

**(1) 1.3 Million...**

Helmand and Uruzgan provinces, who could not vaccinated during the last campaigns in May due to insurgent bans on anti-polio efforts in Afghan territory under their control.

Afghanistan and neighboring Pakistan are the only two remaining polio-endemic countries in the world. Pakistani officials have reported three cases this year.

Polio, a crippling and potentially fatal infectious disease, was also endemic in Nigeria until August 2016, but the country has not reported new cases since then. (VoA)

**(2) Ex-Minister...**

as having been a dramatic move. During Monday's hearing, Wahidi said his case had been investigated under the chairmanship of the Attorney General and therefore the AG should have been present in court.

The state prosecutor, Hekmatullah, said: "Mr Wahidi has misused his authorities, he hired at least 37 people as contract staff with higher salaries despite there not having been any need for them."

But Wahidi's defense lawyer, Mohammad Ali Farhang, rejected the prosecutor's claims.

"They have not clarified the amount of money they claim (Wahidi) embezzled, they are not providing any legal documents in this respect to show where Mr Wahidi has violated the law," said Farhang.

The special tribunal is expected to determine its findings soon but no date has been set for its final verdict. Monday's hearing was however adjourned to Friday.

Wahidi was suspended in January last year, after which President Ashraf Ghani appointed a panel to assess the collection process of the 10 percent tax levied on mobile phone users.

This came after the National Unity Government (NUG) imposed the new levy in 2016.

Earlier on Monday, deputy presidential spokesperson Shahussain Murtazawi said in a social media post that Monday's hearing was the first time a former cabinet member would appear before the tribunal. He also said this was part of the ongoing efforts by government to root out corruption. (Tolo news)

**(3) Wells Due in...**

and district council elections. Ahead of her arrival in Islamabad, the US envoy said in Kabul the Taliban's failure to engage in talks on ending the conflict was unacceptable and asked Pakistan to mount pressure on the group. "Increasingly I think it's becoming simply unacceptable for the Taliban not to negotiate," Wells said, adding the US and Afghan governments were ready for talking without preconditions. (Pajhwok)

**(4) Uzbekistan...**

holds long term benefits and will provide the opportunity for Afghanistan to expand its trade relations with Russia and China. The Ministry of Commerce and Industries (MoCI) meanwhile said Afghanistan-Uzbekistan trade and transit ties are improving - which is in favor of the two nations.

"With Uzbekistan's investments in Mazar-e-Sharif-Herat railway, Uzbekistan's goods will be transported easily to Iran, even from Iran to the Gulf countries," Yahya Akhlaqi, the head of the transit department at the ministry said. ACCI statistics show that the

trade value between Afghanistan and Uzbekistan last year was \$600 million of which \$200 million was Afghanistan's exports to Uzbekistan.

Afghan officials in Uzbekistan say that Uzbek investors are ready to invest in different sectors in the northern and western parts of the country.

Pakistan has been frequently accused by the Afghan government of creating deliberate obstacles to undermine Afghanistan's trade and transit sectors because of Afghanistan's dependence on Pakistan's Karachi port.

However, with the expansion of Afghanistan's relations with the central Asian countries, it appears that Afghanistan's dependency on Pakistani is decreasing and the country is now able to conduct economic relations with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. (Tolo news)

**(5) Afghanistan...**

of disaster losses.

Accurate information on disaster losses is considered essential to good disaster risk management and a risk-informed approach to investments in critical infrastructure. (Pajhwok)

**(6) 77 Detained...**

plan (2018-2020) are among measure by the panel.

In response to a question about bachabazi, he said a law had been enacted in support children but no punishment had been specified in it for the perpetrators.

Anwari said he had carefully studied the US report and believed the international community's expectation should be met despite the ongoing war and other problems in the country. (Pajhwok)

**(7) Zone-Based...**

saying the IEC is an independent and sovereign electoral body and that the decision to split Ghazni into electoral constituencies was aimed at resolving the electoral stalemate in the volatile province. The ICOIC however argues that the IEC should have finalized the issue of the election process 180 days before the October 20 election date.

Zoned-based elections violate article 36 of the election law, said the ICOIC.

MPs also spoke out about the move on Monday and some suggested government should first resolve the security issues in the province.

"People in Ghazni do not endorse even a single word that isn't in the Constitution and the election law," said MP Chaman Shah Etemadi.

