

(1) Govt Hopes...

that Afghanistan will not be used as a stage by terrorist groups to threaten the U.S. and its allies. The Taliban insurgent group has repeatedly denied to meet with the Afghan government or accept a ceasefire. In return, Khalilzad says nothing is agreed until everything is agreed. (ATN)

(2) Wolesi Jirga...

its report to the house on Saturday, but it did not happen as a huge number of lawmakers were absent. Mirwais Yasini, a lawmaker from Nangarhar province, said: "On upcoming Monday, the photos archives will be checked and investigated again to find the controversial point of the issue."

But Khan Agha Rezaee, another lawmaker from capital Kabul, without providing details, said the archives had been investigated as per the law. "If we follow the law and principles, the issue would be solved soon."

However, outspoken lawmaker Ramadan Bashardust told media persons at the Wolesi Jirga hall that a number of legislators had hijacked the Wolesi Jirga for their personal interests. He said lawmakers received around 1.5 million afghanis per day in salaries and privileges but they were not doing their job. He added salaries of lawmakers should not be paid until they resolved the conflict over the speaker position. (Pajhwok)

(3) Voter Registration ...

allocated \$23 million for awareness on presidential elections but the election commission officials said the money will be invested in media ads.

The IEC's decision on removing the use of biometric system in voter registration was faced with criticism by members of electoral monitoring organizations who said that the decision will affect the transparency of the upcoming polls.

Some electoral observers said the Independent Election Commission lacks a clear strategy to ensure the transparency of the presidential elections. According to the election commission, the voter registration will be conducted from the beginning only in central Ghazni province and those who have registered last year will have to go through the process once again. (Tolo news)

(4) 'US-Funded ...

influential in all areas of modern Afghan life – in both the public and private sectors."

Prestigious Fulbright fellowships have been awarded to 76 of its graduates, a higher number than any other university worldwide, according to AUAF.

Babington acknowledged that the financial and management problems uncovered by investigators were serious, but he said that continued funding by the United States government, which underwrites most of the university's budget, was still under discussion. "USAID is in negotiations with AUAF for a possible extension through June 2020," he said.

On March 29, the university's board chairman, David Sedney, signed an administrative agreement that American government officials say they demanded.

In it, the university pledges to undertake substantial reforms in budgeting, management and oversight as a condition of future government funding, but admits to no wrongdoing. The New York Times obtained a copy of the agreement.

The agreement, according to the USAID inspector general, Ann Calvaresi Barr, "imposes robust mechanisms to monitor and verify steps that AUAF must take to continue to be entrusted with taxpayer dollars."

The special inspector for Afghanistan, as well as the inspector general's office of USAID, said they opened a joint criminal investigation into the university several years ago after they had been approached by a whistle-blower. But they said they found the university's records in such disarray that they were not able to make a criminal case against anyone.

Instead, last year, the investigators recommended suspension of the university from receiving future government funding. USAID instead decided on the administrative agreement, which investigators for both agencies said they agreed to reluctantly.

Sedney, a former Defense Department official and former president of the university who took over as board chairman after Farouki's departure,

played down the investigators' concerns.

"In the range of administrative agreements, ours is the mildest one. It's a regulatory proceeding. We were not suspended, no finding of fraud, no financial wrongdoing or requirement to pay back any money," he said.

He also objected to officials' characterization that the university had "lost more than \$63 million since 2012," as the special inspector for Afghanistan said in its latest report to Congress.

"AUAF has not 'lost' any money," Sedney said. "AUAF is a nonprofit organization that has spent all the money it has received from the US government."

Sedney also said government inspectors had failed to visit the university campus or interview key officials, including himself. He said the record-keeping problems were the result of the Taliban attack on the university, which forced it to move abruptly to a new, highly fortified campus.

"We welcome SIGAR or any other organization or individual to contact the university for a full, accurate description of what AUAF has produced through its responsible use of all funds it has received," he said, referring to the special inspector general for Afghanistan.

