

(1) Pompeo Hopes...

He said the United States has not forgotten Afghanistan.

He added that the peace talks will move forward parallel with detailed talks with the government of Afghanistan.

"Simultaneously, the United States is laying the ground force for intra-Afghan negotiations to begin as soon as possible. Objective of those negotiations is for Afghans to agree on a timeline and a political roadmap for reaching a comprehensive peace agreement," he added.

He said that the US welcomes Germany's preparation for hosting a meeting on Afghan peace. "As for our next diplomatic step, we welcome Germany's commitment with Qatar to convene an intra-Afghan dialogue next month," he said. "This is an opportunity for Afghans to endorse the urgent need for intra-Afghan negotiations." Pompeo said that the US is expecting practical measures by Pakistan on Afghan peace.

"Pakistan has a particular important role to play in this process and in the promotion of peace and stability in the region," he said. "Progress has been made and we will continue to look to Pakistan practical measures, cooperation on peace talks and the implementation of any agreement." (Tolo news)

(2) People Not ...

He asked the IEC to pin the list of names of voters who had already registered with the commission or share them online with people.

People who had registered as voters for the Wolesi Jirga elections do not need to register again, but they can visit their voter registration centers to check their names in the list.

The ongoing voter registration process is registering those who did not take their voter card in the previous election or they have reached the age of 18 years or failed to register in the previous process for some reasons.

Abdullah said, "Only three days remain in the end of voter registration process and the IEC should try to facilitate people, provide them with awareness so they get assured their names are available in the list of voters."

The voter registration process began on June 8. The CEO asked those who did not register so far to register in the process. The people who have registered for the Wolesi Jirga elections should make sure their names are available in the lists, he said.

The CEO said he would also meet election officials and ask them to resolve problems in the registration process. (Pajhwok)

(3) Govt Vows to Protect ...

tried to protect the value and provide the ground for its improvement, the statement said. The statement said that the Afghan government will leave no stone unturned to ensure the safety of journalists.

"Threatening and attacks on freedom of speech and media, under any pretext, is in contravention of Islamic and human values," said the statement.

Meanwhile, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at a press conference in Brussels said that the alliance condemns any threat against journalists, referring to the Taliban threat against Afghan media.

We strongly condemn any threat against any journalist because it is absolutely fundamental democratic right to have freedom of press for journalists to work, to do their work and to report and write about what they want and the way they want," he said.

Attacks on Media Outlets in Afghanistan

In January 2016, a Taliban suicide bomber rammed his car into a bus carrying employees of Tolo TV, Afghanistan's most popular private broadcaster, killing seven journalists.

The Taliban had said it bombed the bus because it claimed Tolo was producing propaganda for the US military and its allies.

Journalists in Afghanistan have been threatened or attacked not only by the Taliban but also by fighters from Daesh, government officials and powerful local figures unhappy with news coverage.

The press freedom index released by Reporters Without Borders (RSF) on April 17 shows that the situation of media in Afghanistan has "worsened" as it has descended to 121 from 118 where it stood last year.

The organization has mentioned insecurity as one of the main reasons for an increase in violence against journalists in Afghanistan.

According to RSF, three journalists have been killed in Afghanistan this year. The RSF says that for Afghanistan's journalists, 2018 was the deadliest year since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001.

A total of 15 journalists and media workers were killed in a series of bombings that began early in the year, nine of them in a single day, the RSF says in a report on its website.

Many others were constantly threatened by the various parties to the conflict. The war imposed by the Taliban and Daesh and constant abuses by warlords and corrupt political officials constitutes a permanent threat to journalists, the media and press freedom in Afghanistan.

According to RSF, Women journalists are a favorite target and are especially vulnerable in those regions where fundamentalist propaganda is headed.

The concern is growing that basic freedoms, including press freedom, could be sacrificed in the course of the international efforts to restore peace in Afghanistan, the RSF says, adding that in response to this threat, the RSF-backed Centre for the Protection of Afghan Women Journalists has launched several campaigns for the protection of the rights of women journalists as

a precondition for peace.