Another MP, Ali Alizadah, said: "They should consider concise and legal ways instead of violating the law, they should go and resolve the security issues of Ghazni."

But the IEC commissioner Sayed Hafiz Hashemi emphasized that the body was independent and that it had been forced to take an urgent decision around Ghazni.

"The independent election commission is fully sovereign while taking its decisions, it is completely an independent body within the framework of the Constitution. What we decided was an exception and it was an emergency case.

"We want both the Constitution and the election law to prevail. The Constitution and the election law states that all people must be provided the opportunity to use their election rights and the commission took the decision based on the law," said Hashemi.

Based on the IEC's election calendar for Ghazni, the IEC needs to

supply sensitive election materials to the province by July 24. Last week Ghazni MPs warned they would resist what they described as a "discriminatory act" by the IEC.

"Conducting zoned-based elections in Ghazni and being different from other provinces is clear discrimination against the rights of the people of Ghazni and it is unacceptable," said Abdul Qayyum Sajjadi, an MP from Ghazni. The move comes after Ghazni residents forced the IEC to close its provincial office in May in a bid to get government to either ensure security in the province or reduce the size of election constituencies.

The closure of the IEC provincial office disrupted the voter registration process.

Ghazni has 11 seats in the Wolesi Jirga (Lower House of Parliament).

Based on the IEC's decision, Ghazni has now been divided into three electoral zones. The candidates who secure the majority of votes from these zones will be declared as winners.

The IEC has however said that all zones have been divided based on the population and geography and a committee will oversee the process.

According to local officials, at least 14 districts in the province face serious security threats and 15 voter registration centers remain closed in the center of the province. (Tolo news)

**(8) Abdullah...**

and talks regarding how and where the safe zones should be provided.

President Ashraf Ghani had also responded that no hidden agreement would be reached with the Taliban.

Some lawmakers also contradicted with the offer to provide safe zones to the Taliban and said the move may move the country towards disintegration.

The CEO also condemned blast on Sikh and Hindu minority members in Jalalabad, the capital of eastern Nangarhar province on Sunday afternoon. (Pajhwok)

**(9) Current MPs...**

Baz Mohammad Jawzjani, Mohammad Ismail, Dr. Enayatullah Babar Farahmand, Abdul Sattar Darzabi and Fahima Sadaat were elected from Jawzjan province to the present lower house.

Baz Mohammad was killed in last year's blast at a guesthouse in Kandahar City, Farahmad resigned as lawmaker before being appointed as chief of staff to the first vice president and Fahima Sadaat died of cardiac arrest recently.

The IEC official said sons of Gen. Dostum and Ahmad Eshchi were contesting the Wolesi Jirga polls vote. The names of Batoor Dostum and Baktash Eshchi have are on the preliminary list of candidates.

Wolesi Jirga and district council elections, delayed several times, are scheduled for October 20 this year. (Pajhwok)

**(10) Could World...**

winner Argentina was sent packing by France. Speaking of Les Bleus and La Albiceleste, France and Argentina are the only two countries besides Spain to have won a first World Cup within the last 50 years.

The usual suspects produced every single losing finalist during that span, too, with the last 12 title games contested by teams from just seven nations: Argentina, Brazil, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain. But the way Russia 2018 has gone

so far, you get the sneaking suspicion that things could go differently this time around. Maybe the hints were there when four-time champ Italy didn't even qualify and neither did the Dutch, the third-place finisher in 2014 after being runner-up four years earlier.

Even those who doubted that Germany would successfully defend its crown this summer surely never envisioned Die Mannschaft losing 2-0 to South Korea and missing the knockout stage for the first time.

Look, it would surprise nobody to see France or Brazil - the latter the most successful of all with five World Cup wins - capture another title later this month. According to the website oddschecker.com, those two are the bookies' clear favorites following Sunday's matches. (Agencies)

**(11) Akinfeev...**

atmosphere and understood that Russians really know how to play football and want to play football."

Russia will meet either Croatia or Denmark for a place in the semi-finals, as Spain's rotten run against hosts nation at major tournaments continued.

Fernando Hierro made the bold decision to drop Andres Iniesta for Koke in central midfield, with Marco Asensio handed his first start of the competition.

Russia boss Stanislav Cherchesov left out leading scorer Denis Cheryshev, opting for three central defenders in a conservative 5-3-2 formation.

