

(1) MPs Lash...

of the Afghan people, so then how can they (the IEC) take a decision which violates the law," MP Sayed Ali Kazimi said.

Lawmakers also accused government of interfering in the IEC.

They said that such a move will push the nation towards a crisis.

"The election will head for a crisis under this government and this administration, God forbid, if again there is a crisis, that will be pretty dangerous," said Ahmad Wali Massoud, chairman of the Massoud Foundation.

"The Independent Election Commission and the Afghan government should avoid creating another crisis in the country and in Ghazni by making illegal, biased and unjust decisions," MP Abdul Qayoumm Sajjadi said.

However, the president's office dispelled these allegations and said government was not interfering in the process.

"The Independent Election Commission is a sovereign body and government does not interfere at all in its work and it does not allow other institutions to meddle in (the IEC's) job," said President Ashraf Ghani's spokesman Haroon Chakhansuri.

Other lawmakers meanwhile said that the move by the IEC will add to the people's lack of confidence in the election process.

"This illegal decision will harm the trust the people have in the elections and the commission; this will mark the beginning of a social crisis and expansion of ethnic differences and it should be stopped," MP Chaman Shah Etemadi said.

"We will use all democratic channels to confront this law-breaking move," said MP Jaffar Mahdawi. The IEC's recommendation of splitting the multi-ethnic province of Ghazni into three election constituencies comes after all MPs from Ghazni who won seats in the last elections came from the same ethnic group.

Ghazni MPs said earlier this week that in addition to being unconstitutional, the decision is a breach of articles 35, 36, and 71 of the current elections law, and therefore lacks a legal basis.

Article 36 also states that the boundaries of electoral constituencies shall be determined at least 180 days before the election day.

Government meanwhile rejected a plan to reduce electoral constituencies — which would have divided all provinces into constituencies on the basis of the population — in late May on the same legal basis.

The latest move however, 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 but based on the IEC's latest 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. Meanwhile, on Thursday the IEC said that over eight million Afghans have so far registered across the country to vote in the October 20 parliamentary and district council elections. (Tolo news)

(2) US Asks Pakistan...

assistance to Pakistan in January over its failure to crack down on Afghan Taliban on its soil.

He cut off the security aid to Pakistan saying that the US had "foolishly" given \$33 billion to Pakistan in last 15 years.

He also added that in return to the financial aid Pakistan had only given lies and deceit to them.

The US President also blamed Pakistan for obstructing its operations in Afghanistan. He said the "safe-haven" for terrorists in Pakistan was hindering the US operations in Afghanistan. (wionews)

(3) UN Official...

action to support the government now, the situation could be much much worse in just six months time," he said.

The UN official recommended action against drought within the next six months in terms of providing food for the people and their cattle.

He said he has visited some drought-hit provinces in Afghanistan where he saw people who were faced with food shortage. To address the humanitarian needs, Lanzer said, they have urged the international community to grant \$715 million.

"I was just in the north of the country. I visited Kunduz, I have also been to Baghlan very recently and I am reaching these provinces by road so that I can listen to people and see how grave the situation is. People are telling me that across the north and western parts of Afghanistan there are perhaps two million people who have lost their livelihoods, whose livestock, so sheep and goats and cows are getting sick or they do not have enough food to eat. And so the situation is very very grave," said Lanzer.

Logar is among drought-hit provinces. Officials from Logar Rural Rehabilitation and Development Directorate said around 2,000 families are suffering from drought in the province.

"We have sent our engineers to the area where 2,000 families are faced with lack of water," Ashiqullah Ekhlash, the provincial director of rural rehabilitation and development, said.

"People have left their homes and have gone to the provincial center, but they are faced with water shortage here as well," said Abdul Basir, a resident of Logar.

The UN has urged the international community to provide \$715 million USD to address problems raised from drought. From this money, around \$600 million will be invested by the Afghan government to support farmers and livestock breeders and \$115 million will be spent by the UN to provide foods to people in need. (Tolo news)

(4) Above 14,000...

and then on the exam day for prevention of fraud. The result of this year's entry test would be announced until August 1, he said.

In the first phase of the test today, more than 14,000 students including around 5,000 of them girls participated.

In the second phase on Friday, a similar number of students would take part.

According to MoHE officials, third and fourth phases of the exam would be held in near future.

