

(1) US to Engage ...

to protect America," Pompeo said. He was responding to questions on the recent decision of the Trump administration to suspend approximately \$2 billion in security assistance to Pakistan. "The president has made very clear that he needs Pakistan to cease being a safe haven for terrorists that threaten the United States of America, end, period, full stop," Pompeo said, reflecting the stand taken by Trump. The security assistance can be restored if Pakistan takes decisive actions against terrorists, he added. (Tolonews)

(2) Afghani Losing...

However, Noor, also the executive chief of Jamiat-I-Islami, refused to quit his job. Negotiations are currently ongoing between Jamiat-I-Islami and the government on the matter.

First vice-president, Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum, who has been in Turkey, was recently denied entry into Afghanistan for a second time by the government, further fueling the tension.

The DAB head said that the bank offered \$462 million to the market since December to boost the afghani currency value against foreign currencies.

"It is not DAB's goal to determine currency rates in the market, we are following the open market policy based on the Constitution, it means that the performance of the market determines the currency rate," he said.

He said the central bank last year had good achievement as it increased the foreign exchange reserves by half a billion US dollars and currently the country's currency reserves stood at more than \$8 billion. Seddiq said the inflation rate had been 3.08 in Afghanistan last fiscal year, far down compared to neighboring countries. The inflation rate in Pakistan was 4.6, in Iran 9.6, in India 4.8 and in Turkey 11.8 last year, he said. (Pajhwok)

(3) Washington Should ..

war against terrorism.

The envoy, also while speaking to a news channel, said it was unfair that the U.S. was blaming Pakistan for its failures in Afghanistan instead of praising Pakistan's role in the region.

Regarding U.S. President Donald Trump's tweet, in which he had accused Pakistan of lying and cheating in war on terrorism, Chaudhry said both civil and military leadership were united to protect the country in any situation.

Earlier, Trump, had once again, castigated Pakistan for providing safe havens to terrorists.

Trump, in a strongly-worded tweet, said America had been "foolishly" giving aid to Pakistan for 15 years, but in return, it has only received "lies and deceit".

In line with Trump's remark, the U.S. has recently announced to cut off military aid to Pakistan, for not taking "necessary steps" to curb terrorism. (ANI)

(4) Economic Council ..

With the implementation of this project, 16400 hectares agricultural land will be irrigated. The High Economic Council, following a comprehensive talk, decided that Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock will start feasibility studies of the project and accelerate the work." He added.

The High Economic Council discussed public private partnership plan on building roadside parking in Kabul and decided to study and check various models for it. After implementing this, Kabul city would have a standard parking system and thereby government would receive \$ 1.3 million direct revenue annually, he said.

It is worth saying that according to Ministry of Finance's new policy, all important decisions of HEC would be shared with people via press conference in GMIC. (Pajhwok)

(5) IMF Helping ..

outlining a strategy of necessary reforms that will be brought about in three state-owned commercial banks. The IMF said it will provide support to the Afghan government in this respect as well. (Tolonews)

(6) Almost 2 of Every ...

discharge its responsibilities. The absence of judicial institutions in half of the districts has restricted law enforcement in some areas.

These are the finding of a report compiled by Pajhwok Afghan News and the Lawyers Association on the 14th anniversary of the constitution's adoption. The report identifies constitutional violations over the past 14 years.

In addition, the two organisations conducted a survey on public awareness regarding the law and its implementation, the level of people's access to justice, effectiveness of the law and the best right and freedoms provided by the law.

Most part of law not enforced. The survey finds that of the 162 articles of the constitution, 94 have been violated or not implemented properly. Some of the articles have been spurned outright and others partially. The enforcement of certain parts of the basic law has been blocked.

The violated articles encompass orders that ensure the basic rights and freedom of the people, as well as the legitimacy of the system. Their violations and implementation have a direct impact on the protection of people's rights.

The study indicates only those articles which do not curtail powers of government officials and branches have been implemented somehow.

Chapter 1 of the constitution explains fundamental purposes and government duties and responsibilities. The study shows government efforts to achieve these targets are not satisfactory. Of the 21 articles this chapter has, 12 have not been implemented properly and nine others have been enforced just because they are simple, pertaining to issued like calendar, flag, national anthem and capital.

Chapter 2 guarantees public rights, freedoms and responsibilities besides outlining government institutions' duties in their implementation. The survey finds the situation of citizen rights and freedoms is worrisome. This chapter is comprised of 38 articles, of which 32 have been partially violated. The six articles that have been enforced are simple such as not to award real estate rights to foreigners, the establishment of private universities and the freedom of choice of work.

