

(1) Peace Process...

Afghan and treat every citizen equally according to the law, creating a strong government would develop national trust," he said.

"So the peace process cannot continue behind closed doors and needs to be converted into a national consensus in order everyone is able to calculate the price of war and benefits of peace," Ghani said.

The president said peace could not be made with a person but with people. The war in Afghanistan was ongoing from the past 40 years and has become a routine and a habit of Afghans while some individuals who benefitted from the situation were against peace, he said.

"The way of war has changed and we are under attack from different networks, not a single suicide attack took place during the holy jihad era of Afghanistan, 1.5 million of Afghans were killed and wounded but there was no suicide attack, we did not produce this phenomenon but this was produced by others to us, the first suicide bombing took place in Sari Lanka and it turned into an evil circle," he said.

"People from 20 countries, which whom we have no dispute have come here and are engaged in the war and narcotics. Criminal economy is one of the main factors of war, to know why this war continues needs a fundamental analysis," he said.

The president said another factor of the war was regional. "We have repeatedly said and I once again say it that we do not want peace from Pakistan but we want peace with Pakistan."

Pointing to the peace agreement with Hizb-i-Islami Afghanistan (HIA), he said it was a good model for others to follow because it was done in line with the constitution and inside the country.

"The return of Hekmatyar proved that Kabul belongs to all of us and Afghanistan is our shared home," Ghani said.

Ghani also thanked Afghan security and defense forces and said some people believed the Afghan government would collapse within four months after withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan, but the Afghans had a strong will for the defense of their country.

He said all the Afghans should think about development of their country and contribute to a stable peace in the country.

Pointing to Mohammad Karim Khalili's appointment as HPC chief, he said that Khalili had many abilities and he would be able to put effective steps for bringing peace to the country. (Pajhwok)

(2) IEC Signs....

ground is paved for the people to cast their vote," said IEC chief Najibullah Ahmadzai.

"With consideration of the internal situation and security threats, the situation in the region and international rivalries, security will not be an easy task, but we have mobilized all our capacities," said Stanekzai.

"We will utilize all our capacities to ensure the security of the people and the elections," said Yafthali.

Interference by powerful people and influential figures in the election process seem to be among the main concerns for the IEC.

"We will not allow interference in the elections, rigging or leveraging," said Minister of Interior Taj Mohammad Jahid.

The IEC is now preparing to start the assessment of the voting centers.

"We will cooperate with the independent election commission in each district and in the certification of border villages," said Abdul Baqi Popalzai, the acting chief of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG).

Afghanistan's parliamentary and district council elections are scheduled to be held on July 7 next year.

The IEC has expressed hope that the election reforms process will be completed before voting.

Currently, the Afghan security forces are tackling insurgents on multiple fronts in 20 provinces, an issue which would have a significant impact on the credibility and legitimacy of the elections.

The ability for people to participate in elections free from fear or harassment is essential to inclusive and credible polls. (Tolonews)

(3) Lapis Lazuli ...

documents are ready. We have spoken with Georgia and officials from the other countries and we want the agreement to be signed in the near future," finance ministry spokesman Ajmal Hamid said.

According to Hamid, Georgia has also agreed to help Afghanistan transport its products to European markets.

Afghanistan and Georgia in addition to expanding economic cooperation, agreed to establish a joint chamber of commerce.

Meanwhile, Afghan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) said Afghanistan should be fully prepared to use the Lapis Lazuli Corridor for exports and imports.

According to ACCI, the lack of transit and trade agreements and also visa problems for Afghan traders are the most challenging problems in the way of using the corridor.

"First we should resolve the problems regarding Afghan traders' visas. Government should resolve the problem through the foreign ministry and through diplomatic channels," ACCI deputy head, Atiqullah Nusrat said.

Currently Afghanistan only imports non-alcoholic beverages from Georgia. Nothing is exported there.

However, ACCI officials said Georgia as a transit country can play a significant role in helping Afghanistan to take its goods to Europe. (Tolonews)

(4) NDS also ...

Ministry confirmed on Friday that Germany's intelligence agencies knew there was a plan to bomb the Kabul embassy in the Green Zone.

DW reported that security agencies had received warnings from multiple intelligence sources in the months leading up to the attack. As a result, a number of embassy staff had been evacuated from the building prior to the attack.

Stanekzai meanwhile said that several people have been arrested in connection with the attack and security institutions are carrying out ongoing investigations.

Meanwhile, a number of senators criticized security institutions for failing to foil such attacks in the country.

According to DW, the driver had fake papers, but was stopped at the gate to the Green Zone, by an Afghan security guard, who phoned the embassy to see if the truck was expected.

But the question being asked is why did the NDS fail to thwart the bombing despite knowing it was planned.

