

(1) Ghani Registers...

bringing to peace and stability to the country. My team is committed not to deal over the honor of our security forces."

"The biggest tribe is the poor people of our country who live in every corner of the country and the eradication of poverty and serving them is the priority of my team," he said.

Ghani said the Independent Election Commission (IEC), the Independent Electoral Complaints Commission (IECC) and election watchdogs needed reforms and he would introduce 'drastic reforms'.

Chief Executive Officer Abdullah Abdullah also registered his candidacy in the July 20 election on Sunday, the latest strong candidate to challenge Ghani.

Earlier, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Dr. Zalmay Rassoul, Abdul Latif Pedram, Mohammad Hakim Thorsan, Seyyed Noorollah Jalili, Inayatullah Hafez, Faramarz Tamanna, Shahab Hakimi and Mohammad Hanif Atmar have jumped into the presidential race.

According to the IEC, the candidate registration process would continue until Jan 20 and there is no plan to extend this process.

A presidential candidate should be a Muslim, Afghan citizen, having completed the age of 40 and should present 100,000 supporters and pay a million afghanis to the commission based on the electoral law. (Pajhwok)

(2) Chief Executive...

Abdullah attended a gathering in Kabul on Sunday where the First Vice President Abdul Rashid Dostum and High Peace Council Chief Karim Khalili also participated to announce their support to Abdullah's nomination for president.

Dostum, who was a big supporter of President Ghani in 2014 presidential elections, said at the gathering that Abdullah Abdullah and his team "will be the winner in the presidential elections" as he endorses Abdullah's ticket.

Meanwhile, Abdullah said his team will consist two running mates for first and second vice president and a chief executive with two deputies.

"We created the National Unity Government for people's interests and for the good of the country and never looked at it as two teams," Abdullah said.

This comes a day after key members of Jamiat, Yunus Qanooni and Atta Mohammad Noor, Mohammad Ismail Khan and Bismillah Khan endorse former National Security Advisor Mohammad Haneef Atmar's election ticket. Meanwhile, Ahmad Wali Massoud, another member of Jamiat

So far, Abdul Latif Pedram, Hakim Torsan, Sayed Noorullah Jalili, Enayatullah Hafiz, Zalmay Rassoul, Noorul Haq Ulumi, Faramarz Tamanna, Mohammad Haneef Atmar, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Wali Massoud have entered the race for the presidential elections. (Tolo news)

(3) Nabil, Alokozay...

if win the election."

The ex-intelligence chief promised his team would work in a determined manner for the rule of law and combating the scourge of corruption. His team was picked in the supreme national interest, not on the basis of ethnicity, Nabil insisted.

The Independent Election Commission (IEC) had failed to conduct the recent parliamentary polls in a fair manner, he alleged, calling for reforming the panel and changes to the relevant law to restore people's trust in the process.

Nabil claimed his team Security and Justice had devised comprehensive economic, agriculture, social, cultural and foreign policy plans.

Meanwhile, Mohammad Ibrahim Alokozay also registered with the (IEC) for the July presidential election. He has picked Farida Ghaznawi and Dr. Sami Kiyani as first and second vice-presidents respectively.

Alokozay was born in 1978. He obtained his master's in political science from the Kabul University. He bowed to eliminate injustice, oppression and

inequality --hallmarks of the National Unity Government (NUG).

Ahmad Wali Massoud, Gulbadin Hekmatyar, Dr. Zalmay Rassoul, Abdul Latif Pedram, Mohammad Hakim Torsan, Seyyed Noorollah Jalili, Inayatullah Hafez, Faramarz Tamanna, Shahab Hakimi and Mohammad Hanif Atmar are also in the run for the Presidential Palace.

The registration process will continue until Jan 20. A presidential candidate should be a Muslim Afghan citizen, having attained the age of 40 years, present names of 100,000 supporters and pay a million afghanis to the commission. (Pajhwok)

(4) 'Taliban Proved...

especially in the winter season," said Senator Gulalai Akbari. "Peace talks will not yield results because there is no honesty but lie."

The senators stressed that the countries which have security agreements with Afghanistan should deliver on their promises.

The Meshrano Jirga members made the remarks as they were expected to go for a 45-day winter break.

This comes as the U.S. officials have so far held at least three round of talks with the Taliban representatives including in Qatar and UAE to make way for direct peace talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government.

However, the Taliban has rejected the repeated requests from regional powers to sit for negotiation with the Afghan government, asserting the U.S. is their main adversary. (ATN)

(5) Final Results...

Sayed Mohammad DaudNaseri secured 13,055 votes, RaihanaAzaad 12,590 votes, Ali Akbar Jamshidi 10,490 votes and SherinMohsini 10,480 votes.

Zabul: Abdul QadirQalatwal secured 1,826 votes, HamidullahTokhi 1,458 votes and Zahra Tokhi 482 votes.

Samangan: HayatullahSamangani secured 9,256 votes, MakhdomAbdullahMohmmadi 9,000 votes, Ziauddin Saba 6,261 votes and MahbobaRahmat 3,164 votes.