Farida and Kamila, two students who attended the exam today, asked the government to ensure full transparency in the entry test. (Pajhwok)

(5) Hundreds...

families in neighboring Nangarhar province over the last 10 months. Local authorities told VOA that the conflict in the region had forced more than 14,000 families to flee their homes in Nangarhar over the last three years. Only 8,000 families have reportedly returned.

Clashes between the Taliban and IS are a continuing issue in eastern Afghanistan, particularly in Nangarhar, the traditional stronghold of the IS Khurasan branch that emerged in the country in 2015.

The militant group has since made inroads to adjacent provinces in the eastern and northern parts of the country.

The recent clashes occurred in the Watani and Degal villages of Chapra Dara district.

Farid Dehqan, Kunar provincial police chief, told VOA that IS and Taliban militants had taken positions on high ground, targeting each other with small and heavy weaponry.

"Both sides have suffered casualties, but it is hard to say how many, due to lack of communication services in the area," Dehqan said.

Provincial officials told VOA that the clashes had not caused civilian casualties so far.

Officials said they were following the developments on the ground and were prepared to engage both sides.

"Our forces are watching the situation closely and are ready to engage when needed," Kunar Police Chief Dehqan told VOA.

Afghan defense officials told VOA that Afghan forces had carried out operations in Kunar province, killing and injuring IS and Taliban militants.

"Just yesterday [Tuesday], we have targeted a group of IS militants in the same district, killing six of them. We assure our people that we will put an end to their [IS and Taliban] threats in the area." General Mohammad Radmanesh, a spokesman for the Afghan Defense Ministry, told VOA. (VoA)

(6) Foreign Troops...

to enter talks with the government which through such claims wanted to mislead people's minds.

Mujahid said the Taliban maintained a clear policy for talks and had many times repeated that stance, calling the presence of foreign troops on the Afghanistan's soil "the mother of all problems."

Before Khpalkwak, High Peace Council official Aminuddin Muzfari had also said the people would hear good news about peace soon. Similarly, Afghanistan ambassador in Pakistan Dr. Omar Zakhilwal had also claimed progress in talks with Pakistan. (Pajhwok)

(7) Attacks will...

"The martyrdom of Karwan and the escape of his killers from the scene has raised a lot of questions, we demand an investigation into the issue and we want answers," said a resident of Paktika Sayed Atiqullah.

Abdullah meanwhile said Afghanistan will not regress and that insurgents will not be able to deter government from its resolve.

"Investigations are underway at a high level, the security officials are working on the case and we will inform the people about the results," said Abdullah.

Who was Karwan?

Karwan was a taxi driver who traveled the Kabul-Paktika Highway during the Taliban regime in 2001. After the fall of the Taliban, he gave up driving a taxi to become a policeman.

After joining the Afghan Local Police he went on to become instrumental in establishing the Paktika local police force and eventually became the Commander of the Special Police Forces in the province. According to local officials, Karwan played a significant role in the security of the province.

In a recent interview with Pajhwok Afghan News, Karwan said he had been attacked 38 times in the past 16 years, of which 13 had been suicide bombings. He said these had all been in a bid to kill him.

He also told Pajhwok that in this time he had lost over 600 friends in clashes with the Taliban. (Tolo news)

(8) Army's Special...

police Ranger vehicles, one armed SUV vehicle and two heavy weapons were seized during the operation.

Rezaee said two people were killed and two others wounded in the operation. He added that no casualty was sustained by government forces.

Some local officials in Faryab have claimed that the attack was conducted on Qaisar police chief Nizamuddin Qaisari's house to arrest his armed men.

However, the army spokesman rejected the claims as baseless. (Tolo news)

(9) Kazakhstan Capital...

Ambassador of Kazakhstan especially focused on the regional and international conferences held in Astana under auspicious initiatives of state and government of Kazakhstan including SCO summit, European Cooperation and Security Organization, OIC, and the world and traditional religions congress, Astana Economic Forum, Astana Medias etc.

Adila Raz, Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Cooperation of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, speaking on behalf of the government of Afghanistan praised the positive role of the friendly country of Kazakhstan under the leadership of Nursultan Nazarbayev in international policy including Kazakhstan's foreign policy in Afghanistan.

