

(1) Latest ...

only Article 29 with a series of limitations on the subject and rejected changes to other articles and clauses, he said.

After the amendment, he said, now a company could sell a contract only when the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum keenly observed the selling process.

But mining experts say the amendment will allow opportunists to make money and fuel corruption in the mining sector.

Ibrahim Jafari, a geologist, said the transfer of mining contract from one hand to another could undermine extraction activities and lead to increased project costs besides paving the ground for corruption.

He said contracts changed hands in other countries as well, but the situation in Afghanistan was different.

Saifullah Sihon, an economist and teacher at Kabul University, also expressed his concern over the amendment.

He said transfer of contracts could affect national interest and allow self-centered individuals to take advantage.

He said the first contractor should be held responsible if the contract was not properly implemented.

But Obaidullah Ramin said negative and positive aspects of a law could be better judged at the time of its implementation.

He said every law could have shortcomings and negative aspects if thoroughly studied. He said they approved the amendment after a prolonged debate and consideration.

Jafari defended allocation of five percent revenue to provinces where mines were found.

He said the mining areas could face environmental degradation and other problems and funds for infrastructure development of such areas should be considered. (Pajhwok)

(2) Ghani concerned...

in Syria war has sparked concerns among the Afghan officials some will return to fight in Afghanistan under Islamic State's banner. (KP)

(3) Impossible to ...

both the leaders agreed on the key ministries of interior and defense but now the president was reportedly said to have the ministry of defense with him. According to the constitution, the president is the supreme commander of armed forces. The official said that US senators were expected to visit Kabul this week to help resolve differences between both the leaders on the subject. If the US senators visited Kabul, they would meet the president and the CEO. (Pajhwok)

(4) Amendments ...

six. The MPs insisted words "Afghan" and "tribe" should be mentioned in the ID cards.

Bowing to continued insistence by some MPs, Speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahim asked the Interior Security Commission to prepare amendments to the act and present them before the house for a decision.

But Kamal Nasir Osoli, who heads the Education, Religion and Culture Affairs Commission, told Pajhwok Afghan News the Interior Security Panel had held off the draft amendments on the basis of prejudice and under pressure from some elements.

He said the panel was supposed to make ready the amendments and should have forwarded them to other panels for passing legal phases, but it did not do so.

Interior Security Commission secretary Nawab Mangal also said the panel had

illegally put on hold the amendments.

"Our commission conducted an illegal ballot on whether or not to send the draft to other commissions for debates. Except me, all voted in favour of not sending the draft. But this decision is illegal because the panel has no right to take such a decision," he added.

He said the draft should be sent to other house commissions for discussion before tabling it in the assembly. Mangal said he had discussed the issue with his colleagues and the issue would be raised on the assembly floor soon.

Wolesi Jirga deputy secretary Irfanullah Irfan said the assembly had tasked the Interior Security Commission to prepare the draft amendments in line with the house decision. He confirmed the panel was yet to inform the administration board about the task it had been given. (Pajhwok)

(5) Japan Supports ...

nearly 1.2 million US dollars to support UNHCR and the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran's efforts to provide educational and health services for Afghan refugees in the country, UNHCR said in a press release.

'One example of the projects made possible through Japan's generous contribution has been literacy classes for female refugees. The courses have helped the refugee women become more self-reliant and provided a foundation for their further education and skills training.'

"Not only can I now read and write," said Zahra, an Afghan refugee mother attending a literacy class in Kerman Province, "I can also understand and help my children with some of their schoolwork." (IRNA)

(6) Massoud ...

of local administrations. "Until our economic and political agencies don't work independently and perform their duties in a better way, it will be difficult to meet all the challenges we face. Otherwise, we will always remain dependent on others," he observed.

In this regard, Massoud said provincial councils could play a major role by identifying causes of challenges in remote areas and sharing them with the government authorities concerned.

He insisted development process needed to be started from villages and remote areas because prosperity of people there would result in the country's overall stability.

The two-day conference "Better Representation" was attended by council members from Kabul, Logar, Maidan Wardak, Parwan, Kapisa, Panjsher, Bamyán, Daikundi, Farah and Ghor provinces.

Independent Directorate of Local Governance official Abdul Matin Baig said the participants were familiarised with their responsibilities, role in ensuring good governance and sharing information with civil society.

