

### (1) President Ghani

figures and groups, prompting government leaders to arrive at an agreement on retiring the ANA officers.

In November last year, the Ministry of Defense (MoD) spokesman had announced finalizing the outline of the retirement plan for Afghan National Defense and Security Force (ANDSF) generals, colonels and other high-ranking military officers. Under the plan, Dawlat Waziri had then said around 2,000 high-ranking officers would be retired in three phases over the next two years. (Pajhwok)

### (2) Govt Vows to Take

security to the country, justice must be served on the killers of the people.

"Until that happens, justice is not being served, and until the killers of the people are brought to justice, I don't think we can reach permanent security," said a military commentator Jawed Kohistani.

Security ministries vow harsher military action

"Our commandos, night-time operations and air strikes have increased, whenever we receive any report about the presence of Taliban, we will conduct operations against them," a defense ministry spokesman Dawlat Waziri said on Sunday.

"Operations are ongoing in 20 provinces across the country; major operations are underway in Helmand, Ghazni, Kandahar, Nangarhar, Paktika and Zabul provinces," said MoI deputy spokesman Nusrat Rahimi.

According to reports, 600 prisoners are on death row waiting for President Ashraf Ghani to sign their execution orders.

All cases are related to those who were arrested on charges of terrorism. But the exact number of inmates and the date of court rulings against them are not clear. (Tolonews)

### (3) Election Watchdogs

in election laws, the selection committee for the election commissions, independency of election commissions, voting system and other suggestions.

The statement also said that there were no any developments in implementation of programs including preparation of voters list, balancing polling stations and minimizing electoral districts.

Organs concerned also did not consult with political processes for creating a political consensus for election reforms and making preparations for the upcoming elections, the source said.

The Wolesi Jirga and district council elections are expected to hold on July 2019. However, Independent Election Commission (IEC) has said that the election may be delayed.

The commission said efforts were rapidly underway to finalize the election schedule.

The president has released a legislative decree for election reforms but the Wolesi Jirga did not add it to its agenda as the house has no the authority to discuss law amendments one year prior of election, therefore the decree would be enforced.

The mentioned institutes say that the selection process for members of the election commissions was not transparent and influenced by political groups. They say people who were qualified for the membership of the election commissions were not given a chance.

They say secretary and spokesperson positions of the IEC should be filled through internal election as soon as possible.

IEC has no secretary and spokesperson so far. The commission officials refused to comment on the regard.

Habib Rahman Nang, a leadership member of ETWA, talking on behalf of other institutes, asked the IEC officials to begin consultations with political processes for creating a political consensus as soon as possible.

He suggested a joint delegation comprised of representatives of the government, political parties, civil society institutes and media should be created for assessment of the election reform process and share their suggestions for solution to

problems with the government.

He said that the government should provide clarification about the leadership of secretary positions of the IEC and Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC) by acting officials.

The joint statement of the civil society institutes said, "Preparations for registration of voters, balancing the polling stations and preparing the election schedule should be done as soon as possible and the Population Registration Department should start distribution of paper identity cards on time."

The institutes also asked the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) to support the IEC for identification of districts' borders.

They also asked security organs to develop an organized plan for maintaining security for the upcoming election process. (Pajhwok)

### (4) IEC on Track

the voter registration process.

The process of preparing the voters list is on track, which will enable the IEC to include data of 14 million voters on the new list, said Wasima Badghisi, operational deputy chief of the IEC.

She said the old voting cards will no longer be valid and that parliamentary and district council elections will be held on the basis of the new list.

"The voters list will be prepared on the basis of the ID cards, old voting cards will be invalidated, ACCRA is expected to roll out (paper) ID cards to millions of people," added Badghisi.

But the IEC has confirmed that the parliamentary and district council elections could be further delayed. The date set for them last year was July 7 this year.

According to the Head of the IEC Gulajan Abdulbadi Sayyad, a number of issues have led to this - including the fact that the commission was one member short and without a leader until recently. Sayyad said there were also other logistical issues involved that could lead to the delay in elections.

"There was no chief for the commission and also there were some logistical issues on which a lot of time was spent; our technical teams are assessing the process and there is the possibility of some delay; we will announce our decision when our assessments have been completed," said Sayyad.

Afghanistan Civil Registration Authority (ACCRA) is expected to roll out over ten million paper ID cards to eligible voters. However, the names of 14 million Afghans will be automatically included in the voter list.

"There will be a delay of some months, because we have wasted time; it is impossible to conduct the process on time," said IEC commissioner Sayed Hafiz Hashimi. This also comes after President Ashraf Ghani sacked Imam Mohammad Warimach - who was head of the IEC secretariat. Shahla Haq was appointed as caretaker to the post.

The IEC has since been trying to find a suitable candidate to take over the position. However no one has so far been recommended to the president.

