

(1) New Multi-Billion...

As part of the 100th anniversary of independence of Afghanistan, the iconic Darul Aman Palace in Kabul would also be inaugurated next month after a renovation drive costing \$9 million, Ghani said. This palace designed by German architects in the 19th century, but was devastated during the bloody civil war in the 1990s before Ghani commissioned its reconstruction.

The government is planning to use this renovated palace as a museum upon completion. (Monitoring Desk)

(2) Nuristani Says ...

commission to steadily manage the process.

"The international community has taken a very small burden and this small share can put major pressure on the Afghan government and on the process," said Yusuf Rasheed, the CEO of Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan. "In the past, they [the international donors] were taking a big share, but they should be more involved in the process."

Figures by the IEC show that 5,388 polling centers will be established across the country despite concerns that some of the centers will remain closed due to insecurity.

"They [election commissioners] cannot manage the elections despite they receive budget because many districts are under high-level threats and there is a lack of trust in the elections," said Sayed Ahmad Selab, an MP. (Tolo news)

(3) Senate Delays ...

members verified they would go on break after the fate of the budget was determined.

The Wolesi Jirga approves budget after it is confirmed by Meshrano Jirga. Erfanullah Erfan, deputy secretary of the Wolesi Jirga, said no request had been made by upper house members but some members were interested in delay of the vacation.

He added the Wolesi Jirga might not also enjoy all the summer recess and would reduce the recess period to advance the house affairs.

The Independent Election Commission (IEC) has demanded \$146 million from the Afghan government and international community for holding the presidential poll.

On Wednesday, IEC head Hawa Alam Nuristani called on the government and international community to provide the required budget for the upcoming presidential elections.

But the Ministry of Finance announced it would pay the budget and said a small amount of money would be transferred to the IEC for initial work and the rest would be transferred to the commission after finalization of the budget plan.

According to a report, MoF officials said the total of 11.3 billion afghanis had been demanded by the IEC for the presidential elections - 6.9 billion of which will be paid by Afghan government and 4.4 billion other by donor institutions.

However, no donor has so far approached the government for supporting the upcoming elections. (Pajhwok)

(4) Residents ...

the province is concerning due to inactivity by relevant officials.

"Insecurity has plagued Badghis. Roads to Badghis districts are closed to traffic... We want security, we want the right of our people to be ensured," member of Badghis Provincial Council, Mohammad Farid Akhizai, said. Badghis governor Abdul Ghafoor Malikzai rejected the allegations and called the protest a "conspiracy" against him.

"We shared the protesters' statement with the center [Kabul]. I will accept whatever the government decides about me. The demands of protesters are personal," Malikzai said.

Bala Murghab, which is a key district in Badghis, came under Taliban attack two times this year which left the district vulnerable to security threats. (Tolo news)

(5) Afghan Returnees ...

displacement and encourages the Government of Afghanistan and its partners to put in place measures to

facilitate the return in safety and dignity.

The findings of the report would contribute to further expanding the close collaboration between UNHCR and the World Bank, including on projects that promote self-reliance and support the development of community infrastructure. (Pajhwok)

(6) Qayumi Criticized ...

The Finance Ministry's spokesman Shamroz Khan Masjidi said the acting minister is making the foreign trips for official activities.

"The finance minister is often is his office. Sometimes, he travels outside the country for official activities and with the permission of Mr. President [Ashraf Ghani]. He [Qayumi] appoints his deputy as acting minister when he is outside," said Masjidi. (Tolo news)

(7) Pistachio ...

tasked individuals with harvesting pistachio forests. The harvest takes place at a specific time.

Arghandiwal said Samangan residents had collected more than 212 tonnes of pistachio from natural forests and earned 265 million afghanis last year. But they could not collect this big amount this year, the agriculture director added. (Pajhwok)

(8) Future Political...

The office of the National Security Advisor said in a statement that it is expected that the next round of intra-Afghan talks will happen in the near future.

"[The Afghan] Government sees the ongoing war in favor of none of the sides and is ready to cooperate in any types of talks. We expect that the next [round of] talks will happen in the near future," the National Security Advisor's spokesman Kabir Haqmal said.

Meanwhile, senior officials from the Afghan government insist on respect to values of the Constitution, which also includes the continuation of an Islamic republic system.

"The Afghan people and the government will not feel necessary to trust 'meaningless' slogans until the Taliban accepts all values which have been reflected in the Afghan Constitution such as the republic system, elections, freedom of the press, the genuine rights of women," the Second Vice President Sarwar Danish at a ceremony in Kabul on Sunday.

This comes as representatives of China, Russia, and the United States in a meeting in Beijing on July 12 agreed on the immediate start of intra-Afghan negotiations. (Tolo news)

(9) Hundreds...

Widows, orphans, the disabled, less fortunate people and war-affected families had received assistance, he added.

Farid Ahmad, one of the aid recipients, said he had been forced to flee his home in the Imam Sahib district of the province. (Pajhwok)

(10) India Has ...

situation in Afghanistan. However, Pentagon said in the 1990s, India supported the former Northern Alliance; and maintains contact with Afghan power brokers.