He added efforts were underway to empower provincial councils for the sake of good

Zuhra Naderi, a Kabul PC member, told Pajhwok Afghan News despite security challenges, they would try to represent people in remote areas in an effective way.

"In order to resolve people's problems, we need full cooperation from government agencies. We are ready to give them advise on various matters," she added. (Pajhwok)

(7) Probe Team ...

they also compensated families of the victims and were distributed 100,000 afghanis for each deceased and 50,000 for each injured.

Mohammad said families of 17 dead persons and 45 injured persons were given the amounts.

He said people claimed 27 persons had died and families of the remaining 10 dead persons would be compensated, pending an investigation.

Din Mohammad said key points in their decision included replacement of the existing ANA battalion in Sangin.

He said the perpetrators of the shelling would be awarded punishment and three detained relatives of the victims would be released shortly.

The conflict in Sangin has a negative impact on the country's security situation and the war was no solution to the problem, Mohammad believed, saying they had discussed their views with local security officials.

Acting governor Mohammad Naeem told reporters two ANA soldiers had been arrested in connection with the shelling and investigations could lead to more arrests.

He said the president-appointed delegation had investigated all aspects of the incident and it would present its findings to the president for a decision.

Naeem said he and family members of the victims had talked to the president through a video conference. Tribal elder and Sangin resident, Saifuddin Sangin, told Pajhwok Afghan News they called off

He said the delegation had assured them of properly investigating the incident.

But another leader of the protestors, Baryalai Helmand, criticized ending the protest and accused some elders of cutting a deal with the delegation. (Pajhwok)

(8) Jawzjan Residents ...

She said tens of women voluntarily participated in the rally to support Afghan force and stand against those scuttling peace in Afghanistan. Najibullah, another member of the rally, told Pajhwok Afghan News that their gathering was in support of Afghan forces.

He added that they would join Afghan forces and stand against militants if they did not surrender their weapons to the government.

A number of provincial council members and civil society activists also participated in the rally.

Maulvi Abdul Hai Hayat, head of the provincial council said: "Beefed up security is direly needed throughout the country and we support the government's initiated peace process for militants to join reconciliation."

Acting governor Bai Murad Quainli also participated in the rally and said that the gathering was held by publics and did not have any political motive. The people gathered to voice their support to security forces and defend their country, he added.

The gathering comes as the combat mission of ISAF forces ended five days ago on January 01, 2015. Afghan security forces took full responsibility to combat terror and ensure security in the country. (Pajhwok)

(9) US May ...

government was toppled in late 2001.

About 13,000 foreign troops, mostly Americans, will remain in the country under a two-year mission named "Resolute Support" to train Afghan troops.

Ghani added that he was concerned about the Islamic State militant group and its potential threat to Afghanistan "because the past has shown us that threats, that networks change their form." The group has taken over parts of Iraq and Syria.

But US General John Campbell, who leads the remaining coalition forces in Afghanistan, said in an interview on the same program he did not see Islamic State "coming into Afghanistan like they did into Iraq. The Afghan Security Forces would not allow that." (Pajhwok)

(10) Afghanistan to...

Jawzjan is located in the north of Afghanistan bordering neighboring Turkmenistan. The province has 11 districts and hundreds of villages with a multi-ethnic population of about 512,100. Faryab is one of the thirty-four provinces of Afghanistan, located in the north of the country bordering neighboring Turkmenistan. It has a population of about 948,000, which is multi-ethnic and mostly a tribal society. The province encompasses 15 districts and over 1,000 villages. (AKIpress)

(11) Noor Not...

the classified intelligence files from the NSA, GCHQ, and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) from the archive of whistleblower Edward Snowden, reported that Noor was added to the list of Joint Prioritized Effects List (JPEL) in 2010, among the candidates who were only listed as being under observation or to be taken into custody.

The report further added that in October 2008 the NATO defense ministers made the momentous decision that drug networks would now be "legitimate targets" for ISAF troops.

The report said "Narcotics traffickers were added to the Joint Prioritized Effects List (JPEL) list for the first time." According to the report, Noor had become wealthy through smuggling in the turmoil of war, and he was seen as someone who ruthlessly eliminated his enemies. He was listed as number 1,722 on the NATO list and given a priority level of three, but NATO merely collected information about Noor, rather than placing him on the kill list. (KP)

(12) Muslims ...

and the hereafter was theirs. He said Afghanistan was currently passing through a critical juncture in its history. Millions of Afghans lived under the poverty line and the number of drug addicts was on the increase and countless problems haunted the Afghans, he continued. "Now the unity government should not keep the Afghans waiting and should introduce the cabinet as soon as possible in order to streamline the affairs of ministries." MP Rabbabi Parwani said the people of Afghanistan had plunged in numerous problems because they had shunned Islamic teachings and were following non-believers.

