 people dead and over 200 others wounded. (KP)

**(15)Kunduz Police...**

arrested teens said.

"Malem Sher told me to join them and do jihad. He gave us training on using guns and placing mines and fighting against government," the other suspect said.

"The two teens received training on terrorist activities in Chahardara district [in Kunduz]. They in police custody now," said Kunduz Police Chief Mohammad Qasim Jangalbagh.

**(16)Prayer Leader ...**

people were in need of security

forces' support, Faridoon said. No group has so far claimed responsibility for the attack. (Pajhwok)

**(17)15 Rebels...**

and one car belonging to the Taliban were destroyed during the overnight clash.

A resident of the area, Sibghatullah, told Pajhwok Afghan News: "We spent a sleepless night because there was war in the village and aircrafts were dropping bombs."

He said 14 Taliban fighters had been killed during the night time clash. To a question, the resident said he saw the Taliban offering funeral prayers for 14 dead people. "Taliban from other areas have arrived here and they openly operate."

Elsewhere, Taliban militants kidnapped five civilians from Sher Ghasho area of Ghaziabad district in Kunar province.

Kunar deputy police chief Col. Syed Maqsood Pacha said the civilians were traveling in a vehicle when they were captured and taken to an unknown location by the insurgents.

The police official said efforts were underway to find and recover the civilians.

The Taliban have not yet commented on the said incidents, but their spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid in his Twitter page had claimed the fighters killed six security personnel during an attack in Pul-i-Alam, the capital of Logar province.

Local officials have said nothing about the killing of six security men by the insurgents. (Pajhwok)

**(18)Syria's Jaish...**

said a statement released by the group.

It said that the group had galvanized all support and fighters and carried out an "epic" battle to lift the siege on Aleppo. (Xinhua)

**(19)Seoul Invites...**

threats" from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

However, Pyongyang's proposals for a halt of military and nuclear activities on both sides have repeatedly met cold rejection from Washington and Seoul, which have stuck to frequent military exercises and flown nuclear-capable B-52 bombers over the Korean Peninsula, in a clear show of hostility against Pyongyang. (Xinhua)

**(20)Japanese Emperor...**

reducing perpetually the Emperor's acts in matters of state and his duties as the symbol of the State," he said.

"When the Emperor has ill health and his condition becomes serious, I am concerned that, as we have seen in the past, society comes to a standstill and people's lives are impacted in various ways," said the emperor, who underwent surgery in 2003 to remove prostate cancer and had heart bypass surgery in 2012.

Referring to demise of an emperor, he said, "The practice in the Imperial Family has been that the death of the Emperor called for events of heavy mourning, continuing every day for two months, followed by funeral events which continue for one year." (Xinhua)

**(21)Indonesia to ...**

police said on Monday.

The evidence revealed that Naim had used the online facility to instruct the militants on how to assemble bomb, National Police Spokesman Boy Rafli Amar disclosed.

"Naim had conducted online training. He can ask his terrorist cells here, from a far distance, to follow his orders," Rafli said at the police headquarters.

"The national police chief has held talks with the minister of information and communication to filter the contents of website spreading radicalism," the spokesman said.

"If possible, the websites must be blocked, so that the people could not consume it, it is better," he stressed. (Xinhua)

**(22)Turkey Police ...**

He said U.S. helicopters were seen flying over the border to pick up the journalist before she was detained by Turkish authorities.

Meanwhile, a female intelligence agent from the United

States has been rescued by Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) soldiers after a two-day operation on the Syrian border, Turkish daily Hurriyet reported on Sunday.

Drones and helicopters participated in the operation to rescue the agent, who had been wounded in Syria.

Two U.S. helicopters landed in a village in the Yayladagi district of the southern province of Hatay on Friday, prompting locals to call officials and report the landing. (Xinhua)

**(23)Russian Paralympic...**

following the publication of the independent McLaren Investigation Report, which claimed that Russian authorities manipulated the doping control process. (Xinhua)

## UN to Help Reduce Communal Clashes on Kenya, Ethiopia Border

NAIROBI - The United Nations plans to accelerate efforts to reduce communal clashes on the Kenya, Ethiopia border, UN officials said on Monday.

UN Acting Resident Coordinator in Kenya Siddharth Chatterjee told Xinhua in Nairobi that the United States has already spent 7 million U.S. dollars on the Kenya side to facilitate peace efforts.

"The UN has also set aside funds to help reduce the cause of communal conflict on the Ethiopia side," Chatterjee said.

"The UN is committed to making investments in social services in order to improve access to health services and education," he said on the sidelines of the Consultative Meeting on the Development of the East Africa Region Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism Strategy.

The cross border peace initiative is being conducted jointly by the United Nations, Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), as well as the governments of Kenya and Ethiopia. (Xinhua)

## Turkey Lifts Ban on Russian News Website Amid Thawing of Ties

ANKARA - Turkey has lifted its ban on the Russian news website Sputnik, after months of keeping it blocked, state-run Anadolu Agency reported Monday.

The Turkish government had blocked access to Sputnik on April 14, citing "legal consideration" of a law regarding crimes committed through online broadcasts. It is now no problem for checking Sputnik news website in Turkey.

"Our website is unblocked in Turkey. Starting 10 a.m. Moscow time we began to receive messages from users that the website is accessible again. We started checking this information and it is actually working," Sputnik quoted the editor-in-chief of its Turkish version Mahir Boztepe as saying. (Xinhua)

## AU Observer Optimistic of

### Peaceful Zambia Polls

LUSAKA - Goodluck Jonathan, who is leading an African Union (AU) Election Observer Mission for Zambia's August 11 polls, has expressed optimism that Zambia will hold peaceful elections and maintain its record of being an oasis of peace. Jonathan, a former Nigerian president, said Zambia was a shining example of democracy in Africa and it was important that the political players ensure that the record was maintained.

He told reporters on Sunday in Lusaka, the country's capital that the AU mission was satisfied with the atmosphere across the country ahead of the general elections, adding that environment was suitable for the holding of free and fair elections. He said the AU mission was happy with the preparations done by the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) and added that the prevailing environment that has seen peace, law and order to reign before the elections should be maintained. (Xinhua)