

### (1) Nation Running Out...

systematic reforms within the election management body of the country, which has been under massive pressure over poor management of the electoral process. The people are running out of patience because of these two commissions, said Danish, referring to the IEC and the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC).

Danish said that there is a need for systematic reform to be put in place within the election commissions.

"The election commissions should know that the people of Afghanistan are running out of patience and they cannot withstand weaknesses and inefficiencies more than this. Now it is up to the national unity government to consider comprehensive reforms," he said.

Meanwhile, Daud Ali Najafi, the former chief of the IEC secretariat has said that one of the key reasons delaying the announcement of parliamentary elections results is that the government is trying to interfere in the final results of the elections.

"Whatever has been done was carried out in collaboration with the government, now they are delaying the final results for Kabul is because their lists have been sent to the government, so that the government can pick at it, it seems that that the commission has not the authority," said Najafi. Although the IEC on different occasions confirmed reports of irregularities in the election commission, it has however rejected allegations of corruption and government interference in the job of the commission.

"I hope our intelligence organs conduct their investigations and refer those involved in corruption to the fist of the law," said IEC commissioner, Sayed Hafiz Hashemi.

But, the Afghan government has rejected rumors of meddling in the election process.

"I can say explicitly that such an interference was not carried out. We never asked the commission to provide us any list or name in any province. We always respected the sovereignty of the commission," said Mujiburrahman Rahimi, spokesman to CEO Abdullah Abdullah.

This comes a day after the IEC apologized to the people for a delay in the announcement of preliminary results of parliamentary elections for Kabul province, but said the results will be announced in the near future.

The commission said bringing more transparency in the process was the reason for a delay in the announcement.

The election commission has announced preliminary results for 33 constituencies out of 35.

While the election commission said transparency was the reason behind elections results delay, a number of institutions overseeing elections process said "illegal" demands by a number of officials of the commission from a number of candidates, was one of the reasons for the delay.

The institutions on Friday said that secret deals between the election commission and a number of candidates has delayed the results announcement.

"We have been given reports about deals and corruption," said Naem Ayubzada, CEO of Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan.

"There are lots of problems and the commission cannot resolve all of them. I believe that if elections

results are announced, it will be followed by lots of complaints," said Yusuf Rasheed, CEO of Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan.

"I hope that the electoral complaints commission fulfills its job properly to make this national process transparent," said Qazi Abdul Rahim, an MP. (Tolo news)

### (2) Fourth Presidential...

said Hafiz.

The Independent Election Commission (IEC) meanwhile said a number of other election teams have prepared to file nomination papers at the commission.

"A number of people including Zalmay Rasul, Faramarz Tamana and other figures have contacted us and they will file nomination papers by the end of this week for presidential elections," Abdul Aziz Ibrahim, deputy spokesman of IEC said.

The candidates' registration process was officially launched about 10 days ago and, so far, four candidates have filed nomination papers. (Tolo news)

### (3) Peace Bid's...

"We call on all regional and international stakeholders to support the implementation of the recommendations which President (Ashraf) Ghani made at the recent Geneva Conference, based on our comprehensive peace strategy."

"Doing so will further build and bolster international consensus in support of a genuine, just and lasting peace in Afghanistan," the Afghan FM said the event co-chaired by India's External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and her Uzbekistan counterpart Abdulaziz Kamilov.

Rabbami said the region must do its part by doubling and tripling collective efforts to address both common challenges confronting them.

He said Afghanistan, India, and Central Asia had shared intertwined cultural and civilizational ties since time immemorial.

He said regional partners had a critical role to play in supporting the peace process and sustainable development of Afghanistan. "Doing so will in turn help advance many shared interests in our greater neighborhood." (Pajhwok)

### (4) Senate Rejects...

have followed him throughout his government career.

An official internal Canadian document described the allegations of human rights abuses attributable to Khalid as "numerous and consistent," the watchdog said in a statement on Saturday.

Canadian diplomat Richard Colvin testified to a Canadian parliamentary commission in 2009 that Khalid perpetrated enforced disappearances and held people in private prisons.