"In the name of women's rights, they have destroyed our domestic life. They encouraged women to challenge their spouses and thus ruined their lives," she said. She said Islam had given women rights, which had not been given to them in any other religion or laws. (Pajhwok)

(13) Percentage ...

they came to Afghanistan. "If we look at the fight against terrorism, poppy cultivation and drug trafficking so we all including the international community have lost this war," said Mirza Mohammad Yarmand, former deputy interior minister. With less than two years remaining for the American troops to completely exit from Afghanistan, President Ashraf Ghani has said that exit of American and NATO troops from Afghanistan might be reconsidered. In his first interview as the

President of Afghanistan with the CBS, Ghani insisted that the timeframe for complete troop exit can be extended as Afghanistan might possibly need their presence after 2016. (Tolonews)

(14) ANSF Have...

ago, hundreds of armed insurgents, most of them foreign nationals, attacked Dangam district of eastern Kunar province where hundreds of attackers have been killed and wounded so far.

"The Taliban fighters tried a lot to take control of the district but our security forces responded them with full force," said Major Gen. Mohammad Zaman Wazir, commander of 201 Selab Corps. "Hopefully, we will take overall control of Dangam in near future."

Nearly 190 insurgents have been killed and more than 120 others injured so far in these fighting, he said, adding six ANSF soldiers were also killed with 18 others injured.

Planted mines and destroyed bridges were the main reasons that have pulled over the fighting for the fourth week, according to the commander.

Meanwhile, the deputy governor for Kunar, Mohammad Nabi Ahmadi, said the Taliban fighting in Dangam were being supported from across the border.

"Taliban fighters are mobilized and supported from across the border," Ahmadi said. "Our forces are trying hard to push them back from the area."

Fighting enthusiastically in the front line, the ANSF soldiers have promised to not return home unless the insurgents are eliminated.

"We have come here to save our citizens," Soldier Najibullah said. "We will fight until our last drop of blood." The Dangam fighting have forced thousands of inhabitants to evacuated the area after the insurgents ablaze several homes.

Located in the east, Kunar is among the unsafe provinces of Afghanistan having border with Pakistan, a country accused of harboring and supporting Taliban and other extremist groups. (Tolonews)

(15) Civil Society ...

civil society organizations can no longer tolerate delay in the cabinet," activist Barry Salaam warned. "Finally, we will be compelled to call on the people to take to the streets."

The civil society representatives asked the government to not endanger the fate of around 30 million Afghans. They criticized that when the NUG leaders are not able to solve the cabinet issue in three months, they will likely be not able to fulfill their commitments.

"The government leaders need to serve for the people instead of fighting for political power," another activist Ahmad Seyar Lalee said.

The longest six-month electoral process and now additional three months on cabinet issue have seriously disturbed the normal lives of the citizens. "We are seriously worried about our future as there is not job," a resident of Kabul named Iztatullah said. "The people are totally in the state of confusion." Earlier in the London Conference, Ghani promised to form the cabinet in four weeks; however, the timeframe is ending today with no sign of progress in this respect. (Tolonews)

(16) SC Looks ...

his term through the end of the 16th session of the Senate as Chairman in spite of his having reached the five-year term limit stated in law. "As his highness was selected as the appointed member of the Jirga based on presidential decree number 2894

dated 28/02/1393, the appointment does not disturb their current chairmanship, and is considered a continuation of their tenure in the Senate," the letter reads.

However, the action taken by the Supreme Court has seen backlash from members of the Senate and legal community, who claim the move would be unconstitutional. A number of Senators, along with the Afghan Independent Bar Association, have written to President Ashraf Ghani in hope that he will step in and prevent a violation of the constitution.

"This decision is not by the Supreme Court because this document is against the constitution, and this is made clear in the internal duties and responsibilities and by the 11th amendment of the constitution," Wardak Senator Haseebullah Kaleemzai said.

