

(1) Breakthroughs...

to develop bankable programs and projects for regional connectivity and poverty reduction;

- The issue of narcotics as a driver of conflict and criminality should be comprehensively addressed within the peace-making and peace-building framework;

- And finally, agreeing to a regional framework for fighting terrorism.

Ghani said the Afghan government will hold the presidential elections on September 28, focus on peace, implement a program of self-reliance, invest in regional connectivity and renew its international and regional partnerships to pursue the vision of building the institutions of the Republic.

"As a free, fair, inclusive and transparent election is the test of a constitutional order, we invite international observers to monitor the process," he said.

Meanwhile, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that a prosperous and secure Afghanistan will benefit the SCO member countries.

"Peaceful, united, safe and prosperous Afghanistan is an important factor for stability and security in the Excellencies, SCO area," Modi said. "Our aim is to support the efforts of the government and Afghanistan for Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled inclusive peace process."

Modis said that the roadmap of the further action of the SCO Afghanistan contact group is ready. (Tolo news)

(2) US Working on...

focus on the need to strengthen democratic institutions include women and see credible presidential elections in September," said Wells.

Wells pointed to the role of regional countries in the Afghan peace process and said Pakistan should support the process.

"We recognize that durable peace in Afghanistan requires consultation with Pakistan and Pakistan is encouraging the Taliban to negotiate. But our relationship with Pakistan is broader than just Afghanistan. We are asking Islamabad to take sustained and irreversible actions against terrorists who threaten stability in the subcontinent," Wells added.

Meanwhile, Karen L. Freeman, the Assistant to the Administrator for the US-AID's Office of Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs said Afghan women have made good achievements.

"Afghan women, in particular, have achieved much with the continuing support from the American people. And furthering these gains is a cornerstone of USAID's efforts," Freeman said.

Wells' remarks come as Khalilzad is supposed to meet the Taliban for the seventh time in Doha in the near future. (Tolo news)

(3) IEC Faces ...

"When there is a lack of leadership skills and management and someone is not involved with the election environment, lack of planning and lack of political will are among the challenges which underestimate the efforts for elections and are pushing the elections towards failure and they [election commissioners] are doing it deliberately," said Naeem Ayubzada, the head of Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan.

"Our protest is that we are boycotting Ghazni elections because the reasons they provide are not logical," said Abdul Jabbar Shalgarai, a former MP.

IEC members, meanwhile, said the electoral process is moving forward well and that the only issue is the budget which will be finalized after a "technical review".

Last month, the IEC announced that the presidential elections and the Ghazni parliamentary and district councils' elections will cost \$123.

However, an IEC commissioner Maw-lana Abdullah said, there will be a reduction in the amount after the budget is reviewed.

"We provided different figures about the budget, but this time, we will make a final decision and it will not be changed," said Abdul Rahman Nang, head of IEC secretariat. (Tolo news)

(4) Kyrgyzstan Praises ...

summit, late on Thursday the two sides discuss promoting bilateral rela-

tionship, Afghan peace process, fight against terrorism and economic cooperation, the statement said.

Kyrgyz president welcomed President Ghani to the SCO meeting and reaffirmed Bishkek support to Afghan owned and led peace and reconciliation process.

Jeenbekov said his country wanted to maintain cordial relationship with Kyrgyz people in Afghanistan through Afghan government. (Pajwhok)

(5) Suicide Bomber...

recent months aimed at bringing and end to more than 17 years of war in Afghanistan, fighting and insurgent attacks continue to take place across the country. (Reuters)

(6) Russia Coordinates ...

and so on. There are a lot of issues," Putin said.

The Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia is a forum created to ensure peace, security and stability in Asia, which unites 27 countries of the region. Another eight countries and five international organizations, including the United Nations, have observer status with CICA. (Pajwhok)

(7) India Backs ...

and role played by India towards an inclusive Afghanistan."

The Afghan president shared his views on the current situation in his country and how both New Delhi and Kabul should see drugs and terror together since the former fuels the latter.

