

### (1) Afghans Sign \$68m...

in 100 air cargo flights from Afghanistan to New Delhi and Mumbai.

"We are planning to add more Indian cities such as Chennai and Hyderabad because we consider India as our largest market for agricultural and craft products," said Ahmadi.

"Our trade volume has increased tremendously in the last few years," said Afghan Ambassador to India Shaida Mohammad Abdali.

"The trade volume between India and Afghanistan has reached almost \$1 billion. But the demand is much more so we are looking for \$2 billion in trade by 2020," Abdali said during the trade mission.

The "Made in Afghanistan: Nature's Best" event is a follow-up to the USAID-supported "Passage to Prosperity" trade show that was held last September in New Delhi, where Afghan agricultural exporters made \$30 million in sales.

It also prepared Afghan exporters for the upcoming USAID-supported second-annual "Passage to Prosperity" Trade and Investment Show which will take place in Mumbai from September 12-15. The Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) and the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) also supported the "Made in Afghanistan: Nature's Best" event. (Tolo news)

### (2) President...

He said 27 provincial commissioners' appointments had previously been approved and the remaining had been named and would be sent to provinces soon.

These commissioners will scrutinize complaints before sending them to the central headquarters for a final decision thereon. (Pajhwok)

### (3) Afghan Clerics...

not possible when there is corruption. Corruption has dried the roots of this nation," said Hamidi. Religious scholars meanwhile said fighting corruption needs action not slogans.

"Let's earn honor for our country, for the religious scholars, for our leaders and let's get rid of this situation," said Waezizada Behsudi, a religious scholar.

In February, Transparency International's annual Corruption Perceptions Index ranked Afghanistan as the 4th most corrupt country in the world in 2017, trailing only Syria, South Sudan and Somalia.

The study put Afghanistan in 4th place among 180 countries in the world.

The index also highlighted that the majority of countries are making little or no progress in ending corruption, "while further analysis shows journalists and activists in corrupt countries risk their lives every day in an effort to speak out".

The index, which ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and businesspeople, uses a scale of 0 to 100, where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean.

This year, the index found that more than two-thirds of countries scored below 50, with an average score of 43.

Afghanistan however only scored 15. (Tolo news)

### (4) Political Parties...

system, the use of biometric system for a transparent election and third, a strong monitoring process by political parties for all electoral processes. Government is trying to kill the time," said Bashir Ahmad Tahyanj, a spokesman for Islamic National Movement of Afghanistan.

The IEC has already said that it is too late to address the demands of

the parties.

"It was decided to hold another meeting on Monday to discuss issues around a change in the system and its impacts on the October elections. The issue will be assessed by the commission and a report of it will be sent to government," said Sayed Hafizullah Hashemi, the IEC spokesman.

Meanwhile, electoral monitoring organizations said groups are trying to manipulate the upcoming elections.

"As far as we have assessed, some individuals are trying to drive the elections towards a crisis. Meanwhile, other efforts are being made to manipulate the elections. These two are big concerns for us," said Mohammad Naeem Ayubzada, head of Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan.

This comes after Afghanistan's main political parties on July 14 claimed the current voter registration process was riddled with irregularities which would lead to a crisis in the country.

The remarks were made at a gathering in Kabul involving Jamiat-e-Islami, Hizb-e-Islami, Hizb-e-Wahdat-e-Islami, Mahaz-e-Milliy party, Islamic National Movement of Afghanistan and other parties. Members of the parties held discussions on issues related to the elections and then issued a statement in which they called on government and the Independent Election Commission to suspend the voter registration process and all other electoral activities.

The political parties lodged a range of demands.

They called for changes to be brought to the electoral system, the suspension of the voter registration process, rolling out a biometric system for voter registration and declaring each province a single constituency.

According to the IEC, so far around nine million people have registered to vote in the upcoming parliamentary and district council elections. (Tolo news)

### (5) Afghan-Pak...

in Afghanistan.

According to Rahimi, Imran Khan was in a position to form a "weak" coalition government and thus he would peruse the agenda of military for political sustainability.

Rahimi, however, said that the Afghan government should continue its old policy and globally promote Pakistan's careless behavior and non-cooperative role in Afghan affairs.

Shafiq Hamdard, another political expert, said Pakistani politicians after reaching powers had always given positive comments about Afghanistan.

He recalled Pakistan's first prime minister Liaqat Ali Khan, former president and military dictator Gen. Ayub Khan, PPP founder Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, military dictator Gen. Zia-ul-Haq, PPP leader Benazir Bhutto, Nawaz Sharif and even Gen. Musharraf had publicly wished stability and development of Afghanistan when in power.