Some Senators have speculated that Muslimyar could turn down the offer of an additional year as Chairman in light of the controversial nature of the issue. "Mr. Muslimyar might not agree to it, and the senior government officials might not agree for the law to be violated and the rights of others to be stepped on," Samangan Senator Said Safiullah Hashemi said.

But that appeared unlikely after Muslimyar admitted to TOLONews Sunday that he had reached out to the Office of State Minister for Parliamentary Affairs about extending his term as Chairman. "Following advise from friends, I sent a suggestion to the government to see if I could serve as the Chairman off he Senate for another term, but my being proposed by the Supreme Court is done by the high court, by government, and not me," he said.

Meanwhile, acting Chief Justice Abdul Rasheed Rashed has defended the decision to prolong Muslimyar's term in light of the backlash. "The view of the high court in this regard is obvious; we have said this to the presidential palace as well and considering the extension of the Senate Chairman tenure from four to five years, our views are clear," he said Sunday. (Tolonews)

(17) Georgian Troops ...

the meeting, the commander noted the professionalism of the Georgian soldiers and thanked them for their participation in the international peacekeeping mission of ISAF. Since 2015, a new NATO mission Resolute Support will begin in Afghanistan, and the Georgian troops will also take part in it. (Trend News Agency)

(18) Iran Issues ...

time through efforts made by Iran's Ambassador to Kabul Mohammad Reza Bahrami.

Meanwhile, Ahmadi said, the Afghan travelers to Iran can pay their visa fees through branch of an Iranian bank established inside Iran's Consulate in Kabul.

He further announced that the Afghan nationals will soon receive insurance services while applying for the Iranian visa.

He also said those Afghan nationals who had officially married an Iranian will soon receive further legal facilities by the Iranian government. Iran hosts about one million (950,000) Afghan refugees despite the voluntary return of tens of thousands of Afghans to their countries of origin during the past decade. (IRNA)

(19) 4 Suspected ...

says by arresting the suspects and recovering huge amount of weapon rounds from their positions they have saved several lives. (KP)

(20) Ghazni's ...

arrests were being made but an investigation was initiated by the security agencies. (KP)

(21) Kabul Attack...

sources. Shortly after the attack, the area was cordoned off by the security forces where foreign soldiers were also seen in the area.

The Taliban in a statement have claimed responsibility for the attack. (Tolonews)

(22) 60pc Khost ...

Afghan News due to negligence on the part of the Public Health Department, non-professional doctors attended patients in the provincial capital and remote areas.

He claimed 60 percent of doctors in Khost were not professional and they had severely undermined activities of professional doctors.

"At least the Public Health Department should inspect private clinics and health centers in the city to know if the doctors there are qualified."

Another doctor, Noor Gul, claimed Public Health Department officials paid no attention to healthcare services delivery to citizens due to a lack of interest.

"The department is rife with corruption and thus unable to provide better health services rather creating problems."

A resident Nazeem Khan told Pajhwok Afghan News most doctors prescribed medicine to ailing people without diagnosing their diseases.

But acting Public Health Director Dr. Hidayatullah Hamidi rejected the claims as baseless in an exclusive chat with Pajhwok Afghan News.

"I know some doctors are not professional, but their number is not as high as it is claimed. There is no corruption in our administration and if anyone claims so, they should produce evidence."

A spokesman for the governor, Mubarez Zadrán, said they were aware of the allegations against the Public Health Department raised by doctors. He urged the Ministry of Public Health to completely overhaul the department by introducing reforms. He said the governor had warned of serious action against officials found guilty of negligence in duty. (Pajhwok)

(23) Kapisa ...

and called for the midwives to be fired.

Pajwasha, who lives in Mahmood Razi, the provincial capital, said the midwives did not discharge their responsibilities and lacked interest in providing care to patients.

"Sometimes, if not often, these health workers demand money from family members of patients in return for assisting them in getting their problems resolved. Women often give birth to children in the waiting room rather than the labour room.

They (midwives) have no morals to follow."

Sher Shah, a Mahmood Razi resident, said his female relatives had again and again complained against the midwives, but the Public Health Department was yet to take any action in this regard.

Public Health Director Dr. Mirza Mohammad Reza confirmed receiving complaints against midwives. He warned midwives if further complaints were received against them, they would be subjected to legal actions. Dr. Reza said all patients in Kapisa did not visit the civil hospital because small and big health clinics were available in other areas of the province. The clinics provided healthcare services day and night, he said. (Pajhwok)