He also shared his views on "sincerity of Pakistan" on action taken on terror group on its territory which has been a common cause of concern for both the countries.

New Delhi has been Afghanistan's biggest backer in the region. India through its community development scheme since 2005 has supported over 550 projects throughout Afghanistan.

Of these, around 345 projects have been completed while the remaining are in various stages of completion. India is the largest donor to Afghanistan in the region and since 2001 after the fall of Taliban undertaken projects and programmes over \$2 billion. (Pajwhok)

(8) Khalilzad Not...

Agha maintained that blind airstrikes, night raids, the killing of innocent people and harassment of civilians had spawned more hate and disappointment among the commoners.

In order to resolve the current crisis and move forward, he said, the support of the silent majority, a group that believed in peace and tranquility.

"Foreigners often stress the need for a ceasefire and a long-term presence in Afghanistan only to ensure their stay in the country over the longer haul, not for the sake of peace and stability," claimed Agha.

He said the Afghan conundrum could only be resolved once the foreign forces left the country. The problem in Afghanistan had been triggered after foreign intervention, he argued. (Pajwhok)

(9) Afghan, Chinese ...

reconciliation process and will continue to actively encourage and promote talks through various channels to help the Afghan people achieve internal dialogue, Xi said as quoted by Xinhua.

The Chinese president said his country supports Afghanistan and Pakistan to improve relations, enhance mutual trust and carry out cooperation and is ready to further promote the China-Afghanistan-Pakistan trilateral cooperation.

Ghani conveyed congratulations on the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

Ghani and Xi discussed China's role in Afghan #peace process, regional cooperation, anti-terror efforts, and regional connectivity, the Presidential Palace said in a statement on Thursday.

Quoted by Xinhua, Ghani said that by proposing to build a community with a shared future for mankind and supporting the economic globalization, China has set an example of promoting the construction of a new type of international relations in the 21st century.

According to Xinhua report, Ghani thanked China for the active role it has played in his country's peace process and in safeguarding regional peace and stability, adding that Afghanistan is

committed to fighting, side by side with China, against the "three forces" including the ETIM.

Ghani said that Afghanistan stands ready to align its plan of reconstruction and development with the BRI -- the Belt and Road Initiative -- and set up an even closer trade and economic partnership with China. (Tolo news)

(10) Ex-Football ...

The Attorney General's Office spokesman Jamshid Rasuli said the authority will make a decision if more actions are needed on the case.

An official of the Ministry of Interior said efforts are underway to arrest Karim.

The delay in arresting the former head of the football federation was criticized by a number of MPs.

"Powerful people are supported by politicians, therefore, they are not brought to justice," said Nadir Baluch, a lawmaker.

"It is a politically-influenced issue," said Fatima Aziz, an MP.

One member of the Integrity Watch Afghanistan, a Kabul-based monitoring organization, said the Ministry of Interior has not paid the required attention to the case.

"Law enforcement, prevention of crimes and issues of rule of law have not been put first by the Ministry of Interior. We are facing a serious problem in the rule of law," said Nasir Timori, a member of the Integrity Watch Afghanistan. (Tolo news)

(11) Nangarhar Flower...

Dara-i-Noor district who has cultivated flowers on his land, growing roses was easier than other crops.

The agriculture director promised paving the ground next year for growers in cold areas to cultivate flowers on their lands. (Pajwhok)

(12) Incomplete Quorum...

from western Herat province, held similar views and added some legislators had hijacked the Wolesi Jirga for their personal interest as they were in conflict with Mir Rahman Rahmani. (Pajwhok)

(13) Daesh in Afghanistan ...

He also spent two days aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier in the North Arabian Sea.

He stopped at Germany's Ramstein air base to refuel his airplane before flying to his headquarters in Florida.

Earlier this week, the Associated Press cited US and Afghan security officials in reporting that the Daesh group in Afghanistan is expanding its footprint, recruiting new fighters and plotting attacks on the United States and other Western countries.