Chapter three is about the duties, responsibilities and powers of the president. Of the 11 articles this chapter has, five have been flouted. No need has been felt yet for executing the remaining six articles dealing with unexacting things like the selection of two vice-presidents, the president's salary, referendum, resignations, impeachment and trial.

Chapter four of the constitution deals with government structure, duties, powers and basic aims. Being the executive branch, the government's prime responsibility is the implementation of laws and court decisions.

The findings highlight the government's failure in the area of rule of law. The constitutionally-mandated government structure has been complied with. The approval and implementation of the basic government structure law and other rules have been postponed for unknown reasons.

Of the 10 articles this chapter has, six have been contravened and the rest concerning eligibility for becoming a minister have been put into practice or the need for their execution has not been felt so far.

Chapter 5 pertains to composition of parliament, its prerogatives, electoral mechanisms, ratification of laws and maintenance of government-parliament relations. The most important part of this chapter is public representation and monitoring of government activities.

The findings reveal the parliament has not discharged its duties effectively. Of the 29 articles in this chapter, 15 have been denied in part and the remaining 14, which are straightforward, have been translated into action.

For example, the formation of different Wolesi Jirga and Meshrano Jirga commissions, all panels holding meetings, the parliament's convening for nine months a year and other procedures.

With the extension in Wolesi Jirga tenure, extensions for selected members of Meshrano Jirga and the absence of district council representatives have corroded the parliament's legitimacy. Thus the entire chapter has been treated with disdain.

Chapter 6 of the constitution concerns the Loya Jirga, which is considered a symbol of the nation's will and wields special powers. The Loya Jirga's legal structure is incomplete due to the delay in district council elections.

This six-article chapter could not be implemented due to the delay in district council election. This is a classic example of impediments to enforcing the constitution.

Chapter 9 focuses on the structure of the judiciary, its powers and independence. The survey shows some members of the Supreme Court's High Council have served beyond their legal tenures. Due to insecurity, judicial organs in most districts have been functional in provincial capitals, curtailing public access to justice. During court trials, a balance has not been struck between official languages. Trials are not conducted in the mother tongue of the parties involved.

Of the 20 articles this chapter has, 10 have been spurned in some measure and the remaining 10 about the Supreme Court structure, eligibility criteria for the appointments of judges, salaries etc, enforced.

Chapter eight explains administrative composition, relations between central and provincial governments, distribution of powers and mechanisms for structures of local and central administration. It also stresses better representation at provincial, district and village levels through jirgas.

The government's inability to hold district and village council elections is a clear departure from the constitutional course. The delay in district and village-level elections has also affected Meshrano Jirga and Loya Jirga programmes.

The segment envisages election for mayors and urban assemblies but they have not been held. This chapter has seven articles, but two important ones been in a state of

suspension and four breached.

Chapter 9 outlines emergency situations. Six articles of it elaborating the emergency situations are yet to be executed, as the need for this has not been realised yet.

Chapter 10 has two articles regarding amendments to the constitution. This chapter is not the subject of discussion because there has been no need for its enforcement and the Loya Jirga structure remains incomplete.

Chapter 11, having seven articles, contains different orders. Six of the articles have been breached and one about the salaries of high-ranking officials implemented.

Membership of military officials, judges and attorneys in political parties, high-ranking officials' profitable deals with the state, registration of assets at the beginning and end of jobs and independence of government commissions are some of the important orders. There has been no assurance yet of these articles being enforced.

Chapter 12 of the constitution narrates transitional orders in five articles. The absence of a law regarding basic government structures during the transitional set-up was a violation of the constitution and the aberration continues to this day. At least one article of this chapter has been contravened.

According to survey, non-availability of executive guarantees, lack of political will, weak monitoring, security issues, corruption and limited access to justice are blatant constitutional missteps. (Pajhwok)

(7) MPs Assail Pir ...

and sanctuaries are in Pakistan and are commanded from there.

Addressing Gilani, he said: "It is shameful to deceive you own people for others. The US has suspended aid to Pakistan because the country harbors leaders of anti-Afghan government insurgent groups and supports terrorism; but now he (Gilani) stands up and defends the interests of Pakistan."

Ghulam Hussain Nasirir, a public representative from Maidan Wardak province, said Gilani remarks came at a time when the US had increased pressure on Pakistan. "The Afghanistan intelligence chief should be summoned to clarify with whose money this program (the gathering held by Gilani) was organized and who was behind it."