On the other hand, Pentagon said "In the event of a U.S. drawdown in Afghanistan, India likely will attempt to continue its support to Afghanistan and try to limit Taliban, Pakistani, and Chinese influence. A significant deterioration of security conditions in Afghanistan, however, may adversely affect the ability of India to provide aid." (KP)

(11) Afghan Air Force...

MD-530 operations (rearm and refuel only) at forward-deployed locations for short intervals without CLS presence.

According to Pentagon, the Afghan Air Force will continue to require CLS and supporting training contracts to maintain combat capability in the mid-term and long-term.

In the meantime, Pentagon said the Afghan Air Force plans to build MD-530 NVG combat capability by integrating NVG curriculum into advanced training courses to support flying point-to-point navigation sorties. (KP)

(12) 5 Police Personnel...

the incident and said seven policemen had suffered casualties.

Abdul Fatah, a resident of Guzargah district, said a clash had been underway between security forces and Taliban in Jurab area over the past three days. He gave no information about casualties.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the rebels attacked a convoy of security forces in Guzargah district late on Saturday.

He added five policemen were killed and two others captured alive by the insurgents as a result of the ambush. (Pajhwok)

(13) Decade on...

on the path of high-quality development, the currency's influence is set to rise, analysts said.

SOUND ECONOMIC FUNDAMENTALS

The strength of a currency is backed by the country's economic performance. Wang Fang, deputy director of the International Monetary Institute of Renmin University, attributed the yuan's wider use mainly to China's sound economic fundamentals and its status as the world's largest trader of goods. From 2010 to 2018, China's economy expanded at an average rate of 7.8 percent annually, according to the report at the 2019 International Monetary Forum. It has for years contributed to more than 30 percent of world growth. Even with the trade tensions with the United States since last year, China has stood firm in its pursuit of stability and progress, and continued to open up its financial market, solidifying its role as a key engine driving global growth.

While the IMF downgraded its 2019 global growth forecast by 0.2 percentage points to 3.3 percent in April, it revised its projection for China to 6.3 percent, up 0.1 percentage points from its previous estimation in January.

The stable growth has offered solid support for the yuan's strength, making the currency more attractive for global traders.

In terms of trade of goods, China's strong real economy, especially the manufacturing sector, has fueled export growth, while the country's billion-plus population has meant huge demands for imports.

In 2018, China's foreign trade in merchandise hit a historic high of 30.51 trillion yuan (about 4.5 trillion U.S. dollars), up 9.7 percent year on year, becoming a major push behind the yuan's international use.

CEASELESS REFORMS AND OPENING UP

Committed to making the yuan a true global currency, Chinese authorities have over the years taken steady measures to reform and open up the nation's financial market.

From the current account to the capital account, a series of reforms such as improving its foreign exchange rate formation system and opening up its interbank bond and forex markets had been taken to make the yuan more freely usable.

In an acknowledgement of this progress, the IMF included the yuan in its Special Drawing Rights (SDR) basket in 2016 as a fifth currency, along with the U.S. dollar, the euro, the Japanese yen and the British pound.

The SDR is an international reserve asset supplementing members' official reserves. It can be exchanged among governments for freely usable currencies in times of need, and the yuan's entry marked a milestone in its globalization march.

Since then, China has quickened its pace to push for the yuan's wider use, with increasing investment quotas for foreign institutional investors and the introduction of connect programs between stock exchanges such as the Shanghai-Hong Kong, Shenzhen-Hong Kong and Shanghai-London stock links.

Whether the Chinese currency can match the country's economic and trade clout depends on the scope of non-resident use, which requires further reforms in the foreign exchange market, according to Wang.

China needs to make more efforts in developing foreign exchange deriva-

tives to offer more products for non-residents to manage risks and win their trust, Wang noted. (Xinhua)

(14) Trump Ruined...

strong disagreements among Trump's closest advisers.

They can't articulate any 'day-after' strategy; and contacts with State Department this morning suggest no sort of plan for reaching out to partners and allies, whether in Europe or the region.

In another cable sent out the same day, Sir Darroch blamed Trump for following the line of National Security Advisor John Bolton, who promulgated withdrawal from the deal and the re-imposition of sanctions.

The British tabloid went on to release the second batch of Sir Darroch's wires despite the warning by the Metropolitan Police not to publish the government leaks. The initial publication of cables last week caused a diplomatic scandal between Washington and the UK. It resulted in Sir Darroch's resignation on Wednesday, after Trump unleashed a salvo of attacks against the diplomat, who described his administration as "dysfunctional" and "inept." The Metropolitan Police's Counter Terrorism Command is now investigating the source of the leak. (RT)

(15) EU Supports...

is under pressure to prevent its territories from becoming a battleground for the spiraling tension between Iran and the U.S., both power brokers here.

The U.S. maintains military bases and more than 5,000 troops in Iraq.