McKenzie, a veteran of combat in Afghanistan and Iraq, said he believes ISIS in Afghanistan has not expanded its capabilities but remains a big problem.

"They are very worrisome to us" in their strongholds in eastern Afghanistan, he said, adding that combat operations have failed to reduce the group's fighting ranks. Others have said they are thought to number in the thousands. The Daesh affiliate appeared in Afghanistan shortly after the group's core fighters swept across Syria and Iraq in the summer of 2014, carving out a self-styled Islamic empire in both countries. The Afghanistan affiliate refers to itself as the Khorasan Province, a name applied to parts of Afghanistan, Iran and central Asia in the Middle Ages.

US forces in Afghanistan are combating the Daesh group separately from their mission of advising and assisting Afghan defense forces in their battle against the Taliban. (Tolo news)

(14) Taliban Executes...

of locality, confirmed the killing of Mullah Ali in the Jumrah Bazaar. Local Taliban also acknowledged Ali's killing after his trial. (Pajwhok)

(15) 'Iran Written ...

"freedom-loving nations." Tehran was dismissive, saying the US had resorted to "sabotage diplomacy" in order to demonize Iran among the international community and to cover up the "economic terrorism" is wreaking through its sanctions regime.

The incident followed earlier attacks in May on two Saudi-flagged, one Norwegian-flagged and one Emirati-flagged tankers off the coast of the UAE. An Emirati-led probe into the May attacks

blamed an unidentified state actor; however, Washington has repeatedly blamed Iran. (RT)

(16) UK Leader...

energizing blend of social liberalism and economic dynamism. But his message failed to gain much traction in a party consumed with Britain's stalled departure from the European Union.

Hancock said he had run as the "candidate of the future" but found that "the party, understandably, is focused very much on the here and now and how we get through Brexit."

The Conservative Party is holding a contest to replace Prime Minister Theresa May, who quit as party leader last week after failing to secure Parliament's backing for her divorce deal with the EU.

Tory legislators will hold more elimination votes next week, with the final two contenders put to a vote of 160,000 Conservative Party members nationwide. The winner, due to be announced in late July, will become Conservative leader and prime minister.

Johnson's commanding lead makes him almost certain to be in the final two. The flamboyant former London mayor is admired by many Conservatives for his ability to energize voters, but is also widely mistrusted for his record of misleading statements, verbal blunders and haphazard performance in high office. Johnson has vowed that as prime minister he would "get Brexit done," either by renegotiating May's rejected Brexit deal or by leaving the EU on Oct. 31 without an agreement.

But Johnson has not answered many tough questions about his plans. The EU says it will not reopen the divorce agreement, and many economists say a no-deal exit would cause economic turmoil.

All the remaining candidates, apart from Johnson, say they will take part in TV debates on Sunday and Tuesday.

Johnson signaled he was unlikely to take part in Sunday's Channel 4 program, saying debates with "loads of candidates" could be "slightly cacophonous." But he said he would take part in a BBC debate on Tuesday evening, once the field of candidates has been reduced by a second round of voting.

Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt, who is in second place, said a prospective national leader should not be "hiding away from the media."

In addition to Johnson and Hunt, those still in the race are Environment Secretary Michael Gove, ex-Brexit Secretary Dominic Raab, Home Secretary Sajid Javid and International Development Secretary Rory Stewart. (AP)

(17) Hong Kong...

yesterday imposed a serious threat to the public order."

Police used more than 150 rounds of tear gas during Wednesday's clashes, Lo said. That's nearly double the amount used in major 2014 protests.

It was the first time that Hong Kong police have used tear gas since that year's huge 79-day pro-democracy "Umbrella Movement" demonstrations, which marked the beginning of a shift to a tougher police approach.

Officers also fired several rubber bullets and 20 beanbag rounds, which Lo said other countries deployed as nonlethal methods to quell riots and rebellions, and also used batons, pepper spray, and pepper based solution. Many protesters wore hard hats, masks, plastic wrap and carried umbrellas as protection. Eleven were arrested.