Wolesi Jirga speaker Abdul Rauf Ibrahim said: "I am against the remarks by Gilani. His remarks were in contrast with national interests. I am sorry that a Jihadi family and leader turns a blind eye to the reality." "Afghans have been consistently victims of terrorism and the safe-havens of terrorists are located in neighboring countries. Afghans should not, especially Jihadi leaders, be blind to this." (Pajhwok)

(8) Over 6,000 ...

fighters including Daesh militants during the war, 3,285 of them sustained injuries, 443 others were arrested who have been tackled based on the law," said Waziri.

Afghan government is currently considering more troops to be included in the structure of the special forces.

Meanwhile, a number of officers serving in the ranks of the special forces have reaffirmed their commitment to safeguard the nation against threats.

"We have pursued highly professional training programs," said one officer Mohammad Hussain.

"We the Afghan special operation forces will do it, we are at the service of the people," said another officer Ehsanullah.

According to Waziri, during this period, the special forces managed to seize hundreds of light and heavy weapons including landmines from insurgents and destroyed 15 strategic centers belonging to the Taliban and Daesh.

The forces also took control of three Taliban prisons. (Tolonews)

(9) Pension Crisis ...

Khalid Payenda. Many countries face pension problems but it is especially unwelcome in Afghanistan, struggling to restore an economy shattered by four decades of war.

Provisions that award government workers with service of 40 years benefits equivalent to full final salary were originally introduced to compensate for low pay.

Many pensioners, who complain that actual benefits are meagre and often paid late, would be surprised to hear the system described as generous.

But with no separate pension fund to generate investment income and benefits paid directly from the Treasury, payments are set to spiral out of control as more of almost 900,000 government workers retire over coming years.

"The economics of it doesn't work. It's not sustainable and at a certain point it will explode," Payenda said from his office in the ministry, where he is overseeing a drive to make the budget more transparent and spending more efficient.

"It's the start of a process but it will take a few years," he said, adding that it was vital that foreign donors showed "understanding" and do not cut off funds abruptly.

'LEAKAGES, BLOATED STRUCTURES' Although down since most international troops withdrew in 2014, foreign aid still

accounts for 54 percent of the budget. But donor willingness is not eternal and most funding pledges run only to 2020.

While progress has been made in increasing revenues, preparing for a reduction in aid is urgent, especially given likely disruption around presidential elections next year.

As in each of the past eight years, parliament is wrangling over budget approval, an opaque process that has encouraged backroom deals, waste and corruption.

"There are leakages, bloated structures and there is unnecessary expenditure on conspicuous items," Payenda said. "We want to see where there are problems and fix them."

As long as security accounts for 40 percent of spending, Afghanistan's public finances will be unbalanced and the room for investment to boost revenue in areas like mining or agriculture limited.

But there are many areas where improvements are possible.

Due to weak administrative capacity, funds assigned to ministries are often not fully used, with unspent amounts carried over to following years, reducing accountability and making it harder to track real spending. In future, the government plans a "use it or lose it" approach.

On pensions, a special fund will need to be set up to separate contributions and benefits from regular Treasury funds. Both benefits and government contributions may have to be cut, a process fraught with political risk.

But more open processes to allocate funds are key, Payenda said. "Reasonable people will listen and unreasonable ones can't shout at you because of what the others will think." (Reuters)

(10) Wolesi Jirga ..

Wolesi Jirga, adding it was merely a request and not a unanimous decision. Fawzia Kofi, a legislator from Badakshan, said: "This letter is aimed at blackening the reputation of lawmakers and is far from reality. And the administrative board of the house must not let such a demand take place."

A number of other Wolesi Jirga members also held similar views, saying the letter was aimed at disgracing Wolesi Jirga.

However, Abdul Rauf Ibrahim, the Wolesi Jirga speaker, said the request of increasing privileges had been rejected and the matter had not come up for a discussion on the assembly floor.

He said the Wolesi Jirga denied the increase in salaries considering the current economic situation of the country as such a demand amounted to treason.

It's pertinent to mention that currently every member of Wolesi Jirga receives 200,000 afs in salary and privileges. (Pajhwok)

(11) Khwaja Omari ...

over the last three years.

He said currently 100 new higher education institutes that had passed all legal processes were not allowed to function.

Minister Omari said 131 private higher educational institutes were opened after the activation of the Private Higher Educational Institutes Department in 2006 operating alongside 28 government universities.

Apart from institutes being run by Afghans, a number of foreign higher education institutes also opened and offered education up to master's degree, Omari added.

"The private educational institutes well developed in numbers, but the performance of some is unsatisfactory," he said. Keeping in view the lack of professional lecturers, libraries, dormitories and presence of old curriculum, a new mechanism would be developed and implemented in future, the minister said.

Omari said opening more private higher educational institutes was suspended following a presidential order and currently 170 requests for opening such institutes were awaiting approval.

