

(1) Afghanistan ...

with the regional countries," Finance Minister Eklil Hakimi was quoted as saying during the signing of commitment to the convention.

"A skilled and committed Afghan as technical attaché of customs will soon be introduced to WCO for further consultation with this organization," he was echoed as saying.

By signing the commitment to the declaration in the ten sections—leadership and commitment, legal framework, transparency, automation, reform and modernization, research, conduct, human Resources management, administrative culture and effective relationships with the private sector—Afghanistan would fulfill its commitments, it added.

"The WCO is as house of the world customs departments and we are interested in sharing our experiences with Afghanistan in the modernizing customs in Afghanistan, capacity building and better management of customs," Mr. Kunio Mikuriya, Secretary General of the WCO was quoted in the statement as saying. Revised Arusha Declaration is one of the WCO's key legal instruments regarding the good governance, integrity in accomplishment of tasks and combating corruption which has been signed in Arusha, Tanzania, on the 7th day of July 1993 revised in June 2003. (Pajhwok)

(2) Bamiyan's Potato ...

center at Band-e Amir National Park. This year's potato festival drew dozens of visitors to the province.

"Bamiyan is a secure province and the only reason for security is the close cooperation between security forces and the people; therefore government must put more attention to development projects in the province," said Fakoor Beheshti, a lawmaker from Bamiyan.

The minister of agriculture Assadullah Zamir, who also attended the festival, said the ministry was trying to standardize cultivation methods in the province. He also said his ministry was trying to implement plans to promote the cultivation of saffron and medicinal herbs in Bamiyan.

"We have adequate plans to increase the potato harvest in Bamiyan and those plans will have a big impact on the current situation in coming years," said Zamir.

Tahir Zahir, Bamiyan's governor, said the province will hopefully one day have the largest potato processing plant in the region – once the National Unity Government's plans have been implemented.

"We want the central government to continue its development and economic programs and also export potatoes to neighboring countries especially to central Asia countries," Zahir said.

Bamiyan is one of the secure provinces in the country and draws hundreds of tourists a year – especially to Band-e Amir – the country's first national park. Although Bamiyan is a potentially wealthy province in terms of agriculture and tourism, at least 50 percent of its residents reportedly live below the poverty line. (Tolonews)

(3) 13 Children ..

southern Kandahar province.

He said families of the children had been told the boys would be admitted to religious schools in Karachi "But these men wanted to train the children as suicide bombers," alleged the police official.

"The children belonged to families based in Ghazni, Kandahar and Paktia provinces," he said, adding the families could take home their children after investigations.

He added no one would be allowed to smuggle children to the other countries. The detainees were currently being interrogated and would introduce to justice soon.

Some time back, 25 children were rescued from being smuggled to the neighbouring country. They are still in security forces' custody. Their families had not yet asked about the children, said Mayar.

But one of the rescued children, Faizullah, told Pajhwok he was a resident the Marzak area of Paktia province, "No one has kidnapped or tried to smuggle us to Pakistan; were going to Pakistan for religious education."

The 19-year-old said all of the boys hailed from the same area. Their families were sending them to Pakistani seminaries for studying religious subjects, he explained. (Pajhwok)

(4) EU to Finance ...

financed by the European Union that is ready to donate 16 million euro (\$18 million) for that purpose, Mahbuba Abdulloeva, the press secretary of the EU Delegation to Tajikistan, told Sputnik. The bridge will connect the Farkhor District of Tajikistan with the northeastern Afghan province of Takhar.

"The project will be implemented by the Aga Khan Foundation and PATRIP Foundation, its budget amounts to 16

million euro donated by the European Union. The project will be implemented within five years," Abdulloeva said.

The bridge will replace an existing ferry crossing. The project also implies reconstruction of roads and stabilization of banks of the Panj river.

"The project is expected to boost development of the local private sector and markets promoting peace, sustainability and easing trade procedures in the region," Abdulloeva said.

There are currently six bridges connecting Tajikistan and Afghanistan with five of the having been constructed by the Aga Khan Foundation. (Sputnik)

(5) Most Daesh ...

significant damage on Daesh's Korasan chapter and killed most notorious commanders of the group, including the three leaders.

He said Daesh leader Abu Sayed was killed in an airstrike in Kunar province three days back. Sayed was the third leader of the terrorist organisation killed in the last year, he added.