The experience of the past 17 years confirms that peace and security are what the Afghan people want most, but they cannot be achieved and guaranteed without free and independent media and without guarantees for journalists' safety, RSF said in its report. (Tolo news)

(4) Hakimi, Safi...

Rahmani who needed 124 votes secured 123 in the second round. However, supporters of Rahmani had said that one valid vote of the candidate had been announced as invalid by the temporary speaker of the house while others said the vote was invalid. (Pajhwok)

(5) Afghanistan...

around the globe, these winners embody the best of humanity," said Joe Clark, former Prime Minister of Canada and Jury Chair. "The emphasis on pluralism is much more important now than ever. In only a few years, we have moved from a time in which there was, at least, a general acceptance of difference, to a time where there is fear about it, and very often a contesting of it."

The 2019 finalists—from Canada, the United States, Lebanon, Hungary, Ghana, France, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Myanmar and several countries of the former Yugoslavia—are making vital contributions to pluralism, mainly through peacebuilding, the arts, education, social cohesion and integration of refugees and migrants.

This year, the Global Center for Pluralism received over 500 applications spanning 74 countries for the 2019 Global Pluralism Awards—more than double the submissions to the inaugural awards in 2017.

All nominees undergo a rigorous review and jury selection process. The field of finalists will be narrowed down to three winners, to be announced in the fall, following in-country visits and consultations with key partners on the ground.

These three winners will each be granted \$50,000 to advance their work in promoting pluralism. (Tolo news)

(6) Presidential Hopefuls ...

Officer (CEO) Dr. Abdullah Abdullah had rejected the extension in the previous government's term before 2009 elections. "So how they now interpret the law in their favor?" He said they would take legal steps if the government ignored their suggestions.

Another Presidential Candidate Noorul Haq Ulumi also called on President Ashraf Ghani to end his government. "All of the government meetings taking place during this period are election campaign which is unacceptable to us. The future of the nation and the peace process should not be taken lightly."

Mohammad Ibrahim Alkozai, another contender, said: "Today, we are gathered here for our right. We offered huge sacrifices for the freedom of this country and this president wants to suppress our voices."

He called on Ulema to issue a fatwa for the ousting of President Ashraf Ghani from office.

Deputy Presidential Spokesman Shah Husain Murtazavi said it was one of democracy's specialties that people could openly raise their voices and such gatherings were welcomed.

He said there was nothing new in the speeches of presidential candidates and termed the gathering as part of an early campaigning.

He asked the election bodies to pay attention to gatherings having the nature of election campaign.

Enayatullah Hafeez, another presidential candidate, said Afghanistan was the world's worst country in terms of terrorism and drug trafficking.

A resolution was also passed at the end, saying the continuation of President Ashraf Ghani's work was plunging the country into a new political crisis.

It further said President Ghani was using his authority and state resources for his election campaign and demanded a mechanism through which the president would be unable to use government resources and authority for his election drive. (Pajhwok)

(7) All Allies ...

efforts by the US chief negotiator Zalmay Khalilzad.

"We are strongly supportive of the peace efforts and all allies support them and we are in close to consultations with the US chief negotiator Ambassador [Zalmay] Khalilzad. He has been here several times, consulting and briefing allies and this will also be an issue we discuss at the meeting that starts tomorrow [Wednesday]. Allies are committed to support peace process," he said.

The NATO chief meanwhile condemned threats against journalists by militants in Afghanistan.

"We strongly condemn any threat against any journalist because it is absolutely fundamental democratic right to have freedom of press for journalists to work, to do their work and to report and write about what they want and the way they want," he said.

Meanwhile, US Ambassador in NATO, Kay Bailey Hutchison, accused Iran of sending terrorists to Afghanistan and said that Iran has not played a significant role in the Afghan peace process so far.

"Will Iran be positive? We don't know. They have not been helpful so far, but we do hope that that will change," she said.

Acting Defense Minister Asadullah Khalid will attend the NATO defense ministers meeting in Brussels on Thursday. (Tolo news)

(8) Stop Threatening ...

He said violence against journalists declined by 50.1 percent in the period that saw Nai register 35 cases of violence against media workers, including five murders. (Pajhwok)

(9) Abdullah Approves ...