"Afghanistan's intelligence had more credibility and the information was authentic compared to the information provided by Germany and we were working on it jointly," said Stanekzai.

"When they get information about an attack and fail to thwart it, this indicates an intelligence failure," said military expert Mohsin Mukhtar.

"Those who have been arrested in connection with the attack must be prosecuted and those who helped in their arrest must be rewarded," said senator Lailuma Ahmadi.

The NDS chief said those who are involved in such attacks must be prosecuted.

"Those who had a role in such attacks should be dealt with according to the law," said Stanekzai.

Last month's deadly attack in the heavily-fortified area of Kabul left at least 180 people dead and hundreds more wounded.

According to NDS, between 100 and 120 threats are recorded across Afghanistan on a daily basis.

The NDS alone receives about 20 reports of threats on Kabul alone each day, he said.

The attack in Kabul's diplomatic enclave raised concerns among residents in the city with many asking government to do more and improve the deteriorating security situation in the country. (Tolonews)

(5) UK Special ...

of the Royal Military Police. Afghanistan has long been facing instability due to continued fighting between the government forces and the Taliban, which seized vast territories in the Afghan rural areas. Besides, the instability in the country prompted the emergence of the local cells of other extremist organizations such as the IS. The UK forces were present in Afghanistan as a part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission between 2001 and 2014. (Sputnik)

(6) Displaced...

influential tribal elder Haji Khalil also said the displaced families were in a dire situation and needed urgent assistance.

Haska Mena district chief Sazwali Shinwari also acknowledged the displaced families needed assistance.

He said all the displaced families numbering around 400 had moved to areas near the district centre and were struggling with numerous problems.

He lamented the provincial government had ignored the displaced families of Haska Mena district while such families in other districts received aid.

The Nangarhar governor's spokesman, Attaullah Khogyani, reiterated that the action in Haska Mena was part of operations against Daesh and the aim was to protect people's lives.

He said the provincial refugee department had been directed to survey the displaced families.

Displaced families in other districts of Nangarhar have made similar complaints. (Pajhwok)

(7) Gold Prices...

-50kg Kazakhstani flour dropped from 1,250 afi to 1,240 afi, but other items' rates remained unchanged.

He said the rate of a -24kg bag of Pakistani rice remained unchanged at 1,800afi, and a -16kg tin of Khurshid ghee cost 1,120afi, the prices as of last week's.

Meanwhile, Noor Ahmad Khairkhwah, a tea seller at Kabul Mandavi, said a kilogram of Indonesian green tea cost 220afi and the same amount of African black tea 240afi, the same prices as of past six days.

Sometimes a slight difference is observed in retail and wholesale prices but in some areas, the difference is huge.

Ahmad Wali Panjshiri, who owns a grocery store in Dahn-i-Bagh area, said -50kg of Kazakhstani flour was sold for 1,300afi, -49 kg sack of Pakistani sugar for 2,350 afi, -16litre tin of Khurshid ghee for 1,200afi, 24.5kg sack of Pakistani rice for 2,000afi, a kilo of Indonesian green tea for 270 afi and the same quantity of African black tea for 290afi.

Russian gold prices edged up. Mohammad Fawad, a jeweller in Timor Shahi area, said the price of one gram of Arabian gold was 2,300afi; however, he said, the same amount of Russian variety increased from 1,800 afi to 1,850 due to its price jumped up in global markets.

According to money exchangers' union in Sara-i-Shahzada, one US dollar accounted for 68.10afi and 1,000 Pakistani rupees for 638afi against last week's rates of 68.5afi and 636afi. (Pajhwok)

(8) Dozens of ...

in Afghanistan had lately emerged, calling on both the countries to strengthen security measures on their respective sides of the border. He said border security was strengthened, human traffickers would be unable to easily perform their jobs.

He said they were ready to share their experience with Afghanistan regarding prevention of human trafficking.

Afghanistan High Council on Human Trafficking member Abdul Wahid Hidayat told Pajhwok Afghan News that Afghanistan and Tajikistan had prepared a joint strategy to control borders.

He said human trafficking had become a headache for the whole of the world and needed a global campaign to be eradicated. (Pajhwok)

(9) Khalili Sworn ...

a big part of the achievements depend on reforms and changes need to be made in strategy, policy and mechanism of the council," Khalili added.

Khalili was sworn in as the new chief after the council ran without a leader for a few months following the sudden death of its former chief Sayed Ahmad Gailai. (Tolonews)

(10) Sesame Workshop ...

The introduction of Zeerak is a continuation of Baghch-e-Simsim's work to promote gender equity, and Season 6 will feature segments that model boys' respect for girls and show Zeerak's love for his big sister.

