

## Quote of the Day

The hardest thing about any political campaign is how to win without proving that you are unworthy of winning.

Adlai E. Stevenson Jr.

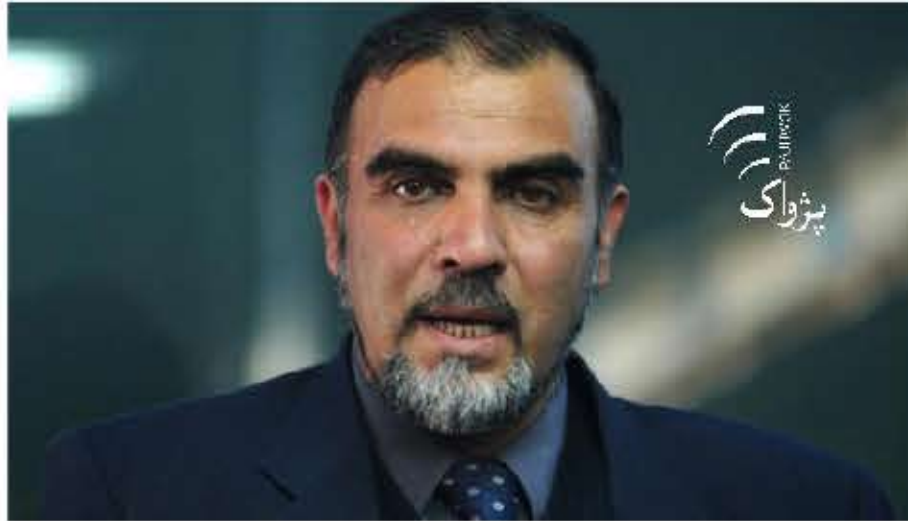
# Elections sans Reforms Meaningless: Reform Panel

KABUL - The Electoral Reform Commission on Thursday said holding parliamentary elections before bringing reforms to the system would be meaningless.

Speaking to reporters here, Sidiqullah Tawhidi, the panel's deputy head, said the commission was not an advisory body and that its members had been divided into two groups.

The first group would recommend amendments to the election law and the second would work on the structure, responsibilities and powers of electoral bodies.

He said members of the commission would introduce new ways on how to prevent fraud and rigging in parliamentary, presidential, provincial and district council elections.



Earlier, the Electoral Reform Commission formally started its work on Wednesday, when Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah said the

panel would not be a symbolic body because the unity government remained committed to electoral reforms.

Electoral reforms are a major point of the US-brokered agreement between President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah on a national unity government.

Four months back, lawmaker Shukria Barakzai was appointed by President Ghani to head the electoral reform panel but the CEO disagreed with her appointment. On the eve of Eid, President Ghani decreed establishing the commission and appointing its members.

Shah Sultan Akefi is the head, Sediqullah Tawhidi his deputy, Kawoon Kakar, Mohammad Ali Amiri, Abdul Qadeer Karyab, Bashir Farooq, Asadullah Sadati, ... (More on P4)...(1)

## WH Finalizing Plan to Close Guantanamo Prison



WASHINGTON - The White House (WH) is in the "final stages" of drafting a plan to close the contentious Guantanamo Bay prison and will submit it for review by lawmakers, spokesman Josh Earnest said. President Barack Obama made the closure of the controversial prison in Cuba a priority when he took office in 2009, but the plan has faced numerous setbacks, including Congress blocking the transfer of detainees to US prisons. "The administration is in fact in the final stages of drafting a plan to safely and responsibly (close) the prison at Guantanamo Bay and to present that to Congress," Earnest said. "That has been something that our national security officials have been working on for quite some time, ... (More on P4)...(2)

## Kabul to Host Turkmenistan-Afghanistan Political Consultations

BISHKEK - Political consultations between the foreign ministries of Turkmenistan and Afghanistan will be held in Kabul on July 27-28, reported Trend.

Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan Rashid Meredov will lead the country's delegation.

Turkmenistan previously expressed readiness to offer its political space for holding inter-Afghan peace dialogue under the auspices of the UN and to participate in development of the new political and diplomatic mechanisms of resolving this issue.

The talks were held during the meeting of Turkmenistan's President Gurbanguly Berdimuhhammadov with special representative of Afghan President for CIS states Mohammad Shaker Kargar.

