

(1) Supremacy...

judiciary was one of his top priorities and addressed the "judges are the nucleus of law and justice. The masses would lose trust on government if the judges demonstrate biasness." He went on to say that judiciary had been neglected since the judges confronted several problems and insecurity. It is the duty of the government to facilitate them and provide them security.

Abdul Qader, senior Supreme Court member, asked for security of judges. The judges could only declare decisions based on justice if they feel secure while 64 judiciary officials had been killed while several others had threats during last few years. He admitted judiciary had not been free from administrative corruption like other government institutions but he started his efforts to make judiciary free of corruption. (Pajhwok)

(2) Suggestions for ...

commissions, change in voting process and short-term reforms for the upcoming parliamentary elections. FEFA Chief Nader Naderi said the group taking its historical responsibilities into consideration tried to highlight the concerned issues that needed general or short-term reforms in the statement. He added the leaders of the unity government pledged complete electoral reforms, but the promises have still not been materialized eight months after the formation of the government.

Electoral reforms were a major point of agreement between President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah which the unity government was formed.

Based on a presidential decree, the electoral reforms panel was formed three months back but it still hasn't embarked on its work.

The statement titled "basic principles of electoral reform" was signed by leaders of political parties and civil society organisations and was submitted to the representatives of the president and CEO. Ahmad Zia Masoud, President's special representative for reforms and good governance addressing the event, said majority of the points mentioned in the statement was acceptable to the government and the statement could make work of electoral reforms commission easier. Masoud added the independent election commission had a major task of conducting fair elections. Sayed Hussein Fazel Sancharaki, cultural advisor to the CEO, said without fundamental reforms no elections would take place. He said it was imperative that the electronic identity cards be distributed soon. (Pajhwok)

(3) Taliban Confirm ...

a six-member delegation, including Deputy CEO Mohammad Muhaqiq and deputy foreign minister Hekmat Khalil Karzai.

A government source on Monday told Pajhwok Afghan News the Afghan delegation would hold face-to-face talks with the Taliban representatives.

But Zabihullah Mujahid, Taliban spokesman, said in an email the group's representatives would not hold peace talks with officials of Afghan government.

He added a three-member delegation of the group headed by Mohammad Tayeb Agha would participate in the Forum.

According to the group's spokesman, Taliban's representatives were officially invited by the Norwegian government and rejected reports that the aim of the conference was head to head talks between Afghan government and the group.

A government official wishing not to be named told Pajhwok Afghan News on Monday the president tasked Khalil Karzai to talk directly about peace with Taliban.

Former vice president Yonus Qanoni, former commerce minister Dr. Anwar-ul-Haq Ahadi, former minister of women affairs Hassan Bano Ghazanfar and high peace council member Farhadullah Farhad are part of government team.

Taliban have increased their presence in several regional and international level conferences in recent past. Taliban delegation showed their presence in Pugwash meeting in Qatar followed by meeting with High Peace Council (HPC) in China and later a meeting with Afghan women representatives in Norway.

The last meeting between Afghan officials and Taliban delegation was held in Dubai where they met with several officials. Mohammad Hassan Haqyar, a political analyst, said regarding these meetings that Taliban wanted to convey the messages through participation in such meetings that they

believed the negotiations and table talks.

He said that Taliban wanted to convey their message to the international community that they agreed to talk on women rights and other political affairs. Such meetings would turn fruitful and provide opportunities to know each other view point, he added. (Pajhwok)

(4) USAID Launches ...

Kabul, the program focuses on major economic centers throughout the country, including Mazar, Herat, Kandahar, and Jalalabad.

The program was launched at a ceremony yesterday at the U.S. Embassy. "The Afghanistan Investment Climate Reform Program addresses critical challenges faced by the private sector," said U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan P. Michael McKinley. "Together with the Government of Afghanistan, which has reaffirmed its commitment to economic reforms, we will help promote investment and make Afghanistan an attractive place to do business."