"Based on the law, we need to introduce three candidates to the president; the work will be done very soon so that the president can pick one candidate for the post of IEC secretariat," said IEC spokesman Maazullah Dawlati. (Tolonews)

### (5) Sans Phytosanitary

Zyrmal said efforts were being made to stop the practice but due to the long and porous border between the two countries, the illegal transfer of such items could not be controlled.

Earlier, he explained, no phytosanitary certificate was required. But when Afghanistan made Pakistani products' import conditional on phytosanitary certificates, Islamabad took a similar step.

He said the principle demand was that all the imported goods specially the vegetables and fruits should be examined in the lab besides having the phytosanitary certificate.

He said efforts for the construction of modern and equipped livestock

and agriculture laboratory in Spinboldak were being launched. Machinery for the laboratory had arrived and would be soon made functional. The World Bank is assisting the project, he said.

Zyrmal said employees for the laboratory had been trained and the facility would start working with the new solar year.

Once the laboratory was made functional all products besides having phytosanitary certificate would be examined for its quality in the lab, he added.

Agriculture official Eng. Mohammadullah Noori said they were duty-bound to check and quarantine products.

He said over 250 trucks delivered livestock and agriculture products to Afghanistan from Pakistan. These products were never allowed entry without phytosanitary certificates.

Noori acknowledged agriculture and livestock products entered Afghanistan via illegal routes and its prevention was difficult.

He stressed the need for the establishment of a proper laboratory in Kandahar and warned the use of unexamined products was a hazard. The official recalled a fly-disease incident, which was caused by items transferred to Kandahar from Iran. Pomegranate were infected with the fly disease.

He also reminded of the melon-fly disease coming from Pakistan to Afghanistan. He said the disease never existed in Afghanistan before. But now the melon crop in Kandahar is affected every year.

Noori, too, spoke of unfit poultry feed imports from Pakistan. Around 15,000 chickens were killed in Afghanistan by the hazardous feed. He has repeatedly informed relevant organs about the problems. In addition to large-scale commercial goods, Afghanistan also imports chicken meat, eggs, livestock and around 60 to 70 trucks of live chickens on a daily basis.

Haji Nanai Agha, head of Fresh Fruit Association in Kandahar, said a phytosanitary certificate was not required for trade between Afghanistan and Pakistan in the past.

However, now it is mandatory. He said Kandahar fresh fruit traders must have this certificate. But some food items, fruits and other goods were smuggled into Afghanistan.

Kandahar residents say they often see food items of low quality in the market. Hayatullah Srak, a resident of the Mirwais Mina area of Kandahar City, complained Pakistani food items were not healthy or standard.

Most of these goods are imported through legal routes and some smuggled into Afghanistan. The officials concerned should activate an advanced laboratory in Kandahar so all the goods imported should be analyzed and health guaranteed.

He said despite the ban, substandard wheat continued to be imported. Earlier, Kandahar officials had banned meat imports from Pakistan, warning of taking punitive action against those violating the order.

Kandahar Butchers Association, meanwhile, said unhygienic meat was still being imported from Pakistan.

They said the meat was not imported through legal routes but smuggled into the country. Custom officials and security organs should stop the practice, they suggested.

Syed Ahmad Silab, a provincial council member, told Pajhwok he had personally taken action to deal with the problem.

He claimed they recently seized a vehicle full of meat imported from Pakistan. Some of the meat was of dead, ill and haram animals that caused many diseases, he charged.

Silab is working jointly with the officials concerned to enforce phytosanitary certification on all imported food items and activate a laboratory in Kandahar to test their quality.

Not only food items, but medicines are also smuggled into Afghanistan. The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) also acknowledged most of medicines were trafficked into Afghanistan from neighbouring countries. The ministry says it is trying to control borders and ban medicine smuggling.

Dr. Najia Tariq, deputy minister of public health who recently traveled to Kandahar province, regretted most of medicines were

smuggled into Afghanistan due to the country's porous borders.

She said medicines arrived in Afghanistan in ordinary vehicles rather than in refrigerated ones. As a result, their quality was harmed by high temperatures and other seasonal effects.

However, she warned of tightening supervising control over the import of medicines and opening a laboratory to analyse the quality and food items and drugs. (Pajhwok)

### (6) Haunted by

where several eastern and western districts remained disconnected from Paron.

"If people from western parts of the country want to come to Paron, they will have to travel through Laghman, Nangarhar and Kunar before reach their destination. They have to cover -300kilometre journey," he added.

Regarding the security situation, he said only Wama district and Paron were under total government control. At least 70 percent of remaining districts were under rebels' sway, he explained.

Paendazoy continued the residents of Nuristan faced serious health issues as there was no modern hospital in the entire province. The scarcity of education facilities is reflected in the fact that 90 percent schools in Nuristan have no buildings.

"All these problems have people to join militant groups," the public representatives argued.

