

(1) A Possible Peace...

next leader of Afghanistan who will get his mandate from the people of Afghanistan through a democratic process.

In a question about Taliban's "clear bid" to restore an Islamic emirate in Afghanistan, Ghani said that "emirates was never accepted by the people of Afghanistan" and that "it was imposed by force".

He said the Loya Jirga, the Grand Council, held in April, has endorsed the notion of the republic.

Ghani said that based on formal figures, of nearly 400 districts, only 22 are under the Taliban control. "The Taliban do not control a single city," Ghani said.

Ghani said that the idea of establishing an interim government is "non-sense" and that "no government has the right, democratically elected government has the right to dissolve itself".

"By what authority will an interim government be created?" Ghani asked.

The idea of establishing an interim government to prevent a power gap in the country was suggested by a group of presidential candidates back in May.

President Ghani's term has ended on May 22 based on the Constitution but the Supreme Court extended his term until the upcoming presidential elections. (Tolo news)

(2) Nearly 150 Students ...

he said, adding the victims were evacuated to hospital.

Abdul Wahid Wahid, acting director of the civil hospital, said several students were discharged after receiving first medical aid.

He informed the reason behind the incident could not be ascertained due to lack of facilities at the hospital. (Pajhwok)

(3) Lawmakers ...

The seven commissions include telecommunications, culture, public health, youths, justice, environment and nationally economy.

The financial, budgetary, internal security, complaints hearing, telecommunication commissions, defence, natural resources, women affairs, human rights, health, sports, central audit, counternarcotics, privileges and impunity of lawmakers, legislative affairs and Kochi affairs commissions are yet to be elected.

However, a number of lawmakers on Monday claimed the election of these commissions could not be held because selling and buying of lawmakers votes was underway.

Kuchi tribe lawmaker Mirwais Balkhi said those who had money could become chairmen of the parliamentary bodies. He claimed one vote was sold for 30000 dollars in the telecom commission.

Lawmaker Shinkai Karokhel from Kabul said it was unfortunate that money was considered instead of one's leadership abilities.

"I don't know the price of a vote and no one could dare to offer me bribe, but evidence shows rich people obtained the chairmanship."

Without naming anyone, lawmaker from Khost province Kamal Nasir Osoli claimed more than 200 lawmakers had sold their votes for 10000 to 20000 dollars during the election of commissions' administrative boards. Outspoken lawmaker Ramazan Bashardost lamented that votes were cast in election of commissions on the basis of money, ethnic and political affiliations. (Pajhwok)

(4) No Clear Roadmap ...

This comes a day after Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah warned that the upcoming presidential elections should lead the country towards stability, not a crisis, as he stressed on

transparency in the electoral process. Abdullah warned that the country will fall into an "unbearable tragedy" if the problems of 2014 presidential elections were repeated in the upcoming polls, scheduled for September 28.

On Monday, the election commission issued credential letters to the presidential candidates with one of the candidates, Ghulam Farooq Nijrabi, refused to receive the letter, saying he will not trust transparency of the election process unless systematic reforms are brought in the election management body of the country. (Tolo news)

(5) Security Situation ...

This comes as security officials said last week that three districts in Herat, two districts in Badghis, six districts in Ghor and the outskirts of the city of Farah have witnessed heavy clashes between security forces and the Taliban in recent weeks. (Tolo news)

(6) Concerns Intensify ...

Khalid Mohmand, an MP from Logar province.

"A bomb was dropped on the mosque where only a few Taliban members and more civilians killed," said Abdubaqi Rasheed, a resident of the area.

Recently, the Afghan military has strengthened their airstrikes for what is called targeting the Taliban's shelters but the Ministry of Defense confirms that rarely the civilians incur losses as the result of these operations.

"We increase our efforts based on the plan of Khalid's operation to lessen the civilians' casualties into zero," said Fawad Aman, the Deputy Speaker of the Defense Ministry.

Meanwhile, the statistics show that 600 civilians have been killed as the result of the war over the past three months.

However, the government and the Taliban blame each other for the growth of civilians' casualties.

At the same time, the Doha intra-Afghan summit participants who had stressed on reducing of the civilians' casualties warn of the horrible result of the war exacerbation.

"The idea of imposing military pressure is not right. The strategy of intensifying the war should be put aside while the political opportunity has been provided for solving the Afghan war," said Salaam Zaief, a participant of the Doha intra-Afghan summit.