Sedney said the university had built a serious institution, with classrooms, dormitories, laboratories, computing facilities and other physical assets that will benefit Afghanistan for decades to come.

The report made no mention of these assets in the places where it discussed what the United States and Afghanistan have gained from the university's existence, he said.

The special inspector general, John Sopko, said that investigators from his office and USAID had examined 28 previous investigations and audits of the university.

When they sought further information from the university about money that was unaccounted for, he said, they encountered resistance – even to a subpoena from his office, in one case.

"In seven years of investigating government contractors and grant recipients in Afghanistan, this is one of the worst-run programs I have ever seen," Sopko said.

When his agency said the university had lost \$63 million, he said, it meant that record-keeping was so poor it was impossible to determine what had happened to that money, more than a third of the USAID and Defense Department grants to the university since it was founded in 2006.

"Suspension or debarment actions are serious. In the grant and aid world, that's considered to be the death penalty," Sopko said. "We really want this university to survive, but if it continues with this management style that everything is OK and there's nothing to worry about, it will fail."

USAID officials said that future funding of the university depended on it making substantial progress under the administrative agreement. (Pajhwok)

(5) ICC Prosecutor...

She also said the Taliban and other armed groups have killed more than 17,000 civilians since 2009, including some 7,000 targeted killings.

She further alleged that Afghan security forces have tortured prisoners at government detention centres.

If the court allows Bensouda to appeal, the process will likely take months.

Bensouda's November 2017 request to open an investigation said there is information that members of the US military and intelligence agencies "committed acts of torture, cruel treatment, outrages upon personal dignity, rape and sexual violence against conflict-related detainees in Afghanistan and other locations, principally in the 2003-2004 period". The alleged atrocities took place in all 34 of Afghanistan's provinces, with a smaller number of crimes alleged in Poland, Lithuania and Romania, where suspected members of the Taliban or al-Qaeda were held for questioning.

But the case triggered a strong backlash from the administration of US President Donald Trump. In April, the US revoked the entry visa of the prosecutor and has threatened to do the same against court personnel. The Taliban, which was removed from power by US-led forces in 2001, has been waging a bloody rebellion against the country's Western-backed government. (Aljazeera)

(6) MTN Group launches ..

The chatbot is an artificial intelligence guide that assists users to navigate MTN's MoMo services and provide other useful information. This innovation leverages messaging and artificial intelligence to drive customer engagement and enhance their MTN MoMo experience.

Commenting on the launch, MTN Group President and CEO, Rob Shuter said, "We are passionate about bringing the power of our mobile money solutions to more than 60 million customers across Africa over the next few years. Harnessing modern technologies like artificial intelligence can improve in scale, how MTN interacts with customers, enabling them to reach us anytime and anywhere, through a variety of channels including social networks and messaging applications. We can also harness the power of artificial intelligence to provide our customers with the right answers to their questions at the right time."

Shuter added, "We are committed to improving financial inclusion with a range of solutions aimed at addressing the needs of various market segments. While MTN has made great strides in these areas, we will continue working to deliver our vision for MTN to become one of the largest Fintech players across our footprint." (PR)

(7) Fruits, Grain, ...

of a proper market for selling the harvests are the main problem of the gardeners.

They said that 7 kilograms of the fruits like peach, black cherry, and apricot are sold around four US dollars.

"The apricot of Kunduz is the best apricot but the government is weak in terms of providing the opportunity for exporting the Kunduz fruits to other provinces," said Ajmal, a gardener in Kunduz.

In addition, the officials said that the several pests were threatening the wheat and several harmful insects were threatening the fruits but as a result of the measurements taken by the Agriculture Directorate and partner organization, the threats were solved. (ATN)

(8) Fallen Journalists ...

While 2018 Afghanistan was recognized as the deadliest country for journalists, this year also, media supporting organizations said, threats against reporters are serious.