"We are unarmed," said Daniel Lee, a 42-year-old doctor who noted that the police wore respirators to protect against tear gas. He said it was the last chance to fight for Hong Kong's future.

"It's expected that we will be hit. There's no way. If no one stands by the kids' side, they will not have any help. This is it." Steve Tsang, director of the China Institute at London's School of Oriental and African Studies, said that before 2014, Hong Kong police handled large demonstrations by using softer, non-confrontational tactics. They didn't wear tactical helmets and instead gave out bottled water and medical kits. (AP)

(18) Europol Report...

developments on the ground," The report comes amid concerns about the risk posed by foreign fighters, in-

cluding women, returning to their homes in Europe after the fall of the self-styled Islamic State caliphate in Syria and Iraq.

Europol Executive Director Catherine De Bolle said that 15% people convicted on "jihadi terrorism charges" in the EU in 2018 were women.

The report's authors studied propaganda targeting women, but also mentioned women who take active roles in Islamist combat, saying they were sometimes used to shame men into taking part in the group's armed struggle.

The report cited an example from an Islamic State publication that praised three women who attacked a police station in Mombasa, Kenya, in 2016 and asked what was wrong with men who had "laid down their swords."

At its peak, in 2014-15, IS controlled an area the size of Britain across Syria and Iraq and launched a series of attacks around the world.

In March, U.S.-backed forces declared victory over IS, but the group's affiliates in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, Afghanistan and other countries continue to pose a threat, and the group's ideology has inspired so-called lone-wolf attacks that had little if any connection to its leadership. (AP)

(19) Pope Warns ...

executives that a well-managed transition away from polluting fuels can "generate new jobs, reduce inequality and improve the quality of life for those affected by climate change."

The meeting marked the second year in a row that Francis has invited oil and financial sector executives to the Vatican to impress upon them his concern that preserving God's creation from global warming is one of the fundamental challenges facing humankind today. Francis has dedicated a major teaching document to the environment and is expected to press his case at a Vatican meeting of Amazon bishops later this year. Outside the summit, around half-a-dozen protesters held up signs urging the oil executives to listen to the pope.

The meeting was held under unusual secrecy even by Vatican standards, with the program and guest list initially unpublished. A few executives confirmed their presence ahead of time, including the chief executives of BP and Eni, Bob Dudley and Claudio De Scalzi.

On the BP blog, Dudley wrote this week that the meeting was coming at an urgent time, with BP's own latest survey showing carbon emissions grew by 2% last year, at a time when they have to dramatically decrease to meet standards set by the Paris climate accord.

Francis told the executives that carbon pricing is "essential" so that the poorest don't pay the debt of the wealthy in future generations. He also called for transparency in reporting climate risks and recalled that in his first meeting with the executives last year, he voiced concern that our thirst for energy must not destroy civilization. "Today a radical energy transition is needed to save our common home," he said. (AP)

(20) Spain Court ...

where he has been held since 2017 on Monday to collect the papers.

Catalonia's independence drive has overshadowed Spanish politics for years and is a major test for Pedro Sanchez's Socialists after they won a national election in April but fell short of a majority.

Junqueras, the former deputy head of the region, is charged with rebellion, sedition and misuse of public funds for his part in organizing a referendum and declaration of independence that were deemed illegal by Spain's Constitutional Court. He denies the charges.

Two other Catalan politicians won European Parliament seats in May but have also been unable to formalize their places because they will be detained if they return to Spain to collect their MEP papers. The region's former leader Carles Puigdemont and local council member Antoni Comin have both lived in self-imposed exile in Belgium since arrest warrants were issued following the attempted secession.

Junqueras was allowed to leave jail in May to collect his credentials as a member of Spain's lower house of parliament following April's election although he will not be able to serve as a lawmaker until the trial is concluded. (Reuters)