This comes as the civilians' casualties have increased across the country in recent months. (ATN)

(7) Taliban Capture ...

commander for the Keran wa Minjan district was also wounded in the nighttime fire.

Farhat without going into details said Taliban militants also seized 30 security forces, workers, weapons, vehicles and ammunition of the mine and took them with themselves.

The Taliban have taken control of several parts of the district but efforts were under way to drive them away, the district chief concluded.

Gulalai Akbari, a Meshrano Jirga member from Badakhshan, told today's session that the Keran wa Minjan district fell to militants after security forces did not receive reinforcement late Monday.

Kamil Bek Hussaini, another senator, also confirmed the Taliban had overrun the district. He urged security forces to recapture the district as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, Nek Mohammad Nazari, the spokesman for the Badakhshan governor, told Pajhwok that he could not confirm whether the district and security forces guarding the lapis lazuli mine had been captured by militants or not.

The Taliban also confirmed taking

control of two security check-posts in Khash district of the province.

The group spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the fighters confiscated weapons and ammunition from the captured check-points in Khash district.

Mujahid also confirmed the lapis lazuli mine had been captured along with 37 security forces guarding the deposit. (Pajhwok)

(8) Afghanistan Invests ...

"In addition, we will attract Afghan partners to cooperation with Azerbaijan," he said. "All conditions are being created to attract foreign investors in [various sectors] in Azerbaijan, for example, these are technology parks, industrial production and others."

He added that all these opportunities aimed at strengthening the economic component of trade relations with potential partners are the result of radical reforms that continue in Azerbaijan. (Trend)

(9) District Chief ...

Abdul Maroof Khairkhwah termed the allegation as a conspiracy against him and said the Australian woman arrived in Badakhshan along with her family almost two months back through Tajikistan.

He said so far the Australian tourist had registered no complaint with any Afghan official but the complaint had been dispatched from Tajikistan. According to him, Tajikistan wanted to reduce the number of tourists visiting Pamir.

A delegation has been constituted to investigate the issue. Findings of the probe would be shared with the media, promised the official. (Pajhwok)

(10) 25 Rebels Killed...

Gul Rahman, a resident of the area, said a clash took place between the security forces and Taliban. Later on, he said, an airstrike took place when the rebels were collecting the bodies of their associates.

He said 20 Taliban and four civilians were killed and 10 others wounded in the airstrike.

But Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said the airstrike targeted a mosque where 25 civilians were killed and 10 wounded. (Pajhwok)

(11) Fighting Intensifies...

Abdullah Afghan, a resident of Maroof, told Pajhwok summer was the season of fruits but, unfortunately, conflict had intensified this year.

He said if the fighting continued farmers could not transport their fruits to the market.

He added people were tired of ongoing conflict and looking forward to peace.

Security operations were carried out in Kandahar before the arrival of the summer. (Pajhwok)

(12) Xi Sends...

Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and head of the Publicity Department of the CPC Central Committee, at a symposium on the anniversary held at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Tuesday morning.

The China Federation of Literary and Art Circles and the China Writers Association, with 135,000 and 12,000 individual members respectively, were both founded in July 1949. (Xinhua)

(13) Erdogan Hails...

mentioned the failed Patriot deal in an interview on Sunday, saying that Turkey went with the Russian system because "we need to have alternatives."

In choosing the Russian alternative, Erdogan risked the ire of Washington. Purchasing the missiles opens Turkey up to sanctions under CAATSA, a 2017 act that, among other things, can be used to penalize US allies for "transactions" with the Russian defense sector. The Turkish

leader dismissed the threat of sanctions on Sunday, however, telling reporters that he believed President Donald Trump will "find the middle ground" and waive economic penalties.

The US has also threatened to exclude Turkey from its F-35 jet fighter program, claiming operating it alongside the S-400 would allow Moscow to learn the stealth fighter's secrets.

Washington has remained tight-lipped about potential retaliation, however government sources reportedly told Bloomberg on Saturday that sanctions will be applied later this week, avoiding the political symbolism of punishing Erdogan on the anniversary of the 2016 coup. (RT)

(14) China Welcomes...

Donald Trump tweeted in December that he was "certain" he would discuss arms control with his Russian and Chinese counterparts "at some time in the future."

In May, Trump claimed that Beijing "would very much like to be part" of a three-way deal with the US and Russia, going so far as to say that the Chinese were "more excited about it than [about] trade."