He said when Imran Khan would enter 'real politics,' his views and sincerity would change regarding Afghanistan.

In his post elections address to the nation, Imran Khan about Afghanistan said: "They have suffered most in the 'war on terror', and before that in the Afghan jihad. Peace in Afghanistan means peace in Pakistan."

Imran Khan added he envisioned 'open borders' with Afghanistan reminiscent to those within the European Union.

But Hamdard said Imran Khan's notion was not much strong and other political parties would influence his policies.

His government would work to bring peace to Afghanistan, Imran promised after declaring victory in the elections and also vowed to

strengthen ties with Saudi Arabia, Iran and China.

Pakistan and India needed to sit across the negotiating table to address bilateral issues, Khan had said. (Pajhwok)

### (6) Barmak Rejects...

spokesman Sunatullah Timor said Taliban stormed KhwajaGhar district just before 8pm local time.

On Friday night he appealed for reinforcement troops.

Some sources said however the district has fallen to the militants. The sources said the lack of reinforcements was a key reason behind the fall of the district to the Taliban.

However, the Interior Ministry's spokesman Najib Danish also rejected the claims and said Khwaja-Ghar district has not fallen to the Taliban and that reinforcement troops are on their way to Takhar. (Tolo news)

### (7) Kabul Exhibition...

have been painted with fingers and the remaining are painted with brush," said Rustami.

The visitors said they are amazed by seeing the good artworks produced by female artists.

"I like all the paintings, they are beautiful," Najiba, a visitor, said.

"This is good. I was surprised seeing these paintings," Abdul Samand, a visitor, said.

In a part of the exhibition, women have put on show their handicrafts and homemade foods.

"We organized the first exhibition for women under the theme of environment in cooperation with Kabul Municipality, fine arts institute, Sazman-e-AgahiNasl-e-Jawan and the UNDP," said Freshta Mowahid, an organizer of the exhibition. (Tolo news)

### (8) AFCO Licence...

around \$19 million was being operated by Helmandi, he said.

Helmandi provided some more copies to Pajhwok in support of his claims.

'Karzai gives land free to some people'

In this regard, Karzai says one meter square land was given to residents \$75 and \$78 who had deposited only installment each years ago.

But the clients gathered several times, saying their economic situation has worsened as compared to the past and they could not afford buying the plots and constructing homes, demanding a cut in the land price.

He says the company then helped them and reduced the price to \$40 one meter square on the condition that all installments would be deposited until August 2018.

The clients then started depositing money in the new bank account in Maiwand Bank because the previous accounts had been blocked due to not renewal of license and were not accessible.

"He (Helmandi) believed we would incur losses in this project, but we showed him documents that we will not face losses, but he did not accept it, now he calls the clients and say don't purchase the land," Karzai says.

About Helmandi's claims that Karzai has grabbed some joint property, Karzai adds: "We (Hashim Khan, Helmandi, Karzai) had been working in this company without taking salaries and I told them we will get lands instead of money."

"I give them the right to choose land of their choice and they did so, selecting better land than me and everyone has the right to sell or give it to someone," he continued.

He says they helped some people and provided them land free of cost, but Helmandi maintained he would count all the money. (Pajhwok)

### (9) 3 Police Posts Hit...

and the casualties resulted from a

brief clash between the public order police and commando forces. He confirmed one public order policeman was killed and another wounded in the incident.

Foreign forces have so far not commented on the incident. (Pajhwok)

### (10) Afghan Team...

and Hazratullah Zazai, have also been selected.

The cricketers to play in the ODI series are as follows: Mohammad Shahzad, Mohammad Jawed Ahmadi, Ehsanullah Jannat, Asghar Stanikzai, Samiullah Shinwari, Hashmatullah Shahidi, Najibullah Zadran, Nabi Isakhail, Gulbuddin Nayeb, Rashid Khan, MujibZadran, AftabAlam, Sayed Ahmad Shirzad, DawlatZadran and Wafadar Mohmand.

The players for the three T20 matches against Ireland are Shahzad-Mohammadi, Osman Ghani, HazratullahZazai, Samiullah Shinwari, Asghar Stanikzai, Nabi Isakhail, Shafiqullah Shafaq, Najib Zadran, Gulbuddin Nayeb, Rashid Khan, Mujib Zadran, Mirwais Ashraf, Aftab Alam and Farid Malik.

