

(1) Noor Lashes out ...

governor this week, he was still Balkh's leader.

He said that he had not been appointed by "official letters (decree)" and could therefore not be fired by "letters".

Noor said he has told the Presidential Palace on many occasions that they cannot forcibly remove him as Balkh governor.

Noor said: "I have said many times that no one can remove me with a decree."

He also expressed his dissatisfaction over the division of power within the NUG and said that the agreement to fill certain cabinet seats with Jamiat members was not being adhered to.

He said at time of the NUG's establishment he had discussed the division of seats in cabinet and had played an active role in the negotiations. He said there were ministerial positions that should have been filled by Jamiat members.

Abdullah is a Jamiat-e-Islami party member, Noor said adding that the party had the right to change its candidate. But Noor was adamant that he would stay on as Balkh governor until such time as Jamiat decided otherwise. He says his reason for staying on as governor is to make sure development in Balkh continues and that Daesh is prevented from taking a foothold in the province.

Noor thanked all those who had come out in support of him in the past week and said the First Vice President Abdul Rashid Dostum said his forces were ready to support Noor if needed. He also said he received the same support from second deputy CEO Mohaqeq.

He also stated that the "international community won't sell the people of Afghanistan for two doctors", this was in reference to President (Dr) Ashraf Ghani and Dr Abdullah.

He said the Presidential Palace and the CEO's office must not use the international community and foreign forces to put pressure on him. (Tolonews)

(2) Govt-Noor Saga...

But other MPs said Noor is a good person, but that he needs to support the law. According to them, the dismissal of these individuals would not affect the country's overall security situation.

"Noor is a good person and everyone respects him and he is proud. But we should support the law," Mohammad Nazir Ahmadzai, parliament's second deputy speaker said.

"He (Noor) is a person and can do nothing. The Afghan people are now alert," MP Razia Mangal said.

"When the president dismisses someone, it does not mean that everyone should interfere in government affairs," MP Lailuma Hakimi said.

The Presidential Palace last week approved Noor's resignation letter and appointed Mohammad Dawood, a member of Jamiat-e-Islami party, as his successor. But Noor has refused to accept his ousting and said the letter dates back a few months, when he made requests to the president, which were not fulfilled. (Tolonews)

(3) Pak, Afghan ...

wants to further improve bilateral relations and promote brotherhood," he added.

He said the conference would provide opportunity to resolve regional issues and devise a strategy to eliminate roots of terrorism. "Terrorism is common issue of all countries" he added. (Agencies)

(4) MoJ Drawing...

was discriminatory practices by government officials - especially in the recruitment process.

"Discriminatory thoughts did not work, eliminating an ethnic group did not work, insulting other zones and provinces also will not work in Afghanistan," said Nahid Farid a parliament member. These claims appear to have initiated government's plan to stamp out the problem.

"A draft bill is being worked on by the justice ministry and it is almost finalized. Soon it will be sent to the law committee of the government. This bill has banned all discrimination that happens in government institutions in the recruitment process and in the work environment," said Riazat.

The impending regulation has also been welcomed by members of the Meshrano Jirga (Upper House of Parliament). According to one senator, Asif Siddiqi the house proposed such a bill two years ago.

"This is a contagious disease everywhere in Afghanistan and we should eliminate it. Unfortunately this is being provoked by some of the politicians and by those who take projects from foreign countries," said Siddiqi.

Meanwhile, issues around ethnicities were also raised by MPs.

"In parliament, the national issues and the issues that benefit the people and by those who take projects from foreign countries," said Siddiqi.

"There is no consolidated international intention to fight drug trafficking," Larijani said, addressing a ceremony to mark the world day of fighting drug trafficking.

The Iranian parliament speaker reiterated that the Islamic Republic has paid

madzai, second deputy speaker of parliament.

"We should not make comments that cause ethnic division," said Haidar Khan Naimzai a parliament member.

In recent months, the government has come under sharp criticism over alleged ethnic discrimination. Two incidents caused a major outcry - one when an "ethnicity plan" in the president's administration office was leaked and the second when a document from the Ministry of Interior came to light about the recruitment of all ethnicities, except Tajiks, to a new anti-riot unit. (Tolonews)

(5) Pakistan Losing ...