In today's session of the Meshrano Jirga, the senators discussed the HRW allegations. Senator Rahmatullah Achakzai from Kandahar province, described the HRW report as 'a plot' against Khalid.

"The plot against Khalid comes after he was warmly welcomed in order he could not improve the country's security and end the war."

Amanullah Azimi, another senator, said, "I wonder why this report was published now, Khalid was the governor of Kandahar 10 years ago. The international community should not make plots against someone who is loved by his people and has enough experience and abilities. This report is baseless, politically motivated and biased."

The senator said the Afghans should be careful and not to be deceived by such reports which had no basis.

Azimi asked the Afghan government to provide a reasonable response to the HRW report so the allegations were not misused.

Meshrano Jirga chairman Fazal Hadi Muslimyar also criticized the report and said, "I as the head and you as members of this house support our security forces and their leadership, if this report is not biased, then why it is published today, why not 10 years ago."

He said the report was aimed at putting mental pressure on Asadullah Khalid so he was unable to lead the Ministry of Defense. (Pajhwok)

### (5) US, Qatar to Work...

Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, the co-founder of Taliban movement, went to Qatar to participate in Taliban's political processes and moves.

Sources said still it is not agreed whether Baradar will join Taliban's political delegation, but soon the group will take a decision in this regard.

Baradar was freed from Pakistan jail in October.

The High Peace Council meanwhile said Baradar could play a crucial role in the Afghan peace talks and asked Taliban to specify their negotiating team.

"Mullah Baradar's role is very important and we hope he soon will play his role to create trust in Taliban's leadership team and select their negotiating delegation," HPC spokesman, Sayed Ehsan Taheri said.

Meanwhile, a number of members of parliament said if Baradar joins Taliban's political delegation, he could play a constructive role in the Afghan peace talks.

"Because Mullah Baradar was an influential figure during Taliban regime, now if he gains the authority to represent Taliban and enter the talks, he will play an influential role," MP, Ghulam Farooq Majrooh said.

The Chief Executive office, however, said the individual's role is not important in the peace process, adding that bringing changes in the peace process depends on changes in Pakistan's politics.

"I do not believe that freeing or jailing a person can change the process. Changes in the peace process mostly relate to changes in politics in Pakistan," CE spokesman, Mujib Rahman Rahimi said. Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, also known as Mullah Baradar Akhund or Mullah Brother, is a co-founder of the Taliban movement in Afghanistan. He was the deputy of Mullah Mohammed Omar, the founding leader of the Taliban, whose death was confirmed in October 2016.

Baradar was captured in Pakistan by a team from Pakistan's intelligence agency, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), and US's Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officers in February 2010. (Tolo news)

### (6) MAIL Program Helps...

houses for the women during the same year and 14 food processing centers have become operational. According to MAIL, around 154 seasonal jobs in Saffron sector have been created with the women forming around 80 percent of the recruitments.

The Ministry has also completed the construction work of dairy products in Kabul and Balkh provinces which have a capacity of producing 46 thousand liters of milk per day while another processing center for honey has been established in Khost province,

MAIL added. (KP)

### (7) MoI Cancels...

be canceled and new licenses would be not issued until the applicants clear their taxes", the ministry added.

The MoI added the move was aimed at increasing national revenue and exposing 'hidden' and 'unidentified sources' in the financial system of Afghanistan. (Pajhwok)

### (8) Ghani signs guidelines...

Housing, the former Land Authority Department, Analysis Framework and rules of merger, limits and solutions, analysis of potential risks and schedule for the adaptive planning of the merger and provided suggestions for better implementation of the process.

After listening to Paikar, President Ashraf Ghani stressed over specific architectural style and said projects of Urban Development and Land should be better managed.

He stressed that domestic materials should be used in construction of buildings in order to help create jobs for more people and improve the country's economy.

Ghani said seismic code for buildings should be considered during their constructions The president said the government was a partner of the private sector and problems facing the sector in investment in government real estate should be addressed and a design center should be opened in the Ministry of Urban Development and Land.