The NATO commander said they conducted operations against the ISIS in every part of Afghanistan – mostly in Nangarhar, Kunar and Jawzjan provinces.

Nicholson promised military action against Daesh would continue in Afghanistan until the last rebel was eliminated. He claimed most of Daesh militants were foreigners.

Nicholson assured NATO would work together with Afghan security forces for the elimination of the insurgent outfit. (Pajhwok)

(6) Noor Harshly ...

particularly pointing towards the deadly attack on Salim Izadyar's funeral in Kabul last month.

Speaking during a gathering for the first after the agreement for formation of a new political coalition, Noor said the government, specifically the chief executive failed to ensure security of the ordinary people during the protests who were shot dead and even run over by the armored vehicles.

Noor said the chief executive has particularly failed to ensure the right of those people who had once casted votes in his favor in the elections.

In other parts of speech, Noor said a major conspiracy is being orchestrated against the Jamiat-e-Islami party and its allies and the last month's attack on the funeral Salim Izadyar, the son of the deputy chairman of the Senate House, was plotted to eliminate the party's leaders.

He said the deployment of four suicide bombers on the funeral ceremony remains questionable as even the chief executive who is a member of the security council, failed to ensure security for an important event.

Noor also added that the coalition among Jamiat-e-Islami, Junbish-e-Millie, and Wahdat Islami will be announced in capital Kabul in the near future. (Tolonews)

(7) Watchdogs ...

partnership with Afghanistan.

Participants endorsed the ambitious reform agenda presented by the Afghan government, where they undertook to ensure continued international political and financial support for Afghanistan over the next four years. The total sum committed by the international community was US\$15.2 billion.

"There is a need for a new strategy to be formed which is helpful to implement long term and short term programs and move forward with work on the basis of this strategy," said Sayed Ghulam Hussain Fakhri, head of HOOAC.

At the summit, Afghanistan was asked to do more to tackle corruption in exchange for continued international financial cooperation.

"Absence of the strategy means that government has no plan to fight corruption in the future; unfortunately it has not been included into government's priority list so far," said IWA chief Sayed Ekram Afzali.

But, government said it is committed to fighting graft.

"The government has been undertaking clear programs to fight corruption; currently work is being done in five ministries which generate the highest revenue and five other institutions which have the highest expenditures," said President Ashraf Ghani's spokesman Shahhussain Murtazawi.

Critics have said the lack of a clear anti-corruption policy would undermine government's anti-corruption efforts. Poor leadership, lack of transparency and accountability are apparently among the key elements behind the rise in corruption. (Tolonews)

(8) Anti-Graft ...

need for access to information so that civil society could raise its voice for an end to corruption. Accurate information was needed to mount pressure on the government in the interest of the people,

he argued.

Karokhel urged civil society organisations to share information about the government's wrong attitude and illegal policies in time with the media. It was media responsibility to inform the people regarding the government's illegal steps, he remarked.

The Pajhwok director believed civil society's coordination with media was vital, having huge advantages on certain occasions. Thought media, civil society could reach out to a huge number of people who could benefit from the information. In this way, he said, powerful individual might be pressurised.

Another important task of the media was to enhance public awareness, he said, urging news outlets to educate the people on democratic ideals – a fundamental right of the people. The media provides a platform for general dialogue, observation, scrutiny on key public interest issues.

Democracy International (DI)-Afghanistan, a research-based anti-corruption project, successfully culminated with the national conference on its goals and achievements on June 30, a statement from the organisation said.

The project was implemented through research reports and its purpose was to highlight corruption within the government machinery. The objective was to inform the Afghan community and international stakeholders about corruption through the provision of research reports.

Corruption in Afghanistan is perhaps the biggest national security threat faced by Afghans; media and civil society have not been able to provide effective and efficient services to the citizens, despite their diligent efforts. While security threats are alarming, the invisible destructive power of corruption affected the lives of millions.

Research reports focused on government services such as getting licences for small businesses, 12th class certificates, identity cards, tax payments, land-related documents and attestation of papers at foreign ministry,

Rampant corruption was seen in the processes, according to the reports, which specifically highlighted the situation in Kabul, Herat and Nangarhar provinces.

Each report contained numbers, figures and cases of corruption, providing information from various angles, including the victims, government officials and the departments responsible for improper services to the public.

