

### (1) Govt Accused

deputy spokesman for the Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah said.

"All other issues which have been sent by the commission to government have been worked on and have been implemented. Government is doing its responsibility on its part," Faisal added. In addition, the IEC still needs to send the names of three shortlisted candidates for the position of head secretariat to the president. According to the IEC, 29 people have applied for the position. Commenting on this, Badghisi said: "This process has different phases including tests, interviews and shortlisting."

But electoral monitoring organization have said government does not have the political will to hold elections.

"If we look at this issue, we see that the voters list is still to be prepared, provincial employees are yet to be appointed, the 10 million (paper) identity cards which should have been distributed have not been rolled out and in general, the constituencies (issue) as a crucial part is stuck in government," said Mohammad Naeem Ayubzada, head of Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan.

The upcoming parliamentary and district council elections is scheduled to be held in July. (Tolo news)

### (2) Afghan Filmmaker

at a ceremony hosted by the Dutch State Department and the United Nations Security Council.

The ministry said that she's the first post-Taliban Afghan female director and first woman whose film was selected as Afghan entry for the Oscars.

The 90 minute, full length movie took two years to complete.

The movie is about the miseries suffered by women in Afghanistan as well as about discrimination and violence against women in the country.

"This film has a lot to say. Social contradictions, challenges and differences have been portrayed in this film through a family life," Sadat said. "This is the first ever long film which all its crew are from Afghanistan. All its activities were done in the country, except one or two technical things which were not available here," Sadat said.

Starring Leena Alam, the movie is written by Aziz Deldaar, produced by Roya Film House and co-produced by Kaboora Production. (Tolo news)

### (3) As Rumored, Mullah

However, the Taliban called the development an intelligence plot aimed at creating rifts in the movement. They denied the emergence of any new splinter outfit.

Written in Pashtu, the printed letters are color and have three mobile phone numbers and a Facebook and an email address. The letter read the Taliban's incumbent leadership has weakened compared to the past and has internal differences.

In the letter, followers of Mansour, who was killed in a US drone strike in Pakistan's Balochistan province, have pinned down many complaints to the current Taliban leadership. The new group says it has been in talks with a number of Taliban leaders in all parts of the country.

The letters ask Taliban militants to register their complaints, if any, against the current leadership of the Taliban through the telephone numbers and email and Facebook addresses mentioned in the letters.

A reliable security sources in Nangarhar told Pajhwok on the condition of anonymity that local residents in Khogyani, Pachirawgam, Chaparhar and other districts had found the letters and had shared them with security forces.

He said people had found the letters in early morning and handed them over to security forces in their respective districts.

The Nangarhar governor's spokesman, Attaullah Khogyani, confirmed the issue and said they had received reports from some districts about the letters. Pajhwok tried to seek comment

from local residents about the letters, but those contacted refused to talk about the issue.

The Taliban said the letters were the handiwork of the Afghan intelligence agency and no differences had emerged in the group. Their spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said similar "fake" letters had been published and spread last year as well but there was no such issue in the Taliban leadership about which such statements could come from within.

"The Kabul administration and the US intelligence, who are facing defeat across the country want to mislead people through such propaganda," said Mujahid.

He said all Taliban fighters maintained close contacts with their leaders and there had been no such complaints from the rebels against their leadership. He called the letters an unsuccessful plot of the intelligence agencies. The new Taliban splinter group emerges after the Afghan government extended an olive branch to the rebels, inviting them to peace talks in return for recognizing the insurgents a legitimate political party. (Pahwok)

### (4) Imran Khan

stressing at every level to ensure resolution of the Afghan crisis. He also requested Zakhilwal to convey his best wishes to Ghani. The ambassador confirmed the conversation with Imran Khan, but gave no details. (Pahwok)

### (5) Average Rainfall

said the amount of rain that has fallen so far is considerably less than usual.

Officials said they are seriously concerned about this situation adding that a lot less snow has also fallen this year.

"We are in the third month of the year 2018. Rainfall as relatively lower but it was normal in February. The showers have been fairly good in different provinces," head of the department Sayed Reza Musawi said.

Areas close to Salang district in Parwan province are prime examples of reduced snow and rain as only light snow has been recorded this year, residents in the area said.

The residents said the Salang River water level is also considerably lower than usual.

The Salang River stretches for 438km in Afghanistan, and flows through Parwan. It is a tributary of the Indus, Ghorband, Panjshir and Kabul rivers.

"There was two, three or less than one and a half meters in previous years, but this year, it is just 50 centimeters," a resident said.