Aalami Balkhi, who presented his report about Afghanistan national policy on migration and said the policy had been formulated in coordination with International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD).

He said the two year policy would be completed in coordination with local and international organizations and implemented after its approval from the Cabinet.

The minister said the number of internally displaced families reached 3,46,094 individuals in 2019 and 57,148 people had returned to their actual areas.

He said the conflict displaced 17024 people in 2019 in Nangarhar, Faryab, Helmand, Farah, Takhar, Maidan Wardak, Kunduz and Balkh provinces and only 12 families had so far returned to their original homes.

Of these families, he said, 12433 families had been assisted by foreign organizations.

Abdullah thanked national and international organizations for their help and participation in formulation of the Afghanistan national policy on migration and their years long cooperation with Afghanistan in assisting refugees.

He said working to support refugees was Afghanistan's urgency and ICMPD had been in Afghanistan for the last four decades.

The CEO said the mentioned policy should be presented before the Cabinet for approval after incorporating suggestions and observations of the meeting. (Pajhwok)

(10) Pakistan Embassy ...

Khan added they did not want patients and elderly people to visit the consulate; their applications could be submitted by their family members. There are separate queues for ladies, children and elderly visa applicants.

"We also wish to clarify that perimeter security of and queuing outside the consulate is exclusively under the preview of local authorities." (Pajhwok)

(11) Security Forces ...

killed and five others were injured in the fire-fight, he said.

Earlier, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) said in a statement that the security forces, led by commandos, conducted an operation to retake the district.

Balcharagh has been under Taliban's control for the past two years. During the period, the Taliban harassed the people and extorted them. The rebels have not yet commented on losing the district. (Pajhwok)

(12) Logar's Azra ...

Meanwhile, Qasim Khoshiwal, a member of the provincial council, confirmed the district head's claim and said the Taliban were trying over the past few days to capture the district.

He said: "Residents of the district have informed us about the problem. We will share the concern with higher government figures."

He added that Azra was an important district for Taliban insurgents and the government should prevent the town from falling to the rebels.

Hayatullah, a tribal elder from the Akbarkhel area of the district, told Pajhwok the insurgents had seized all roads leading to the district for the past few days and people were not allowed to move freely.

A number of other residents of the district held similar views and urged the government to pay attention to the district security situation at the earliest possible.

Police spokesman Shahpur Ahmadzai also confirmed the Taliban militants recently laid siege to Azra district.

He added the issue had been shared with the authorities concerned but they were yet to respond to the challenge. (Pajhwok)

(13) Shakib Powers ...

Rahmat carelessly flicked a flatter delivery to Tamim Iqbal at mid-on and departed for 24. Just 10 runs came from the next five overs and Hashmatullah Shahidi perished when he tried to accelerate, stumped by Mushfiqur Rahim off Mosaddek Hossain for 11.

Bangladesh had victory in their sights after Shakib took two wickets in the space of four balls.

Gulbadin was removed for 47 after driving low to Liton Das at short extra cover before Mohammad Nabi was bowled through the gate for a duck.

Shakib became the first Bangladeshi player to take five wickets in the World Cup when he had Najibullah Zadran stumped.

Earlier, Shakib became the leading run scorer in this year's World Cup so far as his side posted a solid total after being put in to bat. Shakib's 51 took him to 476 runs in the tournament, while Mushfiq top-scored with 83 from 87 balls.

Liton was promoted ahead of Soumya Sarkar to open along with Tamim for Bangladesh, with the pair managing a brisk 23 from the first four overs.

But Liton fell for 16 in the next over after being fooled into a miscued drive by spinner Mujeeb Ur Rahman, who finished with 3-39.

That brought Shakib to the crease and he upped the tempo even further with some aggressive hitting, maintaining his fine World Cup form. When Shakib, who has two centuries already in

the tournament, pulled Naib to the boundary, it moved him above Australia's David Warner's 447 runs. (Pajhwok)

(14) 'Dialogue at...

and verifiably" eliminate its "nuclear weapons program" and end "malignant behavior worldwide."

