

(1) Interests of Other...

youths for the Syria conflict. The former Afghan intelligence chief Rahmatullah Nabil had earlier warned that the deployment of the Afghan youths to Syria may shift the Iran-Saudi rivalry to Afghanistan.

Amid growing concerns regarding the massive recruitment of the Afghan youths by Iran for the Syrian conflict, Nabil has called the move by Iran as a quite dangerous move.

On the other hand, the Human Rights Watch in its latest report revealed in September of this year that young Afghan boys as young as fourteen years old have been recruited by Iran to fight in Syria.

According to the Human Right Watch report, the children have been recruited by the Revolutionary Guard of Iran and several of them have been killed and buried in the Iranian soil. (KP)

(2) 400 Airstrikes Hit ...

Helmand provincial council members have meanwhile said the airstrikes did not have any impact on insurgent's activities in the province. According to council members, there are still a few districts of the province are under Taliban control.

"If the security forces want to retake a district, they can do that. However, holding the district for a long time is difficult because there are not enough forces," Ataullah Afghan, head of the council said.

The 215 Maiwand Military Corps is optimistic about the increase of airstrikes while Baghran, Nowzad, Musa Qala, Khanshin and Desho districts of the province have been under Taliban control for some years.

Fighting is also ongoing between Taliban and security forces in parts of Lashkargah city, the capital city of the province. (Tolnews)

(3) MPs Approve

the nominee for the Ministry Higher Education with 124;

- Hamidullah Tahmasi, the nominee for the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation with 149;

- Mujib Rahman Karimi, nominee for the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) with 129;

- Nasir Ahmad Durani, nominee for the Ministry of Agriculture with 144 confidence votes;

- Gul Aqa Shirzai nominee for the Ministry of Border and Tribal Affairs with 158 confidence votes;

- Mohammad Mustafa Mastoor, the nominee for the Ministry of Economic Affairs with 155; and

- Shahzadgul Aryobi the nominee for the Ministry of Information and Technology 115 confidence votes.

The only female, Nargis Nihan, the nominee for the Ministry of Mines, was been rejected by MPs after not receiving enough votes. She received 107 confidence votes, 93 no-votes, and 15 abstentions were recorded.

Nihan needed 113 confidence votes to secure the ministry of mines and petroleum.

At the end of the voting process, the House Speaker Abdul Raouf Ibrahim called on the government to introduce the remaining nominees of the cabinet.

The voting for each candidate proceeded as follows:

Bahrami: 141 approvals, 65 disapprovals, 9 abstentions, 9 invalid

Barmak: 173 approvals, 35 disapprovals, 10 abstentions, 6 invalid

Omari: 124 approvals, 77 disapprovals, 13 abstentions, 10 invalid

Zaki: 126 approvals, 75 disapprovals, 9 abstentions, 13 invalid

Yari: 156 approvals, 46 disapprovals, 17 abstentions, 5 invalid

Karimi: 129 approvals: 76 disapprovals, 9 abstentions, 10 invalid

Sherzai: 158 approvals, 49 disapprovals, 12 abstentions, 5 invalid

Mastoor: 155 approvals, 49 disapprovals, 10 abstentions, 9 invalid

Aryoubi: 115 approvals, 49 disapprovals, 10 abstentions, 9 invalid

Tahmasi: 149 approvals, 55 disapprovals, 11 empty, 9 invalid

Durrani: 144 approvals, 63 disapprovals, 9 abstentions, 8 invalid

Nihan: 107 approvals, 93 disapprovals, 15 abstentions, 8 invalid

(Tolnews)

to 35 this year," she said.

She stressed the importance of women's role in the government and said: "No society can reach full prosperity until women's are involved."

Muslih said the MoWA had plan to implement a wide range of programs for improved presence of women in government organs next year.

Improving women's awareness about their rights, capacity building and launching educational workshops in different sections are programs to be implemented next year, she added.