Issuing licenses to more institutes would remain suspended until an ongoing assessment of the current higher educational institutes and universities was completed, he added.

About protests by students of private higher educational institutes against not receiving their diplomas, he said: "We cannot give diplomas to imaginary students, but this service would be resumed once the assessment process is complete."

Barai Seddiqi, deputy higher education minister, said the draft plan for beginning of master's degree courses in the country's varsities had been shared with the Ministry of Justice and the Higher Education Ministry was trying to implement the plan. Speaker Abdul Raouf Ibrahim called the minister's explanations as unsatisfactory and said his ministry should issue licenses to private higher educational institutes that had passed legal steps. (Pajhwok)

(12) Govt's Infighting...

end igs internal crisis soon.

"If the situation persists, policies of the international community may change regarding Afghanistan, and the achievements of the past 16 years would go in vain," warned Ayubzada.

"We want the parliamentary and districts council elections to be conducted on its

due time without meddling from external actors. We don't want violation of law, which is not as solution, but instead gives birth to disorder in the society and institutions. We never want violations of law and compromises to benefit a particular party."

In their resolution, the civil society organizations and election watchdogs said that the resumption of the Selection Committee work was against the law.

They asked the government to fully cooperate with the election bodies in holding for this year's elections as scheduled.

They also demanded of the election commission to get prepared for holding transparent and fair elections while preserving its own independence and regaining the trust of the masses. (Pajhwok)

(13) Paktika Farmers ..

sold the same quantity of Afghan pine nuts for 4,000 Pakistani rupees under their own label in international markets.

He accused the government for not paying proper attention to the issue.

Mohammad Hashim, a resident of Gomal district, said the Pakistani militias charged them with 100 rupees per kilogram of pine nut while transferring the dry-fruit to the neighbouring country.

He asked the government to talk to international traders regarding the export of Afghan pine nuts so that the fruit would be exported to the global market under Afghanistan trademarks.

Tela Khan, the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry head, said Paktika produced more pine nuts compared to other provinces but they were unable to find proper market.

He, however, said efforts were on to ink agreement with other countries regarding the export of pine nuts.

It is pertinent to mention that Gyan, Sarobai, Gomal, Barmal, Zerok, Omna, Sarhawza, Urgon and Nakah districts of Paktika have a large number of pine nut trees in their mountainous areas.

Some people have recently started chopping the pine nuts trees in the province.

President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani during a recent trip to Paktia province announced the establishment of processing factory for pine nuts. (Pajhwok)

(14) Pak Scholarship ...

Sunday's session of the upper house the fate of thousands of Afghans was uncertain. "The test was conducted six months back, but the results are yet to be announced."

The inordinate delay in announcing the results had caused grave concern among the youth as almost their entire academic year had been wasted, the lawmaker added.

He asked MoHE and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) to formally share the issue with the Pakistani embassy. "If the scholarships are going to be further delayed, students should be provided higher education opportunities inside the country."

Another senator, Jumuddin Giyanwal, also voiced concern over the uncertain fate of thousands of students. He urged the government to share the problem with Pakistan through diplomatic channels. (Pajhwok)

(15) Pakistan Being ...

Repatriations (MoRR), told Pajhwok Afghan News on Monday a meeting was held to devise a specific plan for negotiating the issue with Pakistan.

At Sunday's meeting, he said, the government's preparations for addressing the emergency situation of returnees were also discussed by the participants.

Fateha Abdullah, head of UNHCR's site office in Afghanistan, Sarah Craggs, senior programme coordinator at IOM, the presidential envoy on refugee affairs, the UN Security Council representative and officials from the ministries of foreign affairs and finance attended the meeting.

Refugee Minister Sayed Hussain Alami Balkhi insisted on convincing Pakistan in political ways and mapping out an immediate plan for addressing the emergency situations. (Pajhwok)

(16) Logar Police...

words, as I was bleeding," he said.

He showed the signs of torture on his body to the provincial council members as evidence. "If my case is not followed, I am ready to do anything."

Samiullah, 60, another elderly man, said: "I swear Russian and US forces cannot commit such cruelty as did to us by our own police, this is not the first time, police in the past too had beaten people."

He said he was feeding his livestock in front of his house when police suddenly came and beat him hard.

"They entered our house and scattered women's clothes, they insulted us with abusive language and called us Taliban and they threatened to take away our women if we do not correct ourselves," Samiullah said. (Pajhwok)

(17) 15 Daesh Insurgents...

"three policemen were also killed in the clashes and 13 others were wounded."

They said that the clashes are still ongoing. However, the officials did not provide further details about the clashes. (Tolonews)