Berdimuhhammadov said that Turkmenistan is interested in sustainable development of Afghanistan. Turkmenistan renders assistance to Afghanistan by supplying electricity and liquefied gas on preferential terms, constructing industrial and social facilities, regularly sending humanitarian aid to the population in border regions, says the statement. (AKI Press)

## MoFA Summons Pakistani Ambassador over Shelling



KABUL - Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) on Thursday summoned Pakistani Ambassador Syed Ibrar Hussain to his office to express his concern over the recent shelling by Pakistan of Afghanistan territory along the Durand line. At least four civilians were killed, including a woman, and two others were injured as a result of missile shelling on Nazyan district of Nangarhar province and Nari and Shegal districts of Kunar province. "Such attacks are in full contradiction with the principle of good neighborliness and against international recognized laws. This can damage the two countries friendly relations," said Deputy Foreign Minister Hikmat Khalil Karzai. During the meeting the deputy minister called such attacks a violation of sovereignty and integrity of Afghanistan and asked for Pakistan to put an end ... (More on P4)...(3)

## Region Should Extend All Support to Kabul: Haysom

MAIMANA - The United Nations top representative in Afghanistan on Thursday said regional countries should extend to Kabul their support in encountering terrorism which was not an Afghan problem, but a regional phenomenon.

Nicholas Haysom, the UN secretary general's special representative for Afghanistan and the world body's assistance mission (UNAMA) chief, was talking to reporters after meeting local officials in northern Faryab province's capital Maimana.

He praised Afghan security forces and said they had been largely able to stand ground albeit a very marked increase in the intensity of the conflict.

"But I would want to share with you that one of the issues I drew the attention of the (UN)



Security Council to was that it seemed to me that the countries of the region from which many of these fighters come, and the countries of the region to which many of them are going, are now fighting, as it were, their fight in Afghanistan." "And it seems to me proper that the region should be extending to Afghanistan all ... (More on P4)...(4)

## Campbell, Raheel Discuss Afghan-Pak Border Situation

KABUL - Commander Resolute Support Mission and United States Forces-Afghanistan Gen. John F Campbell and Pakistan Chief of Army Staff Gen. Raheel Sharif on Thursday discussed matters related to security situation along Pakistan and Afghanistan border region.

The two military leaders, who met in Rawalpindi where the Pakistani



army is headquartered, also discussed the ongoing reconciliation

process in Afghanistan, the Pakistani army's Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement.

Gen. Campbell acknowledged Pakistan's sincere efforts for facilitating Murree Peace talks held

recently in Pakistan, it said. Campbell ... (More on P4)...(5)

## Afghanistan's War Brought to Responsible End: Obama

WASHINGTON - U.S President Barack Obama this week addressed the 116th Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) convention in Pitts-



burgh, Pennsylvania, and said his country has recorded real growth due to strong American leadership, which serves as the foundation for their national security.

He said that it was through such leadership that they were able to use their power wisely - especially their military.

"That's why we refocused our fight in Afghanistan, pushed back the Taliban, trained up Afghan forces so they could take the lead for their own security."

He went on to say: "Today we can say that our combat mission in Afghanistan is over. We brought America's longest war to a responsible end. And we salute every member of this 9/11 generation who has ... (More on P4)...(6)

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## Fidai Asks US to Compensate Airstrike Victims' Kin

KABUL - The governor of central Logar province on Thursday asked US forces to compensate the families of Afghan National Army (ANA) troops killed and wounded in their airstrike in Baraki Barak district. Monday's airstrike that involved two US helicopters targeted an ANA outpost and killed eight soldiers and wounded six others, prompting President Ashraf Ghani to order an investigation into the incident. A press statement from the Logar governor's office said the president-appointed investigation team had held a meeting with Governor Halem Fidai and other officials in Pul-I-Alam, the provincial capital. At the meeting, Fidai de-

manded the foreign troops pay US \$50,000 each to families of the slain soldiers and US \$15,000 each to the injured ones in compensation. Ground Forces Commander Gen. Murad Ali Murad, who headed the investigation team, said they had held detailed meetings with ANA soldiers, other military and civil officials and local residents. The delegation would present its report to the president after completing its investigation. Fidai called for a thorough investigation into the airstrike and suggested allotting land plots to families of the slain and injured soldiers in their respective areas. The governor asked the Ministry of Defence to increase its own ... (More on P4)...(7)