The program's main goal is to reduce hurdles for new and existing businesses to operate effectively by simplifying regulations and reducing compliance costs by: 1) improving the legal and regulatory framework for businesses at the national and provincial levels; 2) streamlining procedures hampering private sector operations; and 3) encouraging growth and investment in key sectors.

The new program builds upon existing USAID-funded activities with the IFC/World Bank supporting reforms in construction permits and regulations within the context of the World Bank's "Doing Business" indicators. (KP)

(5) PC Head Takes ...

a governor She said there was a vacuum on the governance front in the province, where development projects had been stymied by a constant reduction in funding by donors.

In this situation, she added, monitoring work of the provincial council also could not go smoothly. "When there is no governor, where should we start our monitoring from?"

The Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) has recently appointed Zahir Zaheer as governor for Bamyan, but he is yet to take charge. Last week, hundreds of people protested in Kabul in favour of the new governor, asking the government to fill the vacuum in Bamyan.

But four members of parliament – Mohammad Akbari, Safoora Alkhani, Syed Fakoor Beheshti and Abdul Rahman Shaedani – and other people erected tents in front of the governor office in Bamyan City, expressing their opposition to the appointment. They asked the government to reconsider its decision. Ms. Khawari said the provincial council had evaluated the performance of some departments besides helping a number of complainants.

She added most of the council members attended meetings with residents and officials to ascertain public grievances and resolve them.

Ali Jahan Dost, a civil society activist, opined the provincial council had been unsuccessful in its work because it was not acting for the good of the general public. Instead the council was seeking to favour a handful of blue-eyed people, he alleged.

He insisted the elective body had made no tangible achievement so far. "The Bamyan provincial council is incapable if you compare it to similar panels in other provinces. It hasn't done anything to prevent administrative graft."

But Maulvi Mohammad Yousuf Mazhari, provincial council member, claimed they were doing a commendable job, planning to evaluate the performance of provincial departments and address public complaints on merit.

Khawari said women were ready to do away with their symbolic roles and win public trust by remedying people's grievances. "We should show the world our capability to change people's perceptions regarding women's talent." She added, her hard work and effective management proved that women could serve the masses as well as men did.

Azra Ibrahim, a civil society activist in Bamyan, complained the provincial council had slammed its doors on people for 45 days in the beginning. Even now, according to her, the panel had nothing to show in terms of efficiency.

After the announcement of election results, provincial councils across the country went on strike to regain their oversight and monitoring right from the president.

Ibrahim added the sitting provincial

council consisted of old members with different political affiliations and were unable to work due to differences.

But provincial council head promised: "You'll witness a marked qualitative difference between the present members and their predecessors. We have better policies and effective future plans." (Pajhwok)

(6) Russia Prepares ...

any scenario, including the negative one."

To that end, it is necessary to boost the combat capabilities of the Russian military base and the Kyrgyz army, Shoigu noted. He recalled that "contracts had been signed to transfer modern Russian weapons and equipment to the Kyrgyz side, their deliveries were under way."

In addition to that, personnel for Kyrgyzstan's army will undergo training free of charge at the universities of the Russian Defense Ministry. "At present 316 service members are undergoing training, we are ready to admit more than 150 people in 2015," Shoigu added.

This comes just days after former Afghan president Hamid Karzai said in a Russia Television (RT) interview that Daesh in Afghanistan would threaten neighboring Russia and China, but it won't be possible without the jihadist group receiving foreign backing.

Daesh is "quite alien" to Afghanistan, Karzai said when asked how much of a threat he thinks jihadists pose to his country.

Reports earlier this week suggested that between 10 and 12 Taliban fighters had been beheaded by Daesh in Nangarhar province.

However, Karzai believes that Daesh expansion into Afghanistan would not be possible "without a foreign hand, without a foreign backing." But should this happen, "it will only be to go further to Central Asia, to hurt China, to hurt Russia", he told RT.