With a limited capacity to properly stock the wheat, the government has kept 69 percent of the commodity in open storage facilities. The situation will further worsen when the new wheat season starts in four months.

Sarhadi said India, exploiting the situation, had exported 15,000 tonnes of wheat to Afghanistan through Chabahar port in Iran. India plans more exports to the landlocked nation due to what he called a flawed Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement. (Pajhwok)

(6) Police Should ...

police chief, who finally 'cut a deal' with them," added Barmak, without going into details.

"The law is still not enforced in our country in line with the Constitution. There are no same rules for different kinds of people."

Barmak said his priority would be to turn police into public servants and make them treat people professionally and also enable them to use their legal authorities against criminals.

Mohammad Ismail Sahak, deputy head for the Kabul Police Academy, also spoke on the occasion, complaining against interferences in hiring of teachers at the institution. He asked the Mol leadership to prevent such meddling.

He also asked the Interior Minister to pay heed to establishing laboratories, training fields and research centres at the police facility.

The Minister of Interior promised steps at meeting the academy needs and curbing any kind of meddling in the ministry's affairs. (Pajhwok)

(7) Hakimi, Chinese...

of a high rank delegation of AIIB to Afghanistan.

They also conferred on a ministerial meeting of transport ministers to develop transport infrastructure of the country, cooperation and regional connectivity.

The five-nation railway --- Afghanistan, Iran, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and China --- and China's investment in Afghanistan on marble stone and saffron and some other related important subjects also came up for discussion. (Pajhwok)

(8) Iran Supporting ...

groups and criminals, including those in the narcotics trade.

"The sustainable backing of the international community was needed to support the Government in that fight as well as to address Afghanistan's complex security, economic and political challenges," Al Habib added.

The Iranian envoy underlined that the reported 87 percent growth in opium production over the past year was alarming, as narcotics provided a major source of income for terrorist groups.

"The international community must support relevant international and regional projects and activities, including those carried by Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan within the framework of the triangular initiative to counter narcotics," he concluded.

RT reported that Kabulov said Moscow was prepared to work together with Washington to foster stability in Afghanistan, and said it was America's decision to stop such cooperation, not Russia's. In April, Moscow invited the US to take part in Russia-hosted Afghanistan peace talks, but the US declined to participate. (Tolonews)

(9) Discussions Ongoing ...

legislative decree was rejected by parliament but approved by the senate on the e-NIC roll out. The decree said ethnic information should be added to the new identity cards.

A joint committee from the senate and parliament was then formed to work on the decree and the committee approved the president's order.

Parliament members on Saturday said if the roll-out of e-NIC continues to be delayed, people will lose all trust in government.

"Government should not wait any longer and must start the process as soon as possible," MP Sakhi Mashwani said.

But the question being asked now is why is the process being constantly delayed? "Unfortunately, government does not have a strong will in this regard and the process may be postponed for a long time," political affairs analyst Nasir Musavi said. (Tolonews)

(10) Moscow Warns ...

he told RIA Novosti.

"Lately IS has boosted its presence in the country. Our estimate is that their force there is stronger than 10,000 troops and is continuing to grow. That includes new fighters with combat experience received in Syria and Iraq."

According to him, Daesh forces are strongest in the north of Afghanistan on the border with Tajikistan and Turkmenistan - a point of concern for Russia, which has close historic ties with both nations.

"IS goals are definitely to expand its influence outside of Afghanistan, which they use as a staging ground. This poses a significant security threat for Central Asia and southern parts of Russia," Kabulov said.

RT reported that Kabulov said Moscow and Washington differ in opinions about how big a threat Daesh poses to Afghanistan and Central Asia.

He said Washington was focusing on fighting the Taliban. According to RT, he said the US was also in the process of alienating other nations in the region by criticizing them for failing to put enough pressure on the Taliban - "while overlooking its own failures."

"Considering the realities on the ground, which is that the Taliban controls half of the country, one can ask the question: does the US pull its weight? Russia stands for cooperation with international partners based on equality and which takes into account national interests of all nations of the region," Kabulov said.