"Everywhere is dry. The snowfall was not enough this year. We witnessed it once, and we did not see it again," said another resident of the district.

The National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) is also concerned about the lack of rain and snow.

"The source for our agriculture is generally the snow on mountains and the glaciers and unfortunately we witnessed fewer snowfalls around our glaciers compared with previous years," said Mohammad Kazim Humayun, head of planning at NEPA. This comes just days after government officials raised concerns about the substantial drop in Kabul's underground water level in the last year. (Tolo news)

### (6) Gold, Flour

quantity of African black tea for 3, 50afs.

The prices of fuel also remained steady as a filling station worker in Wazirabad locality, Abdul Hadi, said one liter of diesel was accounted for 42afs and the same quantity of patrol for 44afs, registering no change in their rates. Ahmadullah, a liquefied gas seller in Kolola Pushta neighborhood, said the rate of one kg of the commodity was 50afs, the same rate of as of last week's. Moneychanger Sadaqat said the buying rate of one US dollar was 69.12afs, while 1,000 Pakistani rupees accounted for 612afs. Last week's exchange value of the dollar stood at 69.10afs and 1,000 Pakistani rupees at 611afs. (Pahwok)

### (7) HPC Optimistic

said Tahir Yarghal, a political affairs analyst.

Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah's office meanwhile termed the peace offer beneficial to the Taliban and called on the group to make use of the opportunity.

"We have not received any information about this, but our hope is that the Taliban says yes to this offer because it is an opportunity in their favor," said Jawed Faisal, deputy spokesman for the chief executive.

This comes after Taliban, by issuing two separate statements, asked for direct talks with the US and rejected negotiations with the Afghan government. (Tolo news)

### (8) Private Sector

the factories will also provide job opportunities for around 800 people once they become operational.

The Afghan markets are mainly dependent on imports as the government has stepped up efforts to boost the domestic production in a bid to reduce the dependency on foreign markets and increase domestic revenue by boosting the exports. (KP)

### (9) Afghan Forces

country's defense and security forces would continue to chase and target anti-government militants elsewhere in Afghanistan. Increase in the military crack-downs and killing more than 300 militants have been reported after offering peace talks to Taliban by Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani at Kabul conference on Wednesday to end Afghanistan's more than 16 years of war.

The peace package offered by president Ghani at the Kabul conference has been termed by Taliban as a "ploy to divide" Taliban group and rejected.

Meanwhile, General John Nicholson, the U.S. commander of the NATO-led Resolute Support (RS) mission in Afghanistan, has reportedly said that military pressure will continue on insurgents to make the political efforts for peace a success. (Xinhua)

### (10) Woman, Child

Hassan Khan, a resident of Sherabad, said Nakhati inhabitants barged into Ibrahim's house late at night. "Ibrahim, his son and wife were killed and a woman wounded. Two other people were taken hostage," he said. (Pahwok)

### (11) 1041 Women

were underway and would complete till the end of the outgoing solar year.

Ahmad said people's interest in far-flung areas had increased in literacy and promised to provide literacy courses to another 25,000 people. (Pahwok)

### (12) Crimes on

months and several car-lifting incidents and motorcycles stealing had taken place in Farah City.

Mohammad Dawood Haqyar, another civil society activist, expressed similar views.

In response to these complains, provincial crime branch police chief Mohammad Omar Najib rejected the claims and said four vehicles had been stolen in the past two months and three of them had been recovered by police and handed over to their owners.

Without giving exact numbers, he added, several people had been detained in connection with robbery incidents.

Residents urged local authorities to pay serious heed to preventing criminal incidents and collect weapons from irresponsible men. New governor Abdul Basir Salangi, who took over about three weeks ago, said insecurity created by Taliban insurgents had paved the ground for criminal activities in the province.

He assured of taking serious steps against militants and criminals. Work was ongoing to prevent criminal cases, arresting drug dealers, armed robbers and increasing police strength. Salangi said no one, including public representatives, would be allowed to take the law into their hands or support criminals. (Pahwok)

### About 30 Afghan Militants Reportedly Killed in Operations in Past 24 Hours

MOSCOW - At least 28 militants have been killed in counter-terrorist operations across Afghanistan in the past 24 hours, local media reported Saturday citing country's Defense Ministry.

During the operations, at least 13 insurgents were wounded, the TOLO broadcaster reported.

A number of hideouts, vehicles and weapons belonging to the militants were reportedly destroyed.

has long been suffering from political, social and security-related instability due to the simmering insurgency, including that of the Taliban radical movement, but also because of the actions of the Daesh terror group. (Sputnik)

### Two Australian Contractors Wounded in Kabul Explosion

KABUL - The Australian government said a car bomb was detonated close to a convey of their vehicles in PD9 on Friday.

Australia's Foreign Affairs Minister Julie Bishop on Saturday confirmed two of its nationals were wounded in Friday's suicide bombing in Qabel Bai area in Kabul's PD9. Bishop said in a statement that a car bomb was detonated near a convoy of Australian Embassy vehicles while they were travelling in Kabul.

"All Australian Embassy staff are safe," she said in the statement. However, two Australian security contractors were injured in the attack.

No group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack.

At least one person was killed in the attack that happened early Friday morning.

"The Australian government extends its sympathies to families and friends of people killed and injured by this attack," Bishop said.

Ministry of Interior spokesman Najib Danish said explosives were placed in a Suzuki vehicle and detonated when a convoy of vehicles drove by.

Meanwhile, Interior Ministry's deputy spokesman Nusrat Rahimi told TOLONews that the explosion left one person dead and 22 others wounded.

"The number of wounded is 22 people. Three of them are in critical condition," he said.

However, a security source told TOLONews that three people were killed in the explosion.

This explosion came just days after Kabul hosted the second Kabul Process conference in which the Afghan government sent a peace offer to the Taliban. (Tolo news)

### Swiss Firm Denies 1.4\$ Billion Rail Deal with Iran

The Swiss firm Stadler Rail has denied reports that it signed a 1.4\$ billion contract to build 960 subway wagons for Iran.

The Swiss embassy in Tehran had said on Wednesday that Stadler would put the wagons in service from the end of 2020 in the Iranian capital and its western suburb of Karaj.

"On the margin of the First Iranian-Swiss Economic Commission meeting in Tehran, a major infrastructure deal was signed. By the end of 2020, Iranians will enjoy Swiss metro trains," the embassy tweeted.

However, news and information platform Swissinfo on Friday

quoted the company as saying that there was no deal or decision but merely a public tender.

On Wednesday, Swiss Ambassador to Iran Markus Leitner and Iran's Deputy Minister Industry, Mine and Trade attended a signing ceremony between Stadler Rail and the Industrial Development and Renovation Organization of Iran (IDRO).

Iran's state news agency IRNA said Stadler would finance the project on a -14year payback period, guaranteed by the Swiss Export Risk Insurance.

Last August, the World Bank said it was not looking to finance any projects in Iran, responding to Iranian government comments that the international lender was considering financing railway electrification in the country.

The World Bank loan was related to a 1.2 billion euro deal that Russia and Iran signed in November 2015 to electrify the Garmsar to Incheburun route in Iran.

In July 2017, Iran's state rail company and its Italian counterpart signed a final agreement worth 1.2 billion euros (1.37\$ billion) to build a high-speed railway between the cities of Qom and Arak.

Later that month, French transport company Alstom signed a joint agreement for the construction of subway carriages in Iran. The Export-Import Bank of China (EXIM) has also signed a 1.5\$ billion deal to finance the electrification of a high-speed rail line being built by Chinese companies between the Iranian cities of Tehran and Mashhad.

Iran has announced plans to invest 25\$ billion over the next 10 years in the modernization and expansion of its railway network. Under the plan, Iran seeks to stretch out the nationwide railroad line to 25,000 kilometers by 2025 from under 15,000 kilometers now. (Press Tv)

### Tajikistan, Uzbekistan Reach Mutual Understanding on Border Issues

DUSHANBE - Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have concluded negotiations during which the sides reached full mutual understanding on issues of demarcation and delimitation of disputable sections of their state borders, Tajik Telegraph Agency TajikTA reported March 3.

"The meetings of working groups of government delegations of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Tajikistan were held in Tashkent from Feb. 24 to March 1," the Uzbek Foreign Ministry said in a message. "During the meetings, the negotiations on delimitation and demarcation of the state border were held in a constructive atmosphere and in the spirit of friendship and mutual understanding."

The working groups prepared annexes to the draft agreement between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan on certain sections of the border to implement the protocol of the Tajik-Uzbek Intergovernmental Commission for Delimitation and Demarcation of Borders, signed Feb. 24 in Uzbekistan's Ferghana. The agreement is planned to be signed during the visit of Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev to Tajikistan on March 10-9. According to the sources in the government of Tajikistan, the visit puts an end to the disputed border issues between the two neighboring countries. (Trend)