"So, if you hear ever in the coming days, or months, or years that Daesh is on the rise in Afghanistan, and is strong and expanding militarily, it will mean that it is a foreign-backed force intending to destabilize the region, particularly Central Asia, China and Russia," he added.

Karzai put the blame for the rapid expansion of Daesh on "foreign interference" in Iraq and Syria saying that it was all "the result of events" there. Karzai once again criticized the US and its allies for interfering in Afghanistan, saying that the declared war on terror lasted over a decade "without the results that we all expected".

The ex-president also addressed Washington, urging it to "explain to the world whether they have failed in the war on terror, or if the war on terror has gone out of hand." (Tolnews)

(7) 3 Million Afghan ...

whom three million are facing danger and need care."

Oryakhelsaid 1.9 million children in Afghanistan were busy doing hard labour. "Our figures show an increase in violence against children. They need care and to provide safer lives for them, we need to join hands." (Pajhwok)

(8) Pakistan Pledges ...

making it succeed. He credited Ghani for the improvement in relations and said his 'national unity government' had "injected a welcome dose of realism" and the Afghan president's visit to Islamabad was instrumental in removing misgivings that had been clouding the ties.

"We'll do everything possible to strengthen our ties with him and through him with the government of Afghanistan." (Pajhwok)

(9) 12 Ghazni...

and Ab Band districts were feared to go under Taliban control.

Abdul Hakim, a resident of Waghez, said the main road of the district had been closed for last one and half month and civilians had been killed every day in a fight between militants and security forces. The government writ was only confined to the district office, he noted.

Noorullah, another resident of Ghazni City, the provincial capital, said people had migrated to city due to worst law and order situation. Had the security situation remained the same, the district would fall to militants, he warned.

Brig. Gen. Mohammad Hakim Angar, provincial police chief, rejected all threats and said the situation was normal and called Hotak's fear as his personal views. Heavy casualties had been inflicted on militants in several military operations, he claimed. (Pajhwok)

(10) Hundreds of ...

control of the district soon, they could face a humanitarian crisis.

The military operation is however ongoing as security forces continue fighting insurgents. But no details on casualties are available.

More troops have also been sent in to support the local security forces, officials said. (Tolnews)

(11) Taliban Urge...

switched allegiance to Islamic State's al-Baghdadi, who aspires to establish a global caliphate with himself at the helm.

Some defectors expressed frustration that the Taliban have not gained significant territory and questioned whether supreme leader Mullah Mohammad Omar is still alive.

The rival jihadists have fought each other in a few provinces, with some of the heaviest clashes coming this week in the eastern province of Nangarhar.

Provincial spokesman Ahmad Zia Abdulzai said that 1,000 families had fled villages to escape the fighting after two local Taliban commanders, called Bakhtyar and Abdul Khaliq, changed sides to join Islamic State and launched attacks against their former leaders in Achin and Spin Ghar districts.

Afghan and U.S. officials say that so far there appears to be little material support flowing from the Islamic State leadership into Afghanistan, but the rise of its ideology is worrying in a region where radical new ideas can catch on among the region's vast population of young, unemployed men.

The letter to al-Baghdadi, signed by Taliban political committee chief Mullah Akhtar Mansoor, shows the insurgents also are worried.

"Jihad against American invaders and their slaves in Afghanistan must be under one flag, one leadership and one command," it said.

The letter also appeared intended to dissuade other Taliban fighters considering switching sides. Besides Arabic, it was written in Dari, Pashto and Urdu languages that are spoken in Afghanistan and Pakistan and was distributed by an official Taliban spokesman.

Worries about the rise of Islamic State also may be contributing to the Taliban's new receptiveness to a parallel effort to start peace talks with the Afghan government.

Taliban representatives and an Afghan delegation were both attending a peace conference in Oslo on Tuesday, raising the possibility of face-to-face meetings. (Reuters)

(12) Urban Development ...

of a house, he said, would range between \$15,000 to \$25,000.

Naderi said introduction of a special mechanism for improved communication, transparency within the ministry was part of the first 100-day plan, while they would also make sure to address complaints of citizens. (Pajhwok)

(13) Some Senators...