People of this mountainous province, located east of Kabul, have been faced with multiple problems. Long plagued by the Taliban insurgency, Nuristan is situated close to the Durand Line. (Pajhwok)

### (7) "Daesh Has

the provincial council head of Zabul province, on Sunday told Pajhwok Afghan News that Daesh militants recently established active centers in four districts of the province including Day Chopan, Khak Afghan, Naw Bahar and Arghandab.

"Fifty percent of Zabul territory is under the militants' control, the militants are Daesh and some other groups," he said.

Jan said that Daesh fighters were trained in their centers and then sent to other parts of Afghanistan. He did not provide any evidences about his claims but said the government should take serious steps for eliminating militants.

Zabul governor, Kheyal Mohammad Hussaini, told Pajhwok that security problems were created by Pakistani and Iranian intelligence groups in the province.

He said security was good in Qalat, the provincial capital, but districts were unstable due to sharing border with the neighboring countries.

"There are no Daesh militants in Zabul, only Khak Afghan district is under the Taliban control, but it is under our close surveillance," he said.

The militants would be defeated in Zabul following an organized operation framework, he said.

Khan Mohammad, a resident of Dai Chopan district, told Pajhwok that only the center of their district was under the government control and the rest of other areas of the district were with the Taliban.

"Taliban also closed schools in most areas of our district and they do not allow students to go to schools," he said.

Sher Mohammad, a resident of Qalat city, said that security situation was bad in the province because Afghan forces had no coordination with each other.

"Whenever police forces are under attack in districts, other security forces do not go there to support them," he said.

A number of other residents of Zabul also complained about insecurity in their province.

Zabul is located on Kandahar-Kabul highway and most of its areas are under the Taliban control. (Pajhwok)

### (8) Abdullah Says

Ayar in turn said: "Our only wish is unity and brotherhood of the people."

Abdullah went on to say credible documents show that recent attacks in Kabul had been masterminded in

Pakistan.

Abdullah also called on Islamabad to put its words into practice in terms of fighting terrorism.

"Our delegation in their visit to Pakistan delivered all the documents and the National Unity Government expects Pakistan to take action and show us they no longer want instability in Afghanistan," said Abdullah.

Meanwhile, a number of MPs from Parwan and Kapisa provinces said although they have been critical of government, the still support it.

"Although I say government is weak, it is not. It is relative, everything is provided for. Today the situation has provided for 9.3 million children to go to school," Mohammad Almas Zahid, Parwan MP and adviser to the president said. (Tolonews)

### (9) Experts Skeptical

operational program which emphasizes the need for joint efforts between the military of Afghanistan and Pakistan to eliminate the Taliban, Haqqani network and Daesh," added Ahmadi.

Experts Skeptical While Afghanistan strives to get the international community to increase pressure on Pakistan over its controversial role in the fight against insurgency, political commentators argue that such talks will not have a significant impact on Pakistan's actions against insurgency.

"We should not expect any breakthrough from Pakistan, because Pakistan has always made commitments, but not taken practical action; this time it would have been better for us to present our evidence to the UN," said political analyst Nabi Misdaq.

According to MoFA, Pakistan's deputy foreign minister led the Pakistani delegation in these talks, however, they did not hold any meetings with high-ranking Afghan officials.

Another two days of talks are expected between the two countries in Islamabad on Thursday, said Ahmadi.

He said that for the first time, Pakistan's foreign ministry has called the Taliban and its brutal offshoot Haqqani network terrorists.

In addition, some Afghan lawmakers have said that Pakistan's support to militants will be detrimental to the country.

"It is very unfortunate that Pakistan measures its prosperity in terms of destroying Afghanistan; but Pakistan in order to get rid of terrorism must accept the prosperity of Afghanistan," said MP Abdul Jabbar Qahraman.

This comes after Pakistan ramped up its missile attacks on the eastern regions of Afghanistan in the past few days.

Four civilians from the same family, among them women and children, were wounded in these missile attacks, said an Afghan government official in Dangam district of Kunar province.

Pakistani officials have so far not commented on the issue. (Tolonews)

### (10) Kabul Municipality

who are working under the finance ministry in customs," said Habibzai.

Finance Ministry officials meanwhile said in this past year around 3.4 billion AFs was collected in taxes from associations and small factories.

According to the finance ministry, further cooperation between relevant government bodies engaged in tax collection will result in an increase in national revenue.

"We are trying to integrate taxation zones and areas in the city and by that time we will provide you with more information," the deputy finance minister Najibullah Wardak said. According to Kabul Municipality, all associations in Kabul have an obligation to pay four types of taxes to the municipality in exchange for services provided by government. (Tolonews)

### (11) Nearly 100

During the operations insurgent's weapons were seized, Waziri said. Waziri did not speak about the security forces casualties.

Taliban has not commented about the operations. (Tolonews)