At conclusion of the meeting, the president signed guidelines and urban design framework and then handed it over to the acting Kabul municipality chief. (Pajhwok)

### (9) Officials Concern...

bridges, roads, electricity and water dams," Khan said.

Mohammad Khan Nusrat, the provincial director of economy, said more development projects have been inaugurated in the province this year.

Statistics by Helmand's Economy Directorate show that 221 development projects were implemented and completed in province last year.

Taliban has not commented on the allegations. (Tolo news)

### (10) India Renews...

stable Afghanistan, which lies at the Heart of Asia, can be a bridge to connect Central Asia with South Asia," she said, underlining the geographical importance of Afghanistan.

Both nations desire to contribute to:

- (i) The common developmental goals of the region;
- (ii) Bring progress and prosperity to their peoples;
- (iii) Share the benefits, that may accrue, will be furthered if there is a greater connectivity in the region.

While geographically Afghanistan and Central Asia are landlocked, there are several ways in which India, Afghanistan and the Central Asian countries could join hands to work on promoting connectivity in the region, she said.

"In this context, I would like to mention that the joint efforts of India, Iran and Afghanistan have led to the development of the Chabahar Port in Iran as a viable and operational trade route to connect to Afghanistan and potentially to Central Asia. Chabahar provides a shining example of what strong partnership can achieve to overcome any obstacles," she added.

"We have already sent a very substantial quantity of wheat to Afghanistan using the Chabahar port. Last month, the Indian com-

pany opened its office and took over operations at the Shaheed-Behesti port at Chabahar," Swaraj recalled.

India was looking at developing the Chabahar-Zahedan railway link which would bring us close to the Zaranj-Delaram road link which India has already built in Afghanistan, she said.

She announced Iran would be holding the Chabahar Day International Conference on February 26 at the port to introduce to the invited delegations the capacity of the facility.

"I would urge that apart from official delegations, countries should encourage participation of representatives of shipping companies, freight forwarders, port development organizations and other stakeholders to make it a grand success.

Last year, India was admitted to the 'Ashgabat Agreement' aimed at establishment of an International Transport and Transit Corridor between Iran, Oman, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. (Pajhwok)

### (11) Pakistan's Policy...

history and the genesis of the Durand Line that still serves as an unmarked border.

Afrasiab Khattak spoke of a growing realisation in Pakistan that its policy of backing Taliban had failed, as the rebel group posed a threat to the culture, ethnicity and peace of both countries.

Any re-Talibanisation of Afghanistan would damage the already scant infrastructure in the Pashtun-dominated belt, the ex-senator cautioned.

Rupert Stone called Taliban a group frozen in the Stone Age, introducing draconian laws, wielding weapons and suppressing women and freedoms.

The Taliban must change these perceptions, maintain diplomatic contacts with world powers and take the non-Pashtun population along, he proposed.

During another session, former foreign minister Hina Rabbani Khar lamented that Pakistan's foreign policy was a policy of beggars. Pakistan had not learnt any lesson from the 17-year war across the border, she said. (Pajhwok)

### (12) 10,000 Acres...

Haidari also said that Kabul police arrested 2,390 suspects during the current year and prevented 60 security incidents in Kabul.

Kabul governor pointed to the scrutiny of 50,000 complaints and 4,000 property cases by the local Kabul administration as part of the achievements, saying they have prevented from construction of 1654 illegal buildings in coordination with the Kabul municipality. He further said that along with security, justice and judicial institutions we are determined to implement the law equally so that people feel that they are living in safe environment. (Pajhwok)

### (13) Nangarhar Activists...

a strong will to bring peace to the country.

Besides civil society activists some entrepreneurs also took part in the gathering and said economy could improve only in a peaceful environment.

Khanzadah Afghan, a entrepreneur, said businessmen were losing millions afghanis due to lack of peace each day. "If peace comes, there would be great opportunities for further investment in the country." (Pajhwok)

### (14) Jawzjan Clash...

security situation and as a result young people were losing their lives. The Taliban have not yet commented about the incident. (Pajhwok)