

Quote of the Day

Poverty is the parent of revolution and crime.

Aristotle

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Senators Differ Over Decree's Inclusion in Agenda

KABUL - Meshrano Jirga or Senate members on Sunday differed over whether to include or not in the upper house's agenda a presidential legislative decree regarding elections.

Under Article 109th of the Constitution proposals for amendments to the electoral law cannot be included in the working agenda of the assembly during the last year of the legislative period.

Senate's legislative commission head, Maulvi Mahiuddin Musif, said preparing voter list before elections, invalidating pervious voter cards, issuing new cards and the allocation of a seat for Hindus and Sikhs in the Wolesi Jirga were issues mentioned in the presidential decree.

Senator Rahmatullah Achakzai from southern Kandahar province "the legislative decree regarding elections should be included in the agenda of the Meshrano Jirga because elections to the Wolesi Jirga and the district councils are vital for sustainability of the system."



He asked the administrative board of the upper house to include the item in the agenda because 50 percent members of Meshrano Jirga were in their first legislative term and only the selective members of

the Senate would complete their tenure over the next three weeks. However, Mohammad Alam Ezediyar, the first deputy chairman, said the heads of committees have not included the decree in the

agenda because the parliament could not discuss such issues in its final year as it is against the article 109th of the constitution."

"We can't take any step against the law and rules. The Wolesi Jirga had also not included the issue in its agenda because the parliament could not include election related issues in its agenda in the final year of the term," Senate chairman Fazal Hadi Muslimyar said.

"If the issue is included in the agenda, I would not participate in the session that day," Muslimyar said.

However, Ezediyar said they had already included the presidential decree approving seven suggestions of the Electoral Reform Commission and was scheduled to be discussed in Tuesday's general session.

The decreed articles include the formation of the selection committee, the preparation of voter lists on the basis of electronic identity cards, a review of polling stations, reduction in the ...*(More on P4)...(1)*

4 Nations will Focus on How to Move Peace Process Forward: CEO Office

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan will host a four nation meeting of representatives from Afghanistan, Pakistan, US and China as part the recent move to pave the way for peace talks with the Taliban, the office of the Chief Executive Officer of Afghanistan said on Sunday, weeks after Kabul and Islamabad agreed to resume the stalled talks with the hardline movement. The meeting will also focus on how to take the talks forward by creating the framework for the process, the CEO said. Though in the past, Pakistan continuously announced support for a stable Afghanistan, but public perception in Afghanistan disputes Pakistan's commitments amid Islamabad's failure to bring the resurgent group to the peace table.

The Islamabad meeting will however be the first of two. The second meeting will be take place later in Kabul. No date has yet however been announced for this meeting.

"The focus of the four nation meeting will be on matters which were raised at the Heart of Asia conference. The meeting will also focus on how to move the process forward," deputy spokesman to CEO Abdullah Abdullah said.

Amid speculation, some Afghan political commentators believe that participation of Pakistan's key allies and strategic partners in the talks would help strike purposeful talks ...*(More on P4)...(3)*

India Defeats Afghanistan in SAFF Final



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, India - India on Sunday defeated Afghanistan during the final match of South Asia Football Federation (SAFF) Championship final. Both Afghanistan and India ended the first half of the match with no goals scored but the Afghan player zubair Amiri hits first goal for Afghanistan during 70th minute of the game.

However, the Indian player Jeje managed to level the game by hitting the first goal for India during the 71st minute of the game.

The two teams could not achieve more goals until the last minute of the second half and despite an additional time was announced.

India managed to score during the second goal during the last minutes of first additional time allowed and managed to lead the game 2-1.

The Afghan team managed to secure second place in SAFF Championship and handed over the SAFF Championship title to India.

Afghanistan claimed SAFF Championship for the first time after defeating India during the final match of the Championship in 2013. (KP)

ECSC Urged to Consider Transparency, Revive Public Trust

KABUL - Election watchdog organizations on Sunday called on the Electoral Commission's Selection Committee (ECSC) to consider transparency in its activities in order to regain people's trust in electoral bodies. "This is the first step to revive public trust in the electoral process. The committee should assure the people that reforms will be brought to electoral bodies," said Yusuf Rasheed, chief executive for Free and Fair Elections of Afghanistan.



Afghanistan Civil Society Elections Network (ACSEN) officials meanwhile called on the Selection Committee to select election commission members based on merit.