Firoz Khan Majidi, development assistant at the Ministry of Commerce and Industries (MoCI), said women had been playing an active role in the private sector over the past years.

Currently more than 500 small and big commercial companies are led by women in Afghanistan, he said, adding that MoCI was ready to provide further commerce opportunities for women and support them in making investment.

Michelle Morgan, head of Women in the Economy program of USAID Promote, said they supported gender equality and efforts at fighting women's harassment at workplace. (Pajhwok)

(5) Atmar Meets ...

for security and stability of the region. He assured of his country's support towards the Afghan peace dialogue with insurgents.

Meanwhile, Atmar, while expressing gratitude to Xijun, said regional countries should cooperate wholeheartedly in terms of security, stability and the Afghan peace process. "Those countries that have relations with insurgents should use their ties in a positive direction by bringing rebels to the negotiating table." (Pajhwok)

(6) Mohaqiq and ...

concerns regarding the persistent security stalemate in Afghanistan and expressed their concerns in this regard besides holding talks on counter-terrorism fight and efforts to end the violence and maintain unity among the people, the statement added. (KP)

(7) Ghani, Abdullah...

can win on the battlefield.

"Until the Taliban leaders understand that their only way forward is at the negotiating table, there is not going to be productive, genuine talks. But that doesn't mean that we've closed the door," he said.

The Trump administration is constantly talking to the Afghan government on the issue and making sure they are were the same page in terms of what negotiations would look like.

"First, you have to achieve Taliban-Afghan government talks. Two, you need regional support for a peace process. This means you have to be building consensus among regional partners and the other major partners who have an interest in Afghanistan," the official added.

"It means you need better relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan. You need Afghan and Pakistan governments talking to each other. And it means you need a consensus within Afghanistan," the official continued. Referring to bloodshed in the country, he acknowledged the peace process was not going to be easy. "You're going to have differences of opinion on what that is like...."

"So one of the goals of the high peace council is to start building that true consensus within Afghanistan for it," the official said in response to a question. (Pajhwok)

(8) ing Revenue...

identified about 2000 sites where unlawful extraction may take place," the official continued.

Sites in Taliban-controlled areas in Helmand, Nangarhar, Badakhshan and several other provinces were being dug unlawfully, he explained, suggesting the issue be shared with security forces to stop the practice.

But Nargis Nehan, the minister-designate, recently described low revenue and poor capacity of the ministry as a major challenge as she spoke of her future plans in Wolesi Jirga.

She proposed a commission to protect mines across Afghanistan. Increasing mining revenue and introducing Af-

ghanistan as a country with immense natural resources would be her priority. (Pajhwok)

(9) Indonesia Pledges...

The HPC delegation was also accompanied by a member of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar-led Hizb-e-Islami party.

The Hizb-e-Islami group believes that Indonesia can play a vital role in promoting the peace process in Afghanistan.

But, the Afghan political parties and lawmakers in the parliament have frequently blasted the HPC for its poor performance to bring the Taliban to the peace negotiation table.

"I think the stories about the war and peace in Afghanistan by those individuals who are currently in the high peace council or ARG (presidential palace) are useless and not comprehensive," said MP Ramazan Bashardost.

"Everyone wants to know about the performance of the high peace council. The HPC needs to work seriously in this respect," said senator Anarkali Honaryar.

The HPC is optimistic that Indonesia will share its experience for peace with Afghanistan as the country itself has faced major ups and downs in the search for peace. (Tolnews)

(10) US to Act if ...

Speaking at the Reagan National Defence Forum the Trump administration would deal with the situation if Pakistan turned down its request to destroy safe havens.

Dawn quoted him as saying: "In the absence of the Pakistanis achieving that, we are going to do everything we can to make sure that that safe haven no longer exists."

His predecessor, Leon Panetta, told the audience: "Pakistan has always been a problem. It has been a safe haven for terrorists who cross the border and (conduct) attacks in Afghanistan..."