Nimroz: Farida Hamidi received 6,336 votes and Gul Ahmad Norzad 5,812 votes.

The Wolesi Jirga elections conducted on October 20 and 21 across 32 provinces of the country and in Kandahar, on October 27. Initial results of the elections were recently announced after many complaints about fraud and violations.

Initial Wolesi Jirga election results were scheduled for to be announced on November 10, 2018 but it was announced a month later from that date and the IEC said it was delayed due to some technical problems in the process.

A number of failed candidates in some provinces of the country had warned that they would hold massive protests if their demands regarding the results not accepted. (Pajhwok)

(6) No Mention of...

principle in the peace dialogue. The statement further added that the outcome of the ongoing peace efforts 'must not fly in the face' of the freedoms awarded to media outlets and reporters in the Constitution, the Mass Media Law, the Law on Access to Information and other legislative documents.

Media outlets and the AFJ supported the peace talks but they were not ready to sacrifice the hard-won values and achievements of the past 18 years.

The AFJ also urged all sides of the peace discussions, especially the Taliban, to guarantee the safety and security of journalists and media outlets in the peace process.

The journalist body's statement also asked parties to the conflict to pave the ground for journalists' access and collection of information in their respective territories and requested them not to be a threat and barrier to journalists' free movement across the country.

Meanwhile, Sardar Mohammad Dindarkhil, a member of AFJ, slammed the approach to freedom of speech as neglectful and said the media achievements had never been brought up for a discussion during

peace talks so far. "This inattention means sacrificing these values for peace."

Dindarkhil said the AFJ was not against peace talks but it wanted the government to pay heed to these achievements during peace negotiations.

He proposed the presence of a representative on behalf of AFJ and media outlets in the peace process to safeguard and protect the rights of media.

Fahim Dashti, deputy head of the Joint Committee of Media and Government, said: "We are not only requesting the government and the Taliban, but all countries and international organizations partaking in the Afghan peace process that we don't want achievements of media to be sacrificed that way." (Pajhwok)

(7) Korea...

The Ambassador of the Republic of Korea also said that, by the end of last year, his country has contributed about 1 Billion USD in various areas such as education, health, governance, rural development, disaster risk reduction, enhanced security, gender equality, and humanitarian assistance. According to the Ambassador, about two-thirds of the country's focus has been on social and economic development. Mr. RHEE emphasized that by the end of 2020, the contribution will reach almost 1.2 Billion USD.

Education has been one of its top priorities. The Ambassador indicated that most recently, in cooperation with UNOPS, 24 schools have been built in Parwan, Panjshir and Kapisa provinces. Mr. RHEE added that, in cooperation with UNESCO, they have been trying to eradicate illiteracy in Afghanistan, in particular among afghan adults since adults, unlike schoolchildren, cannot go to school to learn how to read and write. He pointed to the success of his country in this regard and said "I believe that one of the key elements that served for the success of the Republic of Korea in Economic Development is that the illiteracy was brought to nearly zero."

Ambassador added that they do their best to eradicate illiteracy in Afghanistan "because a literate society not only increases the chance for individuals to get a job, but also increases understanding of democracy among people. As such, the eradication of illiteracy is important both for economic development and for political democracy."

Furthermore, in its efforts to provide quality vocational training for Afghan youth, the government of the Republic of Korea helped build and run a vocational training institute since 2004. According to the Ambassador, so far around 7000 trainees graduated from the institute, 75 % of them on average getting a job right after graduation. This Afghanistan - Korea Vocational Training Institute (AKVTI) is currently running seven departments: English, Computer, Auto-mechanic, Construction, Tailoring, Electricity, Plumbing and Welding. The Ambassador mentioned that the Korean government is planning to further expand the vocational training in the years ahead. Mr. RHEE also said that they are trying to pave the way for promoting gender equality and educating female teachers. He believes that lack of female teachers at schools could be one of the reasons that a considerable number of parents prevent their daughters from going to schools in many parts of the country.

In the cultural sector, in cooperation with UNESCO, the Republic of Korea is building the Bamyán Culture Center. According to the Ambassador, the construction will be completed, hopefully, by the end of this year.

The Ambassador of the Republic of Korea stated that in order to upgrade relationship between the Republic of Korea and Afghanistan, people need to know better each other. In this context, he pointed to two Korean Language Programs at Kabul and Herat Universities, which help students continue their higher education in Korea. He also added that

currently more than fifty Afghan students are studying in degree courses in Korea in diverse areas. Another key area that Korea has been paying attention to is health sector. Over the past years, Republic of Korea has built and renovated several hospitals in Afghanistan. Fighting malnutrition, especially through establishing soybean value chain, strengthening access to quality healthcare in the most vulnerable population, saving newborn, child and maternal lives, and increasing access to gender-based violence services are among Korea's activities in this sector in Afghanistan. (DoA)

(8) Washington...

direct negotiations with the Taliban last summer. But the rebel outfit has refused to meet the Khalilzad-led US team in Islamabad.