"We believe that the Selection Committee should work transparently and far from any kind of political pressure," said Habiburrahman Nang, a member of ACSEN.

"The figures which are introduced for membership of the election ...*(More on P4)...(2)*

CoAS Orders Troops to Stop Militia Groups in Nangarhar



KABUL - Chief of Army Staff (CoAS) Qadam Shah Sahim, in a visit to Achin district in Nangarhar, ordered Afghan National Army (ANA) troops to bring an end to militia group activities in the eastern province.

"We have bad experiences from establishing militia groups. We will not let anyone build militia [groups]," Shahim said.

"We welcome those who support the Afghan army and police force members in the framework of public uprisings, but we will not allow anyone to establish militia - privately," he added. The governor of Nangarhar, Salim Khan Kunduzi, meanwhile said any move which is out of government's framework is not acceptable. But he said militia groups should operate within government's structures.

He said: "We support those who defend the people but those who defend the people should work in a proper framework."

Nangarhar residents also announced their ...*(More on P4)...(4)*

Education Ministry 'Cooperated Fully' in Probe



KABUL - The Ministry of Education (MoE) said Sunday that they cooperated fully with the fact-finding team tasked to probe alleged embezzlement of millions of dollars from ministry coffers - money provided mostly by international donors to help rebuild the nation's education sector.

This announcement comes a day after a report, leaked to TOLOnews, stated that millions of dollars has been embezzled on the back of ghost schools, teachers and students.

But the education ministry said it had cooperated fully with the investigation into the alleged embezzlement during former education minister Farooq Wardak's time.

The report also disclosed that scholarships were offered to certain individuals affiliated to particular political groups and that ghost training seminars were reported in some provinces. Also that houses were rented for schools at huge expense.

Concerns were raised in recent months after ...*(More on P4)...(5)*

Senior Officials Call on Nation to Support Football Team

KABUL - A number of senior officials on Sunday called on the people to support and respect national football and cricket players as their hard work has enabled the nation to come together and improve the culture of tolerance and acceptance. Their comment came just hours before Afghanistan took on India in the SAFF Cup final match in India on Sunday evening. With the nation behind the team, football fever gathered momentum during the day. By the time the match started, thousands of people around the country were gathered in front of the TVs - including President Ashraf Ghani.

On a positive note ahead of the game, Minister of Economy Abdul Satar Murad said: "I am sure that their victory will strengthen unity ...*(More on P4)...(6)*



Almost 350 Drug Addicts Moved to Rehab Center

KABUL - An additional 350 drug addicts were rounded up from Kabul's Pul-e-Sokhta area, with the cooperation of security forces, and moved to a rehabilitation facility center, the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) said on Sunday in a statement.

The drug addicts were transferred by ambulances to the new treatment center on Saturday, read the statement.

The MoPH statement said that the drug addicts, who live on the streets, were mostly in a bad condition and unless moved they would face the possibility of death, especially due to the cold weather. This comes after about 400 addicts were rounded up in Kabul last week and transferred to the new center.

Officials said the move came after President Ashraf Ghani issued an order for addicts to be placed in care.

Ghani recently ordered officials to establish a drug rehabilitation center at Camp Phoenix - which was once a military base for American troops in Afghanistan and is able to treat at least 1,000 drug addicts at a time. (Tolo News)

Abdullah to Visit Iran on Monday



TEHRAN - Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah will pay an official three-day visit to Tehran on Monday.

While in Tehran, Abdullah and Iranian officials will discuss bilateral ties and regional cooperation.

Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani had visited Iran in early April.

Abdullah will visit Port of Chabahar during his three-day stay. He is the second Afghan official to visit Iran this year. A high-ranking delegation, including the ministers of interior, economy and foreign affairs, will accompany Abdullah in his trip to Tehran.

The issues of Afghan refugees in Iran and border security are likely to be discussed in Abdullah's meetings with Iranian officials.

Back in April 2015, Iran and Afghanistan signed two cooperation agreements as part of efforts to boost the relations between the two neighbors in various areas.

In a ceremony attended by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and his Afghan counterpart Ashraf Ghani, high-ranking officials from the two countries signed the documents.

In 2009, Iran was one of the largest investors in Afghanistan mainly in the construction of roads and bridges as well as agriculture and health care. (IRNA)