Pakistan denounced terrorism or attacks on its soil on the one hand and did mind using terrorism as leverage to deal with Afghanistan, the ex-spy chief alleged. (Pajhwok)

(11) Neither Govt...

of the IEC chief by President Ashraf Ghani, presidential palace issued a decree in which had ordered the former selection committee to commence their work on selecting a new commissioner for the IEC.

"The law has provided for the circumstance that if one of the commissioners is dismissed, the president can select another person from the selection committee's list," MP Shah Gul Rezaei said.

To date, the new commissioner has not been selected and the seat of IEC chief remains empty.

IEC refused to comment on the MPs concerns. However, on Saturday IEC had said that they have given a 20-day timeline for government to introduce a new chief for IEC and if the government fails to do so, they themselves will act.

"The government is losing its legitimacy among the people. The government will be questioned, the problem will get complicated and the war will get intensified," a member of Hizb-e-Islami Amin Karim said.

The parliamentary and district council elections have been scheduled for July 2018, but people and the institutions overseeing election process have lost trust in having on-time and fair elections after seeing the poor performances of IEC. (Tolnews)

(12) Ghani Stresses ...

enemy of Afghanistan, he hoped the country's economic situation would improve only if there was ample cooperation among the state pillars. Cooperation and trust among the three pillars was important, the president commented, thanking the parliament for accelerating legislative efforts. He said some laws had been referred to the Ministry of Justice for publication while others would also be approved.

Ghani said: "Reforms in the infrastructure sector are difficult in the absence of basic laws. You will see that I support the law and act according to the law."

The president said joint meetings were important on major national issues and the parliament's role was vital

in finding solutions to national problems.

Wolesi Jirga Speaker Abdur Rauf Ibrahim, who attended the meeting, urged the government to introduce ministers-designate to complete the cabinet.

He said national interest was seen as a red line in all countries. Afghanistan also needed public help international support for its development.

Ibrahimi said the president's foreign trips were based on the national interest and the entire nation had been witness to positive results from Ghani's recent visits.

Fazal Hadi Muslimyar, chairman of the Meshrano Jirga, thanked the president for seeking their advice. He said the parliament was working in full coordination with the government and shared its views.

About national unity and solidarity, the Senate chairman said: "Since we are better-off in unity, we support the government and its programmes."

Afghanistan was faced with a whole host of problems and all people including the parliament were responsible for supporting and strengthening the system, he concluded. (Pajhwok)

(13) Azerbaijan to ...

Armed Forces has been serving under the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan since November 20, 2002.

Currently, 90 servicemen, 2 medical officers and 2 engineer officers of Azerbaijani Armed Forces are participating in a mission in Afghanistan. (Trend)

(14) New War Tactics ...

training at the Maiwand Military Corps Training Centre.

The Taliban have been in control of Baghran, Dishu, Musa Qala, Nawazan, Khanshin and Sangin districts of Helmand. (Pajhwok)

(15) Local Company ...

"We are aware that there are a lot of problems in Afghanistan if better ground is paved for us, we are confident to work more effectively and create jobs to many people," said factory owner Din Gul.

"You see that all our machines have stopped due to lack of electricity. If reliable electricity is made available, our problems will be solved," said factory worker Bahram Gul.

The company which owns several technical workers and skilled employees plans to expand its production, but the lack of electricity and other necessary resources are obstacles in their way.

"We want the government to make available more land for expansion. If we work on the private lands, it costs us more and we can't get the necessary income," said another worker. (Tolnews)

(16) HRW Distressed ...

of attacks compared to a year before. Statistics show that over 1 600 were killed in the wars in Afghanistan in the first six months of the current year, a figure which is unprecedented in recent years in the country. (Tolnews)

(17) Stay Away from ...