Iran backs powerful Iraqi militia groups, who played a key role in fighting Islamic State militants, and some of them are openly against U.S. presence in Iraq. A series of unclaimed attacks on U.S. interests in recent weeks caused jitters and sparked Iraqi government decrees clearly designed to prevent a confrontation in its territories.

"The region is not prepared for a new war. We are still fighting terrorism. It is an unfinished war," said Iraq's Foreign Minister Mohammed al-Hakim, speaking alongside Mogherini. He said Iraq should not be a scene for this conflict "but should have a supportive role in resolving this crisis with other Arab countries, particularly Kuwait and Oman."

The Emir of Kuwait visited Iraq last month to discuss the rising tension; while Oman has also offered to mediate between the two rivals.

Iraqi Foreign Ministry spokesman Ahmed al-Sahaf said the idea of a regional conference is being developed but the issue was raised with foreign delegations that visited Iraq. (AP)

(16) U.S. President...

in terms of the engagement of our armed forces and their armed services."

Morrison and Trump's political careers have both been built on strong opposition to illegal immigration.

During his time as Australia's Minister for Immigration and Border Protection between 2013 and 2014 Morrison was the architect of Operation Sovereign Borders - Australia's military-led border protection operation.

In a post on Twitter late in June Trump praised Australia's stance on illegal immigration, declaring that "much can be learned." (Xinhua)

(17) Macron Boomed...

how many 'Yellow Vests' were present as they had been urged not to wear their iconic high-visibility jackets on this national day.

It has been reported that protest leaders, Eric Drouet, Maxime Nicolle and Jerome Rodrigues, were apprehended by police at the main military parade route, the Champs Elysees avenue.

It comes just one day after the 'Yellow Vests' took to the streets again on Saturday, marking the 35th consecutive week of the nationwide protest against the Macron government's policies. Simultaneously, leaders of the protest movement urged followers to take part in the rally on Bastille Day. (RT)

(18) Heavy Rain ...

restore phone lines.

Thirty people have been treated for injuries and more than 1,100 others rescued from flooded areas. More than 10,000 are estimated to have been displaced.

Nepal's Department of Hydrology and Meteorology warned of more troubles ahead for the southern region near the main rivers, urging people to keep watch on rising water levels and move to higher ground when needed. Rain-triggered floods, mudslides and lightning have left a trail of destruction in other parts of South Asia.

In Bangladesh, at least a dozen people, mostly farmers in rural areas, have been killed by lightning since Saturday as monsoon rains continue to batter parts of the low-lying country, according to officials and news reports. Water Development Board official Rabiul Islam said about 40,000 people have been affected, mostly due to their homes being submerged underwater. Bangladesh, a low-lying delta nation of 160 million people with more than 130 rivers, is prone to monsoon floods because of overflowing rivers and the heavy onrush of water from upstream India.

Officials in northeastern India said at least 14 people were killed and over a million affected by flooding, state official Kumar Sanjay Krishna said. Six deaths were reported in neighboring Arunachal state.

Assam's Kaziranga National Park, home to the endangered one-horn rhinoceros, has been flooded.

Floods and mudslides have also hit some other northeast Indian states, including Meghalaya, Sikkim and Mizoram. In Mizoram, floods have submerged about 400 homes in the small town of Tlabung, police said. (AP)

(19) Bypassing...

Johnson could secure a new exit agreement with the EU and get it approved by lawmakers, he may have to resort to suspending the legislature.

That prospect has angered fellow lawmakers and campaigners who say parliament should not be bypassed.

Miller, who is best known for successfully taking the government to the Supreme Court to challenge its authority to leave the EU without a vote in parliament, said she had reassembled the same legal team for a fresh challenge.

"We are ready to go to court to test the legality of any attempt to prorogue parliament," she said in a statement.

Former prime minister John Major also said last week he would be prepared to turn to the judiciary if needed to avoid a constitutional crisis.

Johnson is favorite to win the contest to take over from Prime Minister Theresa May. The winner is announced on July 23.

His first preference is to renegotiate a new deal with the EU and have it approved by parliament, but he has said it would be unwise to rule out anything - including suspension - that might be needed to deliver Brexit.

In a letter to Johnson, Miller's lawyers at law firm Mishcon de Reya argued that in the current circumstances it would be "constitutionally objectionable" and unlawful to ask the queen to suspend parliament - a process called prorogation. "It would seriously undermine parliamentary sovereignty for you, as prime minister, to prorogue parliament to prevent it from considering whether to legislate to prevent a no-deal Brexit," the letter said.

It called on Johnson to rule out suspending parliament and that if he would not, asked that he gave enough notice to allow any such move to be tested in the courts. (Reuters)

(20) Taiwan President...

Tsai, he said "your presence here is therefore an eloquent sign of the manifest will of the two countries to further strengthen their cooperation, especially in agricultural and energy matters, as well as other investments essential to the development of Haiti." The pair's joint events included a showcase of Taiwanese technology in renewable energy, agriculture and other fields.

In Port-au-Prince, small signs as well as Haitian and Taiwanese flags were erected on Saturday morning to welcome Tsai. (Reuters)