This comes after Washington recently accused Pakistan of failing to properly fight the Taliban and threatened it with repercussions unless Pakistan ramps up counterinsurgency operations in its tribal areas.

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(11) Govt to Enforce...

in Kabul, has resulted in a marked increase in illnesses.

According to the Criminal Act, in relation to environmental crimes, Section 838 states that a person who deliberately disposes of toxic substances and waste, of mercury or other matter harmful to the public health's - especially in wells, water tanks, public storage facilities or other unauthorized sites - can be sentenced to prison.

However, the law states that if such action leads to the death of an innocent person, the guilty party can get the death penalty.

One major issue of contention has been that of the import and use of low-grade fuel in Afghanistan - used by both motorists for vehicles and for heating purposes.

Semin Barakzai, an MP, noted that this sector also needed to be monitored.

Afghanistan's environmental laws are clear and take air pollution, noise pol-

lution, and the condition of water and soil and the preservation of forests into account.

"Offenders will be cautioned and warned and, if they do not pay heed to the warning, they will be finally referred to judicial institutions," said Ghulam Mohammad Malikiyar, deputy head of the National Environment Protection Authority.

Pollution and failure to maintain a healthy environment has left countless citizens vulnerable to ill health, especially children. (Tolonews)

(12) Clear Strategy...

affairs business expert, said.

The Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) believes that government has not done enough to solve the challenges around attracting investors.

The spokesman for the ACCI Siyam Psarlai, said problems faced by current investors go unresolved.

"Currently there is no law for industrial parks, and alongside insecurity, the lack of land and electricity for investors are still among the major challenges," says Psarlai a spokesman for ACCI.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry Musafir Quqandi, said the ministry has implemented plans for investment development in the country.

Quqandi, said in addition to reviewing the country's investment law, the ministry has also provided support for domestic products.

"The government has so far done a lot to improve the status of current investments, as well as to provide new investment opportunities; it has also revised the Investment Law," said Quqandi, a spokesman for the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

So far, foreign investors, including Gulf traders, and businessmen from many Asian and European countries, have visited Afghanistan to explore investment opportunities - but little has come about after these visits.

Considering current problems, many experts have called on government to clarify its vision for short-term and long-term investment attraction. (Tolonews)

(13) Afghan Spinner...

Sydney Thunder on Friday night.

The 19-year-old, the first Afghan to play in the BBL, took 2-22 from four overs at Adelaide Oval.

"It means a lot to Afghanistan to play in such a big league," Rashid said.

"And to then to perform and get man of the match - it was a dream to play in this league, so it's a proud moment for my country, for me, for my family.

"To play here, it's such an amazing moment."

Rashid's canny spin helped unravel the Thunder - he had Ryan Gibson caught behind and then produced a stellar wrong'un to bowl Ben Rohrer two balls later.

"That was a special wicket, a left-hander, to bowl him with a googly," Rashid said.

"I set him up for it. He was waiting for a legspinner."

Rashid's wrong'un immediately stamped itself as his danger ball - and he warned that no amount of video could properly prepare a batsman to face it.

"I think the speed I bowl makes it difficult for the batsman," he said.

"You can see in the video, but once you come to the centre it's looking everything different."

Rashid, who played the first of his 32 one-day internationals only a month after his 17th birthday, said his Adelaide teammates were encouraging him to demonstrate his variations.

"I wasn't nervous, I just tried my best to bowl on a good length area," he said.

"And the players were backing me and the skipper (Travis Head) just told me 'you can do it, just go and believe in yourself.'" (AAP)

(14) Barcelona Move...

handball, helped move Barca nine points clear of Atletico Madrid at the top of La Liga, and increased their advantage over defending champions Real to 14 points.

Karim Benzema hit the post and Cristiano Ronaldo missed two good chances in the first half, but the home side were blown away after the restart in the first El Clasico meeting of the Spanish league season.

Los Blancos started with Gareth Bale on the bench, and although he forced a save from Marc-Andre ter Stegen having been brought on following Carvajal's dismissal, the Wales forward was unable to spark a comeback.

Instead, late substitute Aleix Vidal added further insult in injury time with a third for Barca, as his shot from inside the box squeezed over the line after Messi's cut-back, despite the Argentine losing his boot in the build-up to his 200th assist for the club.