Pakistan to stability in Afghanistan. Achakzai claimed the ANP had never hesitated in rendering sacrifices for the rights of Pakhtuns. The party leaders would continue to work for Pakhtuns' welfare, he promised. (Pajhwok)

(18) Barmal Elders ...

said over the past seven years he was obliged to cross the border into Pakistan to study in a school there.

"We were taught Pakistani curriculum and all books were in Urdu language. We had to respect their national anthem and also we would kiss Pakistani flag every morning."

Bakht Mohammad said the tribal elders had reopened a school for them on their own soil. Paktika Education Department deputy head, Abdul Rahim Ishaqzai, confirmed the Kamal Border School had been reactivated with support of locals. "Soon books and other teaching materials will reach the school." Ishaqzai said based on the Education Department plan, a new building would also be constructed for the school next year.

It's pertinent to mention that currently three out of total nine schools in Bar-

mak district are closed. (Pajhwok)

(19) Saffron Cultivation...

last year production of saffron.

The official said: "This year 620 saffron bulbs called corms were distributed to 25 farmers in different districts of Kabul and the farmers according to the guidelines of local officials cultivated the corms."

He added 420 farmers from 14 different districts were trained in cultivation, collection and processing of saffron this year.

Stressing women's role in cultivation, maintenance, collection and processing of saffron, Mangal said around 80 percent work of saffron was currently conducted by women, earning income for themselves.

Deputy Kabul Governor Mahboobullah Mahboob said since the launch of saffron cultivation in Kabul, effective programs had been arranged for farmers to increase their level of awareness regarding the vital crop.

Provincial Council (PC) member Ali Yazdan Parast said cultivation of saffron was important for economic development of the country. He said district chiefs should encourage farmers to cultivate saffron so it could replace poppy.

According to the Agriculture Ministry, saffron was cultivated on 1,020 hectares in Afghanistan in 2014 and the cultivation reached 3,000 hectares 2017 and in future the cultivation may reach 8,000 hectares. (Pajhwok)

(20) Favoritism ...

a resident of Sandali area, has erected a tent for his family in Gambir desert. He said aid never reached him because it was always given to those known by local influential figures.

An elderly woman from Bar Bahar area, Bas Gula, has installed a tent near the road, where she lives with her daughter-in-law and grandchildren.

The grandmother complained protecting children from cold was a daunting task. "The children cry all the night due to severe cold."

Gula said no aid had reached her family so far but she had seen aid giving individuals coming to their tents. "The assistance that comes is given to those who have connections."

Public representatives also confirmed the allegations of the displaced families and termed the process as symbolic and disorganized.

Nangarhar provincial council head Ahmad Ali Hazrat told Pajhwok Afghan News that elders and residents from Khogyani district daily complained to them about the Refugee Department's discrimination in aid distribution to the displaced families.

"People come here on a daily basis, but if we criticize the government for not giving assistance to the displaced families, the government blames public representatives of working for their own interests."

Another member of the Provincial Council, Javed Zaman, also tribal elder from Khogyani district, said the aid giving process to displaced families in Khogyani was not transparent and should be monitored.

He said thousands of families had been displaced by recent violence in the district and aid only reached those who had links with officials.

But the provincial government spokesman, Attaullah Khogyani said the aid process had been transparent and Governor Gulab Mangal himself oversaw it. He said currently 20 teams were busy surveying the displaced families. He said almost half of the ten thousands displaced families had received aid. In addition to Khogyani, thousands of families have been displaced in nearby three districts of Shinwari zone and Pachirawgam district. (Pajhwok)

(21) Ex-Senior ...

order police forces of Afghanistan. Paikan reportedly supported his son besides helping his transfer to capital Kabul, a move which can only be done by the ministry of interior leadership. The primary court on Sunday awarded a jail term of 8 years and 6 months for Gen. Paikan while 9 other members of the public forces were also tried in connection to the charges.

The other personnel were awarded jail terms by the court ranging between one to nine years. (KP)