The Taliban have rejected as inordinate US calls for opening face-to-face negotiations with the Afghan government and announcing a ceasefire. (Pajhwok)

(9) 3 Projects Worth...

of Maimana, the provincial capital, and Pashtunkot district of the province.

He said the bridge's construction cost 19 million afghanis funded by the Ministry of Public Works.

At the inauguration ceremony for the completed projects, the new bridge was named "Peace and Friendship". Meanwhile, provincial agriculture director Abdul Kabir Farazam said the two irrigation dams were constructed in Sarbalaq locality of the 3rd police district of Maimana and in the second in Arab Aqsa locality of the Pashtunkot district, which was under Taliban's control.

Farzam said the two irrigation dams would irrigate above 500 acres of land. (Pajhwok)

(10) Protesting Candidates...

Commission's decision in this regard. Safia Siddiqi, another protesting candidate, claimed certain runners had stolen votes of others to emerge as winners. Such candidates in power of money

She urged judicial organs to prosecute the IEC commissioners and senior officials involved in rigging on the basis of documents and evidence they had been provided with.

Meanwhile, Abdul Aziz Aryaee, the IECC head, said after calls from the demonstrators: "Rest assured, justice will be done and we will follow the law."

The IECC would make a decision on the fate of people's votes in light of documents and evidence it had received, he concluded. (Pajhwok)

(11) Balkh Land...

"Militants create problems to our transportation tools between Sholgar and Dara-I-Suf districts, insurgents do not allow transportation vehicles to have open movements on this route," he said.

He said the amount of revenue would have reached 100 million Afghanis this fiscal year if security problems did not threaten them.

Insecurity on highways has affected commercial activities and it stops the revenue to increase, he said.

Sorosh added the amount of revenue would further rise after the system computerized but the department currently had no that capabilities.

However, he said he had some programs for increasing revenue of the province in the next fiscal year and create some more revenue generating sources.

Four new terminals would be created in different parts of Balkh next year, a move that would bring reforms in transportation affairs, he concluded. (Pajhwok)

(12) Families in...

centre of the city of Sar-e Pul and are in a very bad state because they do not have any kind of living materials," Amani said.

Accounts from the displaced families suggest the Taliban singled out families believed to have sympathies with the government or family members in the police and expelled them.

Haji Azizullah, an elder who oversaw the transfer of displaced families from

Kohistan district, said those driven from their homes were all suspected of being close to the military or the security forces.

"The Taliban told us to either take your children and work together with the Taliban under our authority or move you out of this area," he said.

With the Taliban still refusing to talk directly with the Afghan government, the pressure on families on the opposing side points to some of the likely problems in any post-settlement Afghanistan after more than 17 years of war. Saber, a resident of Kohistan who left the district with her six children last week, said Taliban had approached her a week ago and told her to bring her son, a member of the Afghan Local Police, in to them.

"When I refused, four people from the Taliban came yesterday and told me I had to get out of the area," she said. The Taliban spokesman was not immediately for comment. (Reuters)

(13) Iran Denies...

powers have been trying to salvage it despite the withdrawal of the United States from the accord in May.

This month, the European Union froze the assets of an Iranian intelligence unit and two of its staff after the Netherlands accused Iran of two killings on its soil and joined France and Denmark in alleging Tehran plotted other attacks in Europe.

Iran has denied any involvement in those alleged plots, saying the accusations were intended to damage EU-Iran relations. (Reuters)

(14) Zabul Residents...

and from another side most of the polling stations remain close on Election Day.

The residents of Zabul demanded increase in the number of polling stations at a time when registration for the presidential election had already kicked off.

Local IEC officials acknowledged the issue of polling station in Zabul, but added the authority of increasing the number of polling station was with the central IEC officer.

IEC Head AhmadKhel Fani said currently 100 polling stations had been approved for all districts of Zabul which should be opened.

He said as a result of insecurity, over half of the polling stations remained closed in previous elections.

He also confirmed that non-of a resident of the Dai Chopan and Khak Afghan districts registered for election and 75 of 100 polling centers were closed and 43 were opened.

Fani added they have been working jointly with security forces to address the problem in order to increase the number of vote centers in the province for the upcoming presidential July 29 polls.

Meanwhile, Gul Islam Seal, the governor's spokesman, also acknowledged the polling station issue faced by the masses and said the governor's house had discharged its responsibility in this regard.

He told Pajhwok they shared the issue with concerned authorities to increase the number of polling stations till the next presidential election. (Pajhwok)

(15) Car Bomb Attack...

for the blast and that a "large number" of Afghan special forces had been killed or wounded.

Logar, located around 75 kms (46 miles) from Kabul, is known as a strategic gateway to the capital and is vulnerable to attacks due to the Taliban's active presence in most areas of the province.

The militant group have ramped up attacks in strategic provinces in recent months in their battle to expel foreign forces, topple the Western-backed government and restore their version of hardline Islamic law, even as peace talks with the United States ramp up. (Reuters)

(16) Afghan and...

stepped counter-terrorism operations to suppress the anti-government armed elements.

The Afghan forces are conducting the majority of the ground operations with the support of Coalition air power. (KP)