Around 40 cases of violence against journalists were reported this year, according to figures by Afghanistan Journalists Safety Committee.

"Last year, we had nearly 90 cases and so far this year, we have recorded 40 cases. Violence (against journalists) has decreased compared to the last year," said Waheeda Faizi, a member of the committee.

"Lack of job security and lack of access to information are our concerns," said Zahra Sotooda, a Kabul-based journalist.

TOLOnews journalists Samim Faramarz and Ramiz Ahmadi also lost their lives in 2018.

Faramarz and Ahmadi were covering an explosion in Kabul's PD13 that a second blast happened and took their lives. (Tolo news)

(9) Dreaded ...

Governor Naqibullah Faiq told Pajhwok: "Locals informed me that Zikrullah had kidnapped four women. Subsequently, I ordered the security forces to arrest the abductor."

Habibullah Arbab, a resident of the area, confirmed Zikrullah was an infamous killer. He said the outlaw had also killed rural development director for Pashtoon Kot district.

Sanjar Nafeer, son of the slain Mohammad Babar, said: "Zikrullah killed my father and committed other heinous crime but no one moved to arrest him. After he kidnapped four women, police raided his house and killed him." (Pajhwok)

(10) 400 Soldiers

marking the first Red Arrow deployment to Afghanistan. The Wisconsin National Guard is planning a send-off ceremony for the 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry, and will release those details at a later date.

The Wisconsin National Guard has had several worldwide deployments. The nearly 400 soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry remain in Afghanistan and the Middle East, while more than 350 soldiers from the Milwaukee-based 1st Battalion, 121st Field Artillery returned from their deployment to the Middle East and Af-

ghanistan in May.

Another 25 soldiers from the 157th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade's Military Engagement Team returned from their Middle East deployment in February, and a team of soldiers from the 112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment also returned in February from its mission to the U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

In addition, soldiers from the 248th General Aviation Support Battalion returned from a Middle East deployment in September.

About 70 airmen from the Wisconsin National Guard's 128th Air Refueling Wing in Milwaukee completed a series of global deployments in October, and a group of Airmen from the 115th Fighter Wing are currently deployed in support of global contingency operations.

Operation Freedom Sentinel is the official name for the mission succeeding Operation Enduring Freedom in continuation of the global war on terrorism.

Operation Freedom Sentinel is part of the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission, which began in January 2015. (Monitoring Desk)

(11) Flour, Sugar,...

Service in Sara-i-Shahzada, said one US dollar was accounted for 79.70afis and 1,000 Pakistani rupees for 541afis against last week's 79.40afis and 540afis. (Pajhwok)

(12) Boris Johnson

The former minister successfully appealed to England's High Court to overturn the earlier ruling.

"We are quashing the decision of the district judge to issue the summonses," judge Michael Supperstone ruled. The decision left Marcus Ball -- a 29-year-old businessman who crowd-funded to pay for the proceedings against one of Britain's most famous politicians -- bitterly disappointed and contemplating an appeal.

"We've just given the green light to every politician to lie to us about our money for ever. That's a terrible idea that I refuse to accept," Ball told reporters outside the court in London.

"Mr Johnson MP, you do not have the right to lie to the public about how their money is being spent. Go on television and tell everybody what the truth is."

- £350 million dispute -

The £350 million membership price tag represented Britain's gross contribution to the 28-nation EU bloc.

But the net figure is much smaller because it also includes a budget rebate from Brussels as well as payments to Britain's public sector from EU coffers.

The official pro-Brexit campaign emblazoned the £350 million total on its red touring bus during the 2016 EU referendum.

The image became one of the lingering symbols of a campaign that left Britain as divided as it had been before the vote.