Members of the ACB selection committee said they will also select players for first class matches against Ireland from those who play well in a planned practice camp.

On the upcoming tour, Najibullah Zadran said: "Players will play with good spirit. We try to familiarize ourselves with the Irish climate, because the climate of Asia and Europe is different. We need to adapt to the pitches."

Afghanistan defeated Ireland by five wickets in March in a winner-takes-all Super Sixes game for a place at the World Cup.

Since then the two sides have played their inaugural Tests and are set to meet for the first time in the five-day arena in February next year.

Officials at the ABC said that after Afghanistan finishes its series with Ireland the team will head to United Arab Emirates to play in the Asia cup in its group with Sri Lanka and Bangladesh on September 15. (Tolo news)

### (11) Flour, ghee...

price also remains steady.

Abdul Hadi, a worker at Wazirabad fuel station in Kabul, said that one liter of petrol cost 55af and the same quantity of diesel 47af this week.

Ahmad Javid, a liquefied gas seller in Taimani area of Kabul, said the price of one kilogram of the commodity was stood at 60af.

Haji Fawad Ahmad Salehzada, a jeweler in Timor Shahi area of Kabul said that one gram of Arabian gold cost 2,350af and the same quantity of Russian variety 1,800af, no changes have recorded in the gold prices. (Pajhwok)

## Ex-Catalan Leader Returns to Belgium from Germany after Extradition Bid Fails

MADRID - Former Catalan leader Carles Puigdemont returned from Germany to Belgium on Saturday after Spain failed in an attempt to extradite him from Germany on charges of rebellion over an illegal declaration of independence.

Puigdemont said he would continue traveling around Europe to raise support for the cause of Catalan independence. He fled to Belgium in October after Madrid imposed direct rule on the region after his administration declared independence.

"This will not be my last stop, this is not the end of my journey," he told a press conference in Brussels held alongside current Catalan leader Quim Torra, who had traveled from Spain to greet him.

"I will travel around Europe to the four corners of the continent to defend our cause."

Puigdemont was arrested on March 25 at a petrol station in the northern German region of Schleswig-Holstein while returning to Belgium after a journey to Finland.

A German court ruled earlier this month that Puigdemont, 55, could be extradited to Spain to face a separate charge for misuse of public funds, but not for a more serious charge of rebellion. Under European law, that means Spain would have been barred from trying him on the more serious charge if the extradition were to proceed. The Spanish court rejected that proposal, lifting the arrest warrant altogether. The charges against Puigdemont and the five others remain in place however, meaning they would be arrested if they return to Spain.

Relations between Spain's central government in Madrid and the Catalan capital Barcelona have thawed in recent weeks, with Prime Minister Sanchez hosting cordial talks with Torra in Madrid earlier in July.

But Sanchez, who took office in June after his more hardline conservative predecessor Mariano Rajoy lost a confidence vote, has ruled out allowing any referendum on independence, saying it goes against Spain's constitution. (Reuters)

## PM's Words Mean Little to Fire-Stricken Greeks Standing on Ashes

ATHENS - Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras faced mounting criticism on Saturday after wildfires that killed at least 88 people plunged Greece into grief just as it was healing from years of painful bailouts.

Survivors and political opponents accused Tsipras and his government of insensitivity for not apologizing for Greece's deadliest blaze in memory and for failing to prevent the tragedy.

He cut short a visit to Bosnia on Monday night, rushing home hours after the killer blaze broke out near Athens. But falling off the radar for three days after that has infuriated some people.

"How does he plan to redeem this political responsibility? What does political responsibility mean?" a 79-year-old man standing in front of his burnt home told Skai TV.

Venting anger, survivors and political opponents want to see officials resign over the failure to prevent the disaster amid questions on why an evacuation did not take place.

Tsipras appeared on TV screens on Friday to chair a cabinet meeting after an official three days of mourning ended. Aides said he had been busy coordinating the disaster response.

He said he took "full political responsibility" for the disaster. But for those who survived the inferno, the words meant little.

"Words are nice ... but I want him to tell me and the people who perished, our friends ... whose fault it is, if not his. I've reached my limits."

The wildfire in Mati laid bare decades of ills of the Greek state - unlicensed building dotting the Greek landscape, tolerated by the state as governments turn a blind eye to non-compliance and eventually legalize built homes to win votes.

On Monday night, five hours after the fire had started, state TV showed Tsipras rushing from the airport to an operations center in Athens, asking ministers in a live broadcast what happened and how many personnel had been deployed to put out the flames. (Reuters)