His colleague, Jumauddeen Gayanwal said: "If the claims are true, then Afghanistan will turn into a battlefield once again." The lawmaker underlined the imperative of halting foreign backing of militant outfits.

Senate Chairman Fazl Hadi Muslimyar observed: "I don't have accurate information, but this (Iranian meddling) could be another serious threat to the people of Afghanistan."

"Afghans have not interfered in Iran's internal affairs. Iran should not turn Afghanistan into a battleground," he said, asking the government to investigate the allegations.

Dawlat Waziri, Ministry of Defence deputy spokesperson, told Pajhwok Afghan News they were yet to establish the validity of reports regarding Iran's supported to the Taliban.

The Wall Street Journal reported last week that Iran not only supported the Taliban financially, but also trained the fighters. But the Taliban and the Iranian embassy in Kabul have not yet commented on the issue. (Pajhwok)

(14) New Governor ...

Nasir Zadran, a tribal elder, said education sector needed more attention and asked the governor to create jobs opportunities for educated youth. (Pajhwok)

(15) 3 Urban ...

sought refuge in Shighnan district of Badakhshan have been transferred to Kabul and investigations have been launched on the order of the Attorney General," spokesman Basir Aziz said.

Meanwhile, the High Office of Oversight and Anti-Corruption has already begun evaluating the assets of the six former officials under investigation. "The properties of these

three individuals are registered with us, but there are some issues with the documents of two of the defendants and investigations have been started," the head of the office's public relations department, Abdul Qahar Farrukh Seyar, told the media on Monday.

The oversight office has reportedly referred another six or seven cases of official corruption within the Urban Development Ministry to law enforcement.

President Ashraf Ghani met with officials from the Urban Development Ministry on May 28, when he issued suspensions for the following individuals: Ahmad Shah Hemat, the head of the central housing department; Mohammad Amin, the head of the real estate and accommodations department; Ahmad Nawaz Bakhtyari, the head of the housing enterprise department; Gul Rahim Zyarnal, the head of planning and project manager for the 5th Macro-ayan; Syed Amanullah Sadat, the head of the finance department; and Mohammad Amin Qane, the head of the apartments and rentals department.

The six officials stand accused of pocketing millions of dollars intended for development projects. (Tolnews)

(16) Project "Roses ...

responsible for managing the project. Cultivation of roses can guarantee farmers a stable long-term source of income. The aim was to provide former poppy farmers with an alternative to cultivating drugs illegally, in this case, by growing roses.

Rose production was chosen as a potential alternative to growing poppy due to the fact that roses are a raw product for the distillation to rose oil, a high quality niche product.

After processing the flowers into organic rose oil, the product can be sold in the international market. Today, instead of opium poppies, some 800 farmers grow roses for oil on 105 hectares of farmland in the Nangarhar highlands. Total production in the region has risen from 1.7 kgs in 2006 to 101 kgs in 2014. (Pajhwok)

(17) Analysts View...

message of Islam. "Taliban militants have been fighting for the last 13 years and have suffered heavy losses. Afghan war has inflicted considerable damage on Taliban," he said, adding that Daesh could be a challenge for Taliban since IS had energetic young people, abundance of wealth, blessed with strong Arab support.

Taliban's letter to Daesh also showed their weakness, he said, fearing that Taliban and Daesh fight could be fatal for Afghanistan and the entire region.

Pashtuns would be killed from both sides whereas Pashtun soil would be an arena of the battle while the strangers would get benefit out of the war, he predicted.

Khushal Khalil, another political analyst, assumed the letter ascertained Taliban legitimacy had been threatened. "Pakistan remained legitimate religious source of Taliban whereas Baghdad is the source of legitimacy for Daesh. The emergence of Daesh has put Taliban's legitimacy at stake," he added.