As a young boy who aspires to go to school with his sister when he gets older, Zeerak can be a strong role model for children in a country where over 60 percent of children - two thirds of them girls - are not able to complete school.

Since the project's premier in 2011, Baghch-e-Simsim has promoted early childhood development, literacy, and numeracy, with a focus on girls' empowerment, mutual respect and understanding, diversity, and national identity. The Baghch-e-Simsim TV and radio programs are available in both Dari and Pashto.

A January 2017 survey of over 1,500 parents and caregivers of children ages 7-3 across Afghanistan shows that Baghch-e-Simsim is having a positive impact and reaching more children and families than ever before.

Zari was the most mentioned character when participants were asked to name children's TV characters, and she is beloved by both boys and girls, who together are vital in the effort to shift societal perceptions of girls and what they're capable of.

Currently 3.1 million children ages 7 - 3 are tuning in, up 45 percent from 2015.

And Baghch-e-Simsim isn't only engaging children - more than 70 percent of parents and caregivers watch the program alongside children, with Baghch-e-Simsim surpassing other Afghan children's shows in terms of adult-child co-viewership.

"We are excited to continue our work with Sesame Street. As a young Afghan boy who loves and respects his older sister Zari, Zeerak will promote gender equity and education for all children," said Saad Mohseni, Chairman and CEO of MOBY Group, the parent company of TOLO TV and LEMAR.

"Given Zari's extraordinary debut in 2016, we are confident that Zeerak will follow in her footsteps and that together they will have a strong positive impact on Afghanistan," he said.

Starting June 29, Baghch-e-Simsim will be broadcast six days a week on TV and radio. New TV episodes will air on TOLO TV and LEMAR every Thursday and Friday during the "Children's Hour" from 4:30 pm to 5:00 pm, with repeated episodes airing on Saturday and Sunday, and past episodes airing on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays.

New Baghch-e-Simsim radio episodes will air Thursdays and Fridays on national, regional, and local radio stations nationwide. (Tolonews)

(11) Faryab Women....

taboos, she regretted. Women do not have protection mechanisms, with schools shut for grown-up girls.

A civil society activist in northern Balkh province, Zarmina Zaray, also expressed concern over women's situation. She said women still did not enjoy their legitimate rights and were recruited symbolically to government offices. They are summarily dismissed on the pretext of having no work experience.

Zaray called insecurity and the negative view of religious scholars the main problems being encountered by Faryab women.

Women could not work in government offices and girls faced problems in attending schools in districts due to insecurity, she grumbled, stressing the need for decisive steps to address the issues. Women Affairs Director Sharifa Azimi said insecurity, gender discrimination, ossified traditions and mistrust at the family level were the main challenges to women working alongside men in government offices.

"Except in Andkhoy, Qaramqol, Qorghon and Khan Charbagh, girls' schools in all other districts of the province frequently remain shut and have no female teachers. There are fewer job opportunities for women, who are also subject to harassment," she charged.

But despite these problems, women still have a large presence in different areas. Eleven percent of government servants, 35 percent of education personnel, 27 percent of university lecturers and 45 percent of lecturers and school students in Faryab are female, she explained.

Azimi added Faryab women were also representatives in parliament, provincial council and in legal, cultural and civil society organisations. Several government departments in Faryab are headed by women, she continued.

"Women want their Islamic rights. Islam allows them to continue education in line with religious teachings. They can also work and have a share in inheritance. But, unfortunately, women are dubbed

as Satan and deprived of rights," she remarked.

However, she said some women expected more from their men without considering the country's overall security, social and economic situation. The government had failed give women their rights, she alleged, believing there would be no problems in society if the Islamic law was enforced.

Gita Saeed, gender affairs advisor at the governor's house, endorsed women's concerns over insecurity but said they were more active in government offices in Faryab, where 50 percent of girls were getting education.

She agreed that some girls were deprived of education due to unawareness of their families from advantages of education and negative customs but said this problem would be gradually resolved.

On the other hand, the governor's spokesman, Ahmad Javed Baidar, said women's role in politics, society and cultural activities was significant. Women are working in key positions and the government has prioritised hiring female workers.

Baidar confirmed insecurity was one of the key challenges for women, particularly for those travelling to rural areas. He promised state organs would try to resolve the problem on priority. (Pajhwok)

(12) Govt to Introduce ...

SIM cards have sold by telecommunication companies in the country and of these SIM cards, about six million are not being used.

Officials said they have sent the new plan to the telecommunication companies in order to get feedback on the new system and once approved, the new registration process will be implemented. The companies will have six months to register all SIM cards, officials said. "Around seven to eight million SIM cards may be registered, but we also are not sure about their registration. Because in some places from five to 10 and 50 SIM cards have been registered with one National Identity Card and it is not acceptable for us," said Najib Nangialay, the ministry spokesman.