It is the first time Barca have won three consecutive away league matches at the Bernabeu, and the result leaves Zinedine Zidane's side fourth in the table.

(BBC)

(15) Asfandyar Calls ..

election of Donald Trump as US president was unfortunate, he remarked, paying glowing tributes to Bilour for his proactive role against terrorism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. (Pajhwok)

(16) Afghan Parliament

billions of dollars, and then they vote against us. Well, we're watching those votes. Let them vote against us. We'll save a lot. We don't care," Trump told reporters at the White House on Wednesday.

Khalil Ahmad Shahed Zada, member of the Afghan parliament, said in Saturday's session that the U.S. should have respect for the views expressed at the General Assembly. "I appeal to United States which claims to believe in democracy and human rights to respect the views of the people of the world, the United Nations and the Muslim world."

He also hailed the leadership role played by the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in uniting the Muslim world. Similar views were expressed by a number of Afghan lawmakers.

On Dec. 6, Trump officially recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital despite worldwide opposition. The decision has sparked angry demonstrations across the Muslim world including Afghanistan. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and other top Turkish officials have been at the international forefront opposing the U.S. move.

The Afghan government had also expressed its deep concerns over the move.

"The decision has affected the feelings of Muslims around the world and it will threaten peace in the Middle East. Therefore, any unilateral move in this respect, without the participation of Palestine, will not result in a positive and permanent solution [to the problem]," Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani had said in a statement.

Jerusalem remains at the heart of the perennial Middle East conflict, with Palestinians hoping that East Jerusalem -- occupied by Israel since 1967 -- might eventually serve as the capital of an independent Palestinian state. (AA)

(16) Rice Price up, ...

and the same amount of African black tea 300afs -- same prices as last week's. Ahmad Wali Panjsheri, who owns a grocery store in Dahn-i-Bagh area, sold a 49-kg bag of sugar for 1,900afs, a 16-litre tin of ghee for 1,200afs, a 50-kg sack of Kazakhstani flour for 1,300, 24-kg rice for 2,300afs, a kilo of green tea for 300afs and the same quantity of black tea for 350afs.

The price of Russian gold dipped.

Haji Fawad Ahmad Salehzada, a jeweler in Timor Shahi area, said the price of one gram of Russian gold was reduced from 1,850afs to 1,800afs while the same quantity of Arabian variety remained steady at 2,300afs.

Abdul Hadi, a worker at Wazir Abad Fuel Station in Kabul, told Pajhwok Afghan News that one liter of diesel cost 46afs and the same amount of petrol 45afs.

However, the prices of firewood and liquefied gas remain unchanged.

Haji Hassan, a firewood seller in Charahi Shaheed area of Kabul, said that 560 kilograms of unpeeled oak cost 8,000afs and the same quantity of cedar 7,500afs.

Seyar Ahmad, a gas dealer in Taimani area, said the rate of gas remained steady at 60afs a kilogram.

According to moneychangers' union in Sara-i-Shazada, one US dollar accounted for 69,500afs and 1,000 Pakistani rupees for 632afs against last week's rates of 69,400afs and 630afs respectively. (Pajhwok)

(17) Habib Gulzar Group ...

distribution of finished products.

"Let us reassure, NESTLÉ MILKPAK and MILKPAK CREAM consumed in Afghanistan are imported in the country in complete compliance with regulatory requirements of CODEX Alimentarius standards followed internationally."

"All Nestlé products enters Afghan market following strictest quality checks and regulatory standards," the Habib Gulzar Group said.

"We regret any confusion caused by recent reports. Ensuring the quality and safety of their products is a priority for Nestlé. The Habib Gulzar Group takes every step necessary to maintain these high standards."

It said the group and Nestlé had agreed to take the journey of providing quality products to Afghan consumers further. "Whereby the Habib Gulzar Group is investing in a Kabul based manufacturing facility in order to locally produce some of the products for Nestlé in strategic collaboration with Nestlé's newly established local company Nestlé Afghanistan limited."

The production in this regard is scheduled to start in mid-2018. (Pajhwok)