Iran, meanwhile, has been anything but silent about the prospect of negotiating with the US. The country had consistently maintained that it is ready to talk if Washington refrains from issuing threats and slapping new sanctions on Tehran.

Iran stands ready for dialogue, given that it goes on "equal footing and mutual respect," Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said in January. The minister often blamed Bolton and other foreign policy hardliners at the White House for pushing President Donald Trump from peaceful solutions towards a more belligerent stance.

The Islamic Republic also made it clear that meaningful talks cannot go in hand with the Trump administration's strategy of applying "maximum pressure" on Iran. On Monday, the US announced plans to blacklist Zarif along with Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei in retaliation to Iran downing a US drone it claims violated its airspace last week. Tehran responded by saying that sanctions against the nation's top leadership effectively close "the path of diplomacy" and do not create the right atmosphere for talks.

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani put it more bluntly, saying that the new sanctions are a sign of Washington's "desperation" and "the White House actions show it is mentally retarded."

You [the Americans] call for negotiations. If you are telling the truth, why are you simultaneously seeking to sanction our foreign minister, too? The promise to enact new sanctions shows that the US is "lying" in the offer of talks with Tehran, Rouhani stressed.

Moscow, whose senior security official Nikolai Patrushev met with Bolton on Tuesday, had also blasted the new round of US sanctions on Iran. The restrictions "negate all of the repeatedly-sent signals that Washington is open and ready to engage in dialogue," Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov said.

You can't have dialogue at gunpoint, literally and figuratively speaking.

All the recent diplomatic maneuvers by the US have been "aimed at mobilizing an anti-Iranian front," Ryabkov stated.

The decades-long row between Tehran and Washington escalated dramatically last year when the US unilaterally abandoned the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA, while accusing Iran of secretly violating the agreement. Iran denied this, and the nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in its latest reports had confirmed that the nation was following the deal. (RT)

(15) Russia, US...

Patrushev, Bolton and Ben-Shabbat are scheduled for Tuesday, and the three are supposed to produce a joint statement.

Bolton was dispatched to Israel while Secretary of State Mike Pompeo flew to the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, after US President Donald Trump decided not to launch an attack on Iran last week. Pompeo's officially published agenda includes discussions of "dangers posed by Iranian destabilizing activity."

This focus on Iran to the exclusion of everything else was "counterproductive," Lavrov said. "Israel and the Americans are above all concerned with Iran, not just when it comes to Syria but also this region in general, and maybe even in a much wider geographical area."

"We consider it very, very dangerous how the situation is developing in [the Persian Gulf] as well as in Syria," the top Russian diplomat added.

There are attempts to turn the territory of Syria into a battlefield between Israel and Iran, between Sunnis and Shia. This is bad and only aggravates the crisis.

He did not name any particular country as the culprit, but the thrust of the remark was perfectly clear. Earlier in the day, Washington announced additional sanctions against Iran, including Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei personally. (RT)

(16) Alphabet Unveils...

era of global concern over data protection at tech firms, the proposal has been criticized for concerns over loss of privacy, and the handing over of control of public spaces to a private corporation.

The city, Ontario and federal governments, which have partnered with the New York-based urban planning firm on the project, would have to approve the proposal.

If the Can\$3.9 billion (US\$2.96 billion) development goes ahead, tens of thousands of people are expected to live and work in the district, where tall buildings would be made out of timber.

Sidewalk Labs said it could be expanded to cover more than 77 hectares.

The aim, Sidewalk CEO Dan Doctoroff told reporters, is to "create the neighborhood of the future... with people at its center, and with cutting-edge technology and forward-thinking urban design combining to achieve ambitious improvements in the urban environment and in the way we all live."

Public consultations will be held over the coming months. (AFP)

(17) Russian, North...

Saint-Jacques were optimistic ahead of their

successful launch and remained upbeat throughout their time aboard the orbital lab which is seen as a rare example of cooperation between Russia and the West.

"A beautiful night pass over Africa on my last night on @Space_Station," tweeted 40-year-old McClain, who completed two spacewalks during her virgin mission to the ISS.