Former US diplomat Jim Jatras told RT in April that it seemed unlikely that China would agree to talks, given Washington's record for tearing up past agreements, such as the Iran nuclear deal and the INF (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces) Treaty. (RT)

(15) Italian Police...

operation, an air-to-air missile in perfect working order and used by the Qatari army was seized," police said in a statement.

The suspects had tried to sell the missile via conversations with people on the WhatsApp message system, according to The New York Times. (Fox News)

(16) Macron Vows...

goods in November, prompting Belgrade to say that the talks would not continue until the decision was revoked.

"Events in the last few months are worrying us and decisions contrary to agreements should be revoked," Macron told reporters after meeting with Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic.

"It is our responsibility to provide necessary support to reach an agreement," Macron added.

The north of Kosovo, which has a significant ethnic Serb population that remains loyal to Belgrade, has in recent days protested against a tariff that has cut off the flow of Serbian goods to the region.

Kosovo says it will not lift the tariffs until Belgrade recognises its independence, while Serbia won't hold a dialogue talk until the levy is dropped.

Macron, the first French president to visit Serbia in 18 years, later surprised a crowd of thousands in Belgrade by speaking in Serbian.

In front of a monument devoted to French-Serbian friendship in the city's medieval fortress Kalemegdan, he called on Serbians to "be brave" and "seek a compromise".

Macron and Merkel have been trying to restart dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia for around a year, calling off a planned summit in July in Paris after no progress was made at a previous Berlin meeting in April. (AFP)

(17) North Korea...

At the dramatic June 30 meeting between North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and U.S. President Donald Trump, Trump crossed the border dividing the North and South, becoming the first sitting U.S. president to set foot in North Korean territory. The leaders agreed in closed-door talks to resume nuclear diplomacy that had been stalled since their

failed second summit in Vietnam in February.

Despite the seeming mini-breakthrough, there has been little public progress since. North Korea wants widespread relief from harsh U.S.-led sanctions in return for pledging to give up parts of its weapons program, but the United States is demanding greater steps toward disarmament before it agrees to relinquish the leverage provided by the sanctions.

Amid the diplomatic jockeying, North Korea said Tuesday that upcoming regular summertime U.S.-South Korean military drills are forcing it to rethink whether it should be committed to the promises it has made to the United States. It cited its moratorium on nuclear and missile tests and other steps aimed at improving ties with Washington.

The statement said Trump vowed to suspend military drills with South Korea during his first and third meetings with Kim, but the planned summertime drills with Seoul and the deployment of weapons in the South show that Washington is not fulfilling that promise. "With the U.S. unilaterally reneging on its commitments, we are gradually losing our justifications to follow through on the commitments we made with the U.S. as well," said the statement, carried by the North's official Korean Central News Agency. (AP)

(18) UAE Oil...

The Riah, a 190-foot oil tanker, typically made trips from Dubai and Sharjah on the UAE's west coast before going through the strait and heading to Fujairah on the UAE's east coast.

However, something happened to the vessel after 11 p.m. on Saturday when it stopped transmitting its location with tracking data shows its last position pointing toward Iran.

Capt. Ranjith Raja of the data firm Refinitiv told The Associated Press on Tuesday that the tanker hadn't switched off its tracking in three months of trips around the UAE.

"That is a red flag," Raja said.

Oil tankers have previously been targeted as the Persian Gulf region took center stage in a crisis over Iran's unraveling nuclear deal with world powers.

Recently, Iran has inched its uranium production and enrichment over the limits of its 2015 nuclear deal, trying to put more pressure on Europe to offer it better terms and allow it to sell its crude oil abroad.

However, those tensions also have seen the U.S. send thousands of additional troops, nuclear-capable B-52 bombers and advanced fighter jets into the Mideast. Mysterious attacks on oil tankers and Iran shooting down a U.S. military surveillance drone has added to the fears of an armed conflict breaking out.

Iranian officials have not said anything publicly about the ship, nor have officials in the UAE. The U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet, which oversees Mideast waters, declined to immediately comment.

The ship's registered owner, Dubai-based Prime Tankers LLC, told the AP it had sold the ship to another company called Mouj Al-Bahar. A man who answered a telephone number registered to the firm told the AP it didn't own any ships.

Separately, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said Tuesday his country will retaliate over the seizure of an Iranian supertanker carrying 2.1 million barrels of light crude oil. The vessel was seized with the help of British Royal Marines earlier this month off Gibraltar.

Khamenei called the seizure of the ship "piracy" in a televised speech Tuesday. (Fox News)