Raz added that Ashraf Ghani, the President of Afghanistan congratulates the birthday of Nazarbayev which has coincided with the anniversary of Astana city and retreated the friendly mutual relations between the two countries and the mutual trust between the leaders of Afghanistan and Kazakhstan. Raz on behalf of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan thanked Republic and people of Kazakhstan for supporting Afghanistan and wished them sustainable development and security.

The participants thanked the officials of the embassy for the celebration and highlighted the achievements of Astana as the capital city of Kazakhstan. (PR)

(10) Helmand Peace...

among the warring parties; specifying an address for peace talks; establishment of a peaceful government based on Islamic values; and determining an exact date for the withdrawal of foreign forces are among the activists' key demands.

"Our campaign started outside UNAMA's office and now it is in front of the US embassy. Tomorrow we will move to the Russian embassy," said campaign leader Iqbal Khyber

The activists have held a sit-in protest outside the US embassy for the past ten days.

Protest Started In Helmand

The peace activists initially launched their protest in Lashkargah City after a suicide bombing outside a stadium in March. About a month later, a group of eight protesters left Helmand on foot for Kabul.

The activists walked through towns and villages, crossed provinces and met with local residents along the way. For 38 days they walked and as they progressed, so their numbers grew.

About 700kms later, the group of eight had grown to an estimated 100. They arrived in Kabul on June 18 and handed over demands for a ceasefire and peace to both the Afghan government and the Taliban. The group gave the Taliban three days in which to answer and said if they failed to do so, they would embark on sit in protests outside diplomatic offices and missions in the capital.

The Taliban's deadline passed without any response. The activists then held a three-day sit-in protest outside UNAMA's office in Kabul. They sent a letter to the UN Secretary General António Guterres in which they asked him not to remain indifferent towards ending the ongoing war in Afghanistan. From there, they moved on to the

US embassy — where they have been for the past 10 days.

The activists, whose ages range from 17 to 65, come from all walks of life and include students, athletes and farmers among others. (Tolo news)

(11) Germany Departs...

German authorities had stopped collective deportations after a May 2017 truck bombing in front of the German Embassy in Kabul that killed more than 150 people.

But Berlin restarted deportations in September 2017 in three categories: suspected terrorists, criminals, and individuals who did not cooperate with the German government regarding their documents.

The latest deportation comes amid a worsening security situation in Afghanistan, with intensified attacks by Taliban militants as well as Daesh. (Tolo news)

(12) Protest in Faryab...

The angry protesters then torched government vehicles and parts of the governor's house.

The protest in Maimana continued despite a decision reached with a high level delegation from Kabul that the protests would be called off until security threats in the province were removed.

The delegation from Kabul held talks with tribal elders, religious scholars and civil society activists. Hundreds of people marched in the city for a fourth day in a row, demanding the return of Dostum from Turkey and release of Qaisari.

Junbish party provincial chief Atta Mohammad Faizi said President Ashraf Ghani reached the Presidential Palace on votes from Dostum supporters.

But the president then started removing national personalities and hatching conspiracies against, he said.

Faizi warned their protest would continue until their leader Gen. Dostum returns to the country.

Another protestor, Bashir Yaqubi, said: "Security forces instead of having court orders invited Nizamuddin Qaisari to a meeting and arrested him." (Pajhwok)

(13) Ministry to...

Former deputy minister of energy and water Abdul Basir Azimi said the dam will generate an additional 22 megawatts of power after the project is completed.

"The third phase of the project will provide water to Kandahar City. It will help hundreds of thousands of families to have access to drinking water after it is processed. Meanwhile, three turbines will be installed on the dam. Each of them will produce eight megawatts of power. All the turbines will generate 22 megawatts of power," Azimi said. (Tolo news)

(14) Tagab Police Claim...

said land grabbers used different tactics how to grab public land.

Tribal elder Shah Wali said no government land had been left unsold in the district. He accused the former mayor of selling the whole land.

Last year, the Tagab district mayor was arrested by security forces over unauthorized distribution of government land. (Pajhwok)

(15) Taliban Capture

Chamtal residents said the Taliban were now in control of vast areas after capturing these security posts.

However, the governor's spokesman, MunirFarhad, confirmed only the collapse of the Jar Qala security post, something he called a tactical retreat.

He said additional forces had been dispatched to the district and currently a fierce clash was ongoing between the two sides.

Local residents said one ALP man was killed, another wounded and four more captured alive by the Taliban. (Pajhwok)