A number of communications experts have welcomed the move and said that unregistered SIM cards also contribute towards insecurity in the country.

Experts also claim that unregistered SIM cards negatively impact the tax collection process on mobile phone usage.

"A number of people who have contracts with the companies to sell SIM cards, get activated SIM cards from the company to make the distribution easy. A number of telecom companies also leave unregistered SIM cards active in order to sell more SIM cards and the SIM cards finally go to the black market and there get sold illegally," said Musafershan Khurasani an IT analyst.

This comes after a number of residents raised concern over irregularities in the sale of SIM cards and said some telecommunication companies deduct credit from SIM cards as they see fit, but are in turn not paying over the required tax to government. (Tolonews)

(13) Pakistan to ...

program, registered refugees get 200\$ USD per family when they return.

The report said that the Afghan ministry for refugees' repatriation would also be involved in the registration exercise, which would help establish the number of Afghans living in Pakistan. (Tolonews)

(14) Senate Concerned....

interests of the country. "These are those individuals who directly receive money from neighboring countries and cooperate with them and even implement their projects in Afghanistan," said senator Asif Sediqi.

While the Coalition to Rescue Afghanistan insists that the formation of this alliance was aimed at bringing reforms in the country, they dismissed rumors that it will work to collapse the government. Senators however argue that the alliance was against national interests.

"This coalition is certainly against national interests in view of the current situation where the security situation is quite sensitive," said Mohammad Hassan Hotak, another senator.

"Unfortunately, this is a matter of concern for Afghans; this has created chaos for Afghans," said senator Mohammad Hanif Hanifi. Jamiat-e-Islami party of Afghanistan, which is led by acting foreign minister Salahuddin Rabbani, has been one of the main critics of President Ashraf Ghani alongside the National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan, which is led by First Vice President Abdul Rashid Dostum and the National Unity of People of Afghanistan party, led by Second Deputy of the CEO Mohammad Mohaqiq. Together, these three parties last week agreed in Turkey to form the alliance. (Tolonews)

(15) Fierce Battles

Kunduz provincial council warns the situation is deteriorating. According to Kunduz provincial council members, security forces have also sustained casualties in the clash.

"Currently we are in the middle of war, we can hear gunfire; every day we see people being killed and wounded; what does the collapse of Kunduz really mean for them (government officials)?" asked Amruddin Wali, the head of the Kunduz provincial council.

According to provincial council members, the Taliban has also surrounded an Afghan National Army (ANA) base in Kunduz city. They said that despite the presence of an ANA battalion, units and several check points, security has not improved.

"You (government) should show some efficiency, it is really shameful for government and government officials," said a member of the provincial council, Ghulam Rabbani Rabbani.

"Kunduz collapsed several times, the president came and pledged that an army regiment will be deployed here and there is an extra unit, but neither the unit nor the regiment has had any impact on security," said Safiullah Amiri, another member of the provincial council.

Security officials have said that so far, fifteen Taliban insurgents have been killed and dozens other wounded.

Several soldiers have also been killed in the battles, security officials confirmed. (Tolonews)

(16) Taliban Execute
A resident of Balkh district, Syed Alam, said one of the victims, Wilayat Khan, was his villager who had no links with any party to the conflict.

He said Wilayat Khan left behind a small daughter and four sons.

Provincial security officials said they were gathering information about the incident and full investigation would be launched soon. (Pajhwok)

(17) Taliban Hideouts...

Nangarahr is among the relatively calm provinces but the militants belonging to the Taliban group and ISIS terrorist group are active in some remote districts of the province, including in Khogyani. (KP)

(18) Daesh Militants

thrown into a well on the outskirts of the village."

According to him, the IS group had tasked its militants with not allowing anyone to pull the dead bodies out of the well or hand them over to their families.

Dawar said such fighting between Daesh and Taliban were in favour of people and the government, adding the new incident would play a great role in eradication of the both sides themselves.

However, Eng. Abdul Rahman Mahmoudi, deputy governor of Jawzjan, said infighting between Daesh and Taliban militants would not benefit government as both the groups at times jointly fought against government forces.

"Daesh and Taliban jointly attacked security forces for capturing the district centre but some of them fought among themselves, which is a separate topic, but these two usually act as one against government forces."

Abdul Ghafar, a resident of Aqbalay village, said some tribal elders from Faryab visited Daesh seeking handover of the Taliban bodies. However, the elders were unable to convince Daesh.

Meanwhile, Zabihullah Mujahid, a Taliban spokesman expressed unawareness about the incident.

The decapitation comes as a week after the Taliban also held captive a five-member Daesh group before shooting them dead on the outskirts of Darzab centre. (Pajhwok)