Johnson's lawyer Adrian Darbishire argued on Friday that the case was designed to stop Brexit from the start. "This case, on the face of it, represents political origins... in an area of public life that has never been subject to a court of law," he told the court. (AFP)

(13) Xi Highlights ...

marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, Xi said China, as the world's largest developing country and a responsible major country, has been unswervingly fulfilling its commitment to sustainable development and attached great importance to enhancing global cooperation on sustainable development.

The Chinese president recalled that he put forward the Belt and Road Initiative in 2013 to realize win-win cooperation and common development among countries, adding that the initiative, highly compatible with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in terms of goals, principles and implementation approaches, has received positive response and support from the international community.

At the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, which was successfully held in April in Beijing, all participating sides agreed to forge ahead with high-quality joint construction of the Belt and Road along a green, low-carbon and sustainable development path.

Calling Russia China's priority cooperation partner in all areas, Xi said jointly building the Belt and Road shares a similar philosophy with the Greater Eurasian Partnership proposed by Pu-

tin, adding that the two initiatives can support each other, facilitate each other and advance together to forcefully promote regional economic integration and realize common sustainable development.

Sustainable development answers to the common calls of most countries in the world, Xi said, laying out three areas where China and the rest of the world can work together in exploring a new path of sustainable development.

Firstly, we should stick to the principle of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits, and work together to create an open and pluralistic world economy, said Xi.

China will continue to expand opening-up, relax market entry rules and nurture a market environment featuring fair competition, he said.

China will push ahead the process of economic globalization, uphold the multilateral trade system, endeavor to solve the imbalance and inequality in global economic development, and create more opportunities for developing countries, he said. (Xinhua)

(14) Iran Rejects ...

sanctions relief in return for curbs on its nuclear programme.

Iran had until recently remained in full compliance with the deal, but with the remaining parties struggling to bypass US sanctions, Tehran has reaped few of the promised benefits.

In May, it dropped its adherence to certain limits on enrichment activities under the accord and gave an ultimatum to the remaining parties that it would ditch other commitments unless they delivered on promised sanctions relief. Trump's administration has also sought tighter controls on Iran's ballistic missile capabilities.

In comments published by the Washington Times on Friday, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo demanded that Iran bring its missile programme "back inside a set of constraints" laid out in UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif hit back, tweeting that the US had "violated" the same resolution by withdrawing from the nuclear deal and was "in no position to push a conceited interpretation of its missile provision".

He pointed out that the resolution called on Iran "not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles DESIGNED to be capable of delivering NUCLEAR weapons." (AFP)

(15) International...

sectors of the economy with high returns," Bukhari said and urged British-Pakistani investors to take optimum benefit of the opportunities for their own benefit and socio-economic prosperity of Pakistan.

He said the UKPCCI would work on a project of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) for the development of the national flag carrier.

He invited UK investors to invest in information technology and Special Economic Zones (SEZs), and establish industrial units in these profitable zones. The government would fully facilitate them, he declared.

The government wanted to facilitate overseas Pakistani investors and in that regard, efforts were being made to give representation to members of all overseas chambers on the board of Overseas Pakistanis Foundation and engage them in the development of the country with the help of their investments, the special assistant said.

He said the government was taking a number of measures for the welfare and resolution of problems of overseas Pakistanis, including the establishment of special courts.

During eight months of the current government, he pointed out, many initiatives had been taken, especially the resolution of property-related issues of the overseas Pakistanis. An overseas Pakistani police station was also being established in Sector F-6/3 of Islamabad for the registration of complaints.

Similar police stations would also be set up in different parts of Punjab and other provinces to facilitate overseas Pakistanis in making complaints and their speedy resolution, the special assistant said, adding the overseas Pakistanis ministry had resolved a number of issues of overseas Pakistanis, which had never been done in the past.

"My office is always open to overseas Pakistanis," Bukhari said, adding in July this year, he was planning to visit the United States and meet Pakistani and US investors to invite them to take benefit of the opportunities in various sectors in Pakistan in a more friendly business atmosphere. (Agencies)