Research reports have been published on the main website of Pajhwok, which then surfaced in other sources such as news websites and print media, audios and videos. Over a million users of Pajhwok's Facebook page also benefited from the reports.

In addition to research reports on the anti-corruption drive, Pajhwok published articles of prominent authors on corruption, highlighting multiple problems faced by people in getting government services.

Short documentaries, images and sounds of relevant sources were part of the project aimed at raising awareness among the people about corruption. Video images were captured from proceedings of government services in health, education, business, land distribution and other areas.

At the conference, once again, a round table will be followed up on the achievements of civil society organisations in the fight against corruption and the struggle to promote accountability of different publications. (Pajhwok)

(9) Balkhi Asserts ...

predecessors.

Balkhi received the Wolesi Jirga's vote of confidence in April, 2015 for the slot of education minister. However, he was impeached by the house in November, 2016 for failing to spend 70 percent of his ministry's development annual budget. Balkhi is currently continuing his job as acting education minister.

He said a list of the halted projects had been prepared and submitted to the president.

For completion of work on the mentioned projects, \$9 million was needed and the MoE had many times asked the Ministry of Finance for it; however, there was no positive response received in this regard, he concluded. (Pajhwok)

(10) 114 Students ...

and the medical sciences faculty is one of the main faculties in the university that had major achievements moving forward.

He also added that efforts are underway to improve the quality of education in the other faculties of the university as well.

The deputy head of Nangarhar University Abdul Nasir Kamawal and other university officials called on the graduates to further improve their education in the field of medical sciences and not only suffice to the degree they have obtained from the medical faculty. They also urged the graduates to do

their best to provide health care services to the people. (KP)

(11) Civil Society ...

that economic mafia, monopoly of power, local powerful individuals, illegal armed men and weakness of security organs were the reasons of deteriorating insecurity in Nangarhar.

He accused local powerful individuals and some figures in central government of monopolizing Nangarhar administration and creating problems for business. "Presence of illegal armed men in Nangarhar shows that local and Kabul officials have connections with them," he said.

He said 17 districts of the province were currently faced with high security threat. Sial also criticized the claims of Ministry of Defense (MoD) that said it defeated Daesh militants in Nangarhar.

Daesh militants have reached to gates of Jalalabad and they are more active in five districts of the province compare to the past, he said.

Abdul Sattar Hayat, head of the Pashayee Unity Council and a member of Nangarhar Social Council, said international forces and the local government was supporting Daesh fighters.

He voiced on the government to let people of the eastern region to improve their security themselves if it could not serve people.

AYCM presented a resolution letter in which the government was asked to pay attention for Nangarhar security and remove and sentence security officials.

Governor's spokesman, Attaullah Khogyani, said the local government had put strict measures for improving Jalalabad and districts security situation.

He said that pillion motorcycle riding and vehicles with tinted glasses were banned and a campaign was also underway against irresponsible gunmen.

About recent security incidents in Nangarhar, he said the incidents were not very serious as some of them happened due to domestic violence and personal enmity.

He said that some civil society activists were directed by others to express security situation worse. (Pajhwok)

(12) New Party ...

(society) decided to form and announce Mehwar-e-Mardum-e-Afghanistan party as a political opposition in order to get [the country] out of the current crisis," said Nabil.

Spanta also addressed supporters and said the NUG's foreign policy was a failure and has distanced Afghanistan from its allies.

"Bloody suppression and using force against legal a demonstration of Uprising for Change Movement and as a result the demonstration turned deadly; such moves by government have not happened in Afghanistan's recent history," said Spanta.

"Taliban has not become powerful, terrorists have not become powerful, all these are because of government's inability [to resolve the crisis]," said Amir Mohammad Akhundzada, a former Jihadist.

As the next presidential election approaches, new political parties and coalitions emerge as individuals work to gain political power.

"Our presence in the political scene is not to challenge the National Unity Government over power division, gaining seats or political power, but we want to end the wrong and deceptive politics and corruption. We want to put an end to the trend where a specific circle uses government facilities to maintain their own interests," Nabil added.

"Stopping independence in decision making and transferring of national political decisions to representatives of foreign countries in Afghanistan was the first dangerous diversion - and abandonment of national identity and leadership of the Afghan people ...," Spanta added. Members of the new party said those individuals who have not been accused of discrimination and human rights violations and who do not want to gain a seat in government are welcome to join the party.