"Daesh leader fulfilled all criteria of being Caliphate since he is Qureshi by tribe of Arab and also belongs to a Hussaini sect," Khalil added. "Taliban's letter showed they did not have strength to fight Daesh therefore they want to use diplomacy to deal with Daesh," he observed.

Mohammad Hassan Haqyar, a political analyst, said: "The aim of Taliban is to know and get information regarding Daesh and to know who basically provide support to Daesh." Maulvi Muslim Dost, a local Daesh leader, harshly criticized Taliban militants therefore Taliban retreated back to at least reply to them.

"Taliban did not want to fight Daesh but to convince them they have the same agenda therefore Taliban used soft tone in their letter to Daesh", Haqyar said, adding Taliban could use harsh language if the dispute between the two groups was intensified. (Pajhwok)

(18) Taliban Commander...

leaders, security officers and other government officials in Kandahar city but they were arrested red handed with two Kalashnikovs and three motorcycles.

The group has confessed taking part in the terror of a number of tribal leaders and security officers in the past.

NDS statements do not usually contain the exact date of the achievements but they come after recent activities. (Tolnews)

(19) USAID Launches...

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bassy. "The Afghanistan Investment Climate Reform Program addresses critical challenges faced by the private sector," said U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan P. Michael McKinley. "Together with the Government of Afghanistan, which has reaffirmed its commitment to economic reforms, we will help promote investment and make Afghanistan an attractive place to do business."

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(20) Taliban Shadow...

a week during military airstrikes. Omar Zadran was killed along with two commanders and 12 insurgents in Kunar province on Sunday.

Meanwhile, insurgents have increased their activities in Badakhshan in recent months. As a result, hundreds of families have been displaced in the past few weeks due to ongoing clashes in the Yamgan district, local officials said on Tuesday.

The clashes have reportedly led to Yamgan district falling into the hands of the Taliban. However, military forces have launched an operation to re-take control of the district, provincial acting governor Shah Wali Adebek said.

More troops have also been sent in to support the local security forces, officials said. (Tolnews)

(21) Powerful Symbols...

acknowledged for their service and sacrifice, and we are thankful for the support of our partners, sponsors and the Government of Canada," said Tom Jenkins, chair of the LAVIII Monument Program steering committee.

Peter Devlin, the President of Fanshawe College and the former Commander of the Canadian Army commented, "As a retired member of the Canadian Armed Forces and President of Fanshawe College I am pleased that our students and our veterans will have an opportunity to participate in this program to recognize the service of our fellow Canadians in Afghanistan. Fanshawe is proud to be the first college to work on the LAV III Monuments that were originally built and assembled right here in London. (CNW)

(22) NATO to...

Jump, the first training deployment of Allied high-readiness units under the new Very High Readiness Joint Task Force framework.

It also includes Baltops, a major Allied naval exercise in Poland and the Baltic Sea, and Saber Strike, a significant land exercise in the Baltic States. (Xinhua)

(23) Russian Gov't...

Afghanistan, India, Iran, Mongolia and Pakistan as observers and Belarus, Turkey and Sri Lanka as dialogue partners.

Russia holds the rotating presidency of the SCO in 2015, with a summit to be held in Ufa, the capital of the Republic of Bashkortostan, Russia, in early July. (Xinhua)

(24) Establishment of...

mooted two years ago to help deal with emerging security threats like civil strife, terrorism and transnational crimes. African leaders have since 2014 discussed modalities of setting up a standby force that is both efficient and well equipped. (Xinhua)

(25) Turkey Looking

text of 'Make in India'. But no concrete steps have been taken. We are looking forward to getting more information and possible visit from India to explain the objectives to which we can contribute," the Ambassador said. Hailing bilateral relations, he added: "We are expecting ministers of both countries to sign a document to take ahead the centuries-old relationship of the two friendly countries." (Xinhua)

(26) Bank of China...

independent governance and oversight we have implemented to bring transparency and trust to the gold price auction." Average daily volumes for the morning and afternoon gold auctions have more than doubled, compared with the five months prior to the agency's administration, data showed. (Xinhua)