It was Nacho, in for Dani Carvajal at right-back, who won the free-kick that led to Spain taking the lead as he was caught by Yuri Zhirkov to the right of the penalty area.

Asensio, who made two brief substitute appearances in the group stage, whipped in dangerously to the far post where the ball looped in off an unsighted Ignashevich as he tussled with Ramos.

Spain dominated the first 30 minutes, pressing Russia heavily as the hosts struggled to advance beyond the halfway line in humid conditions.

Aleksandr Golovin carved out their first chance of note, starting a move with a jinking run before bending just wide of David de Gea's left-hand post.

Isco produced a series of regal touches with Spain's King Felipe VI among those in the crowd at the Luzhniki Stadium, but Russia equalised shortly before half-time. (Agencies)

**(12) Afghan Air...**

President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani on Saturday said that the Afghan forces are authorized to target the militant groups across the country. (KP)

**(13) Afghan Special...**

Improvised Explosive Devices was killed during an operation of the Afghan armed forces.

According to the local officials, the key ISIS Khurasan group member was killed in Jalalabad city the provincial capital of Nangarhar province.

The officials further added that the Special Forces of the Afghan intelligence, National Directorate of Security (NDS), conducted an operation in Muqam Khan area of Behsud, resulting into the killing of a key ISIS Khurasan group member, who was famous as Mujahir. (KP)

**(14) Egypt Condemns...**

to all the injured. The bomb attack was carried out in Jalalabad city on Sunday when a suicide bomber blew himself

up targeting a convoy carrying members of the Sikh minority on the way to enter the governor's house to meet Afghan President Ashraf Ghani. (Xinhua)

**(15) Panjwayee...**

said Wahidullah, an army soldier.

Sher Aqyar, a member of the provincial peace council, meanwhile, said that they need facilities in their peace-making efforts and that so far they have gained nothing, but have contacts with armed oppositions and hopeful of getting results.

This comes as Khakriz, Maiwand, Shwalikot, Nesh, Ghorak and Zerai are among the districts that are still under serious threats of the Taliban in Kandahar province. It has been said that in some of these districts, the Taliban make even difficult for the Afghan security forces to receive military equipment via ground. (ATN)

## S.Korean Stocks Hit Year-Low on Concern Over U.S. Protectionist Move

SEOUL - South Korean stocks hit the lowest of this year Monday amid growing concerns over U.S. protectionist moves, with the local currency depreciating to the U.S. dollar.

The benchmark Korea Composite Stock Price Index (KOSPI) shrank 54.59 points, or 2.35 percent, to settle at 2,271.54. Trading volume stood at 390 million shares worth 5.9 trillion won (5.3 billion U.S. dollars).

It was the lowest close since May 10 last year. During the day alone, about 36 trillion won (32 billion U.S. dollars) worth of market capitalization evaporated.

The KOSPI, which took a weak start, extended its initial loss throughout the trading day on rising worry about the U.S. protectionist move.

Hyundai Motor, the country's No.1 carmaker, and its affiliate Kia Motors, presented a written statement to the U.S. Department of Commerce over the weekend, saying that if Washington slaps tariffs of 25 percent on imported cars and auto parts, it would inevitably deal a blow to the U.S. labor market.

Under instruction from U.S. President Donald Trump, the Department of Commerce initiated a so-called Section 232 investigation in late May into the implications of car and auto parts imports to the U.S. national security.

The probe was based on a rarely-used Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act, which can lead to the imposition of as high as 25 percent of tariffs on imported vehicles and car parts.

Hyundai said it manufactures nearly half of the cars it sells in the U.S. market in the U.S. soil, employing over 25,000 U.S. workers for the operation.

If put in place, the tariffs would drive up the production costs of U.S. plants which could lead to a drop in profitability and ultimately prompt it to slash employment and investment, according to the South Korean carmaker.

Most of large-cap shares lost ground. Hyundai Motor lost 1.6 percent, and market bellwether Samsung Electronics declined 2.4 percent. Memory chip giant SK Hynix dipped 2.3 percent, and the biggest steelmaker POSCO tumbled 4.3 percent.

Leading chemical firm LG Chem plunged 4.8 percent, and Samsung Biologics, a biosimilar unit of Samsung Group, the country's biggest family-controlled conglomerate, retreated 0.6 percent. (Xinhua)