The next presidential elections are scheduled to be held in 2019. (Tolonews)

(13) Batikot District ...

government has paid nothing for the protection and cultivation of the land. He recalled they had collected 42 million afghanis in revenue from the farms.

The district chief, Niamatullah Noorzai, hoped the kinnow farms would help generate work opportunities for resident of Batikot and Ghanikehel.

He said residents of the locality were happy to see the development of orchards and wanted the fruit to be dispatched to other parts of the country. He added Batikot people produced and sold watermelon and melon in the summer and would be happy to sell kinnow in the winter season. (Pajhwok)

(14) Troops Set...

and six others were wounded," he said

adding that "there are no civilian casualties. Our priorities are to prevent civilian casualties."

Zwak also said that foreign troops are supporting the Afghan security forces by carrying out airstrikes on the affected area.

"Our operation is moving a little slowly because of mines that have been placed by the insurgents along the roads. So far we have defused 150 mines but by the end of the day we will take control of the district," he said.

TOLONews reporter, Abdullah Hamim who is with the security forces says "the mines are a key issue for the security forces and [in addition to mines] they have recovered explosive devices and weapons during the operation." (Tolonews)

(15) Thousands Storm ...

He said forest guards were limited and could not prevent the large number of people from attacking the jungle.

Qasimi said pistachio jungles were national asset and collecting the nuts illegally was a crime.

He said harvesting pistachios before reaching maturity led to a 50 percent decrease in the yield. A ripened pistachio has more weight compared to the un-ripened.

Mohammad Aslam, a resident of Takhti-Rustum village of Aibak, the provincial capital, said: "When I heard the pistachio is ripening and people prepared to storm its jungles, I along with eight other persons came by our car near the jungles then three days ago and we started collecting the fruit last evening when other people did so."

He said he collected 35 kilograms of pistachio. Zargul, a resident of Shalako area of Aibak city, said he collected 70 kilograms of pistachio from Hazara Mazari Jungles. He said a kilogram of pistachio cost 1,000 afghanis in Aibak city.

According to the provincial agriculture and livestock department, more than 21,000 acres of pistachio jungles are available in Samangan. Samangan pistachio is exported to Pakistan, India and European countries. (Pajhwok)

(16) 'Skate Girls ...

laughter, your preconceptions drop away.

You realize that however unusual it may seem, they're doing what comes naturally to them. As with girls anywhere in the world, once you give them the chance to do something they love, each one begins to discover her own personality, her sense of style and how to express it." (Agencies)

(17) 16 Taliban ...

activities for years. Finally, he said, they realised their mistake.

Separately, Badghis governor's spokesman said a 6-member militant group, led by Sami also joined peace process in Qadis district. He said they were involved in subversive activities in Qadis.

Over the past few years, Taliban fighters have been joining the peace process but the war in Afghanistan has not abated but the fighting has escalated in recent years. (Pajhwok)

(18) 13 Rebels Slain, ..

clashed with security forces and uprising group members in Qirma area of Balchergah district; however, they faced strong resistance and as a result six rebels were killed and nine injured, Baidar said.

He added as many as 20 security personnel and public uprising members suffered casualties and a civilian was slightly wounded during the gun battle.

Uprising group commander, Haji Hesuamuddin, said Damla Yousaf Haqyar--a notorious Taliban commander--was also among the dead. Security personnel drove the militants away from the areas, he added.

But Damla Yousaf Haqyar in a telephonic conversation told Pajhwok that he escaped unhurt and only one of their fighters was killed and three others wounded during the firefight.

Haqyar notified of staging an attack within a week to capture Khwaja Sabezposh, Sherin Tagab and Dawlatabad districts.

On the other hand, Baidar also confirmed the Maimana-Andkhoy Highway was under threat from the mentioned districts, creating concerns for commuters. A security official, who declined to be named, said two uprising group commanders were also killed and a third wounded by Taliban insurgents, adding a village had fallen to the rebel group as well. (Pajhwok)

(19) 5 of a ...

from the area. They are currently under treatment.

The provincial government and police department refused to comment on the airstrike, which came two days after 20 civilians suffered casualties in a similar incident in the Sajwal area of the city. (Pajhwok)