Fellow first-time flyer Saint-Jacques broke the record for the longest single spaceflight by a Canadian astronaut, previously held by Robert Thirsk.

Thirsk clocked 187 days at the ISS in 2009 during a typical six-month mission, while 49-year-old Saint-Jacques' mission will stand at 204 days by the time he touches down.

The record was helped along by the fact that the launch was moved forward to December 3 from December 20 for operational reasons – possibly as a confidence booster after the accident.

The returning trio were joined aboard the ISS by Ovcchinin, Hague and NASA astronaut Christina Koch in March.

Koch, who was not part of Hague and Ovcchinin's aborted mission in October, will have her stay at the ISS extended to nearly 11 months, which would set a record for the longest spaceflight by a woman, NASA confirmed in April.

That record is currently held by Koch's former NASA colleague Peggy Whitson, now retired, who spent 288 days aboard the ISS in 2016-17, NASA said.

Russians dominate the rankings for cumulative days spent in space, with the returning Kononenko set to reach 737 days by the time his fourth mission is complete on Tuesday.

That will leave the 55-year-old sixth in the all-time standings and just a typical ISS mission short of beating the 879-day record set by 60-year-old Roscosmos colleague Gennady Padalka in 2015.

Since 2011, Russia is the only country to oversee manned launches to the ISS.

But last year's failed launch, multi-billion dollar corruption scandals at Roscosmos and the emergence of private sector competitors like Elon Musk's SpaceX have combined to put into question Moscow's future dominance.

NASA said earlier this month that it will be opening the ISS up to space tourists for the first time next year with 30-day visits expedited by SpaceX and Boeing expected to cost around \$58 million per person.

Russia has flown seven tourists to the ISS but is set to increase that number beginning in 2021, according to Roscosmos, which struck a deal with American company Space Adventures earlier this year.

US businessman Dennis Tito was the first space tourist to the ISS, paying Russia around \$20 million for the trip. (AFP)

(18) Egypt Arrests...

only one year in power and amid mass protests against his divisive rule.

Tuesday's statement from the Interior Ministry, which oversees the police, said the arrest of Ziad el-Elaimy, the former lawmaker, was part of a raid that targeted at least 19 businesses and economic entities linked to the Brotherhood, which Egypt designated a terrorist group in 2013.

According to rights lawyer Gamal Eid, police arrested el-Elaimy on Tuesday morning in Cairo's Maadi district. A vocal critic of el-Sissi's government, el-Elaimy is a leading member of the secular Egyptian Social Democratic Party. He was a parliament member after the 2011 uprising that toppled autocrat President Hosni Mubarak.

Economist Omar el-Shenety and journalists Hossam Monis and Hisham Fouad were also arrested, the ministry said.

Monis was the presidential campaign manager for opposition leader Hamdeen Sabahi, the only candidate who ran against el-Sissi in the 2014 presidential election.

Abdel-Aziz el-Husseini, a senior leader in the Karama, or Dignity party, said el-Elaimy and Monis took part in meetings with political parties and opposition lawmakers to discuss possibilities to run in the 2020 parliamentary elections. The meeting was late Monday in Cairo, he added.

"These public meetings are legitimate. They are members in legitimate parties and absolutely have no ties to the Brotherhood," he said.

The meeting included the Civil Democratic Movement, a coalition of liberal and left-leaning parties, which called for their release.

The Interior Ministry statement said the detained were collaborating with wanted Brotherhood members in Turkey to plot violence and riots on the anniversary of the June 30 mass protests that led to the military ouster of Morsi from power.

The Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights said the detained were questioned by prosecutors later Tuesday.

Morsi, who was known to have diabetes, was often held in solitary confinement and was largely barred from receiving visitors. His family was only allowed to visit three times. While in detention, Morsi continued to appear in court on a range of charges. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, a fierce el-Sissi critic, has claimed that Morsi didn't die of natural causes but was killed. He has also said he believes the United Nations should take up "Morsi's suspicious death." Egyptian authorities deny mistreatment of Morsi